ART, SELF & KNOWLEDGE

KEITH LEHRER

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Keith Lehrer

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To Adrienne, who ties my art, self, and knowledge together in the loop of her love.

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PREFACE: WEBSITE INFORMATION, SUMMARY, AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

WEBSITE FOR IMAGES

Images referred to in this book in the form of [**Web ASK XX**] will be found with supplementary information for the text by linking to website: http://sites.google.com/site/artselfandknowledge/.

SUMMARY

This began as a book about art and aesthetics as a local area of philosophical interest. I began, as does the book, with aesthetic experience directed toward sensory experience and what it is like. The difference between ordinary perception and aesthetic experience has been often noted, but the implications stand in need of philosophical articulation. Aesthetic attention to sensory detail not only contrasts with ordinary perceptual experience, it blocks it. We surpass the more customary representational response. We experience a form of representational autonomy in how we use the sensory materials to mark distinctions in conceptual space reconfiguring experience itself. The sensory experience becomes an exemplar used to mark those distinctions creating meaning and content, both cognitive and affective. I began with the idea that this use of the exemplar, exemplarizing, is central to the experience of art. I concluded that it is central to our conception of our world, including the world described by science, and ourselves in our world. The understanding of aesthetic experience shows us ourselves as autonomous agents exemplarizing experience to represent our world, ourselves, our world in ourselves, and ourselves in our world. The exemplars of experience connect art and science, the internal and the external, the mind and body. They are Janus faced and show us what the represented object is like at the same time that they show us how we represent in a way that cannot be fully described. We exemplarize experience to mentalize body and materialize mentality.

As I created the work, I found myself, an analytic philosopher, appreciating the contributions of such diverse figures as Goodman and Heidegger,

Weitz and Derrida, to mention a pair of odd couples advancing similar views with a diversity of style. Moreover, under the influence of Peggy Zeglin Brand, I came to view feminist art as a paradigm of art and what art does and can do, and I thank her for that influence as well as for the editing work she did on an earlier version of Chapter 3. Under the influence of Dom Lopes, Otavio Bueno, and Nola Semczyszyn, I came to appreciate the similarity between the function of scientific representation and artistic representation in the construction of theories of our world. My book is intended to crash the barriers between the discourse of analytic philosophy and continental philosophy, as well as between science and art, without denying or depreciating the difference. Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel and Serrano's Piss Christ, are both religious art, even if very different. One directs attention to the separate glory of God and the other to the embodiment of God. To understand the teaching of Christianity, perhaps you need both.

As I came to the close of the writing of the book, I confronted the issue of how to connect the reader with images of artworks to which I referred. My first thought was to reproduce them in the book. I decided instead to connect the reader with a website containing easy access to the works. I had two reasons. The first is connected with the theory of the book concerning the way in which the particular experience of an artwork functions as an exemplar representation and content thereof in response to aesthetic attention. The problem with reproductions is that aesthetic attention to them is different from aesthetic attention to the artwork discussed and, by the theory I advance, has a different content and meaning than an exemplar representation of the artwork. For the theory affirms that the experience of the exemplar is a constituent of the content of the exemplar representation. So a different exemplar of experience gives you a different content. So what could I do? I decided that the image of the artwork on a computer screen takes you closer to the experience of the original than a printed reproduction no matter how entrenched the use of such printed images are in art history books. Better than nothing to experience, perhaps, quicker to access, surely, yet lacking the vivacity of the original, certainly. I do not claim that the computer images I direct the reader to on the website I supply are anything close to exact replications of the original. Some of you will have large brilliant display screens that captivate and focus your attention. That matters.

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Art, Self and Knowledge

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Introduction

This book concerns the role of art in human experience. The method of the book is intended to break down walls of philosophical and intellectual oppositions between analytical and continental traditions and between art and science. Human experience transcends these divisions and unifies them. Dewey (1934) saw art as making a special contribution to human experience rather than standing in splendid isolation from it. He is not alone. Goodman (1968), a leading analytic philosopher, and Heidegger (1971), a leading existentialist, writing in different ways in opposing traditions thought that art reveals a special contribution to the world-making experience of the artist and the receivers of the artwork.

I stand with these philosophers in opposition to many theories of aesthetics that search for what separates art from the world outside of art, theories of art as representation, as beauty, as significant form, as expression, even as deconstruction. I do not deny that art is representational, that it may contain significant form giving rise to a special emotion, that it may be expressive of a wide range of human feelings, or that it may deconstruct previous artworks, removing them from their frames to assemble something new. My objection is not that art does not do these things. There is some art that does each of them. But not all art does these things, and not only art does them. So what is the special contribution that art makes to experience that contributes to human life? Art uses sensory consciousness as the focus of attention to create new form and content out of exemplars of experience. We value art because of the new content it offers to us in our lives. Moreover, and perhaps most importantly, we are provoked to ask ourselves whether to transfer the content of the artwork to our world and ourselves beyond the artwork. When we ask that question, we experience our conceptual

autonomy in how we represent our world, ourselves, ourselves in our world, and, finally, our world in ourselves. Art is that part of experience that uses experience to change the content of experience. I shall argue that the reconfiguration of experience in terms of conscious exemplars explains how art represents, pleases with beauty, expresses feeling, and reconfigures art itself as part of experience. Exemplar representation unifies aesthetic theory.

Here is an example. A conscious experience of color, of a sensation of color, can serve as an exemplar that exhibits what the color is like. As we distinguish that color from other things, we conceive of a form of color exhibited by the sensation of color. We use the sensation of color as an exemplar. That shows us the form of representation. We use the exemplar to represent what objects are like contained in the conceptual space marked by the conscious experience. The marking gives form to the content represented. At the same time that we mark what is contained in the conceptual space, we distinguish it from what is not in that conceptual space, from what Spencer-Brown (1969) called the unmarked space. I call this use of the exemplar to represent content *exemplarization*.

When does exemplarizing yield art? Two ingredients are essential. We must first notice that new form and content have been added to experience by the use of exemplar representation, exemplarization. Then we must find value in adding content in that specific way, in terms of the use of the exemplar. There is often more to art than that, even if that suffices for the name. For we often seek more from art experience and the activity of the artist than novel configuration of content in terms of a sensory exemplar that we value, even if we agree that this is art. We require that the content of the reconfiguration confronts us with a possible reconfiguration of the world outside of art, and, indeed, a reconfiguration of the content of the story we accept about our world and ourselves.

When we become reflective about how we transfer the content of art to the world and ourselves, we confront a most fundamental form of freedom: The freedom to decide for ourselves how to conceive of our world and ourselves. Every tyrant knows that freedom is coiled at the center of art like a snake. Art contains the existential freedom of choosing how we represent the world and ourselves, undoing the dictates of political power and social control. You see a painting, you read a poem, you hear some music, and you experience the freedom to use that conscious experience to reconfigure the bondage of conformity into the creative choice of the content of your world and yourself. The tyrant can tell you what you have to believe. The experience of art shows that you are free to conceive of your world and yourself in another way.

All this requires explanation. It requires, first of all, an account of the connection between consciousness and representation. That is explained in

Chapter 1, "Knowing the Content of Art." That is where we begin. The exemplar of conscious experience shows us what consciousness is like. We must have an account, therefore, of consciousness. Consciousness shows us what experience is like. It presents us with what consciousness is like. As it presents us with what consciousness is like, we know what the conscious experience is like. How?

To answer that we need an account of how consciousness gives us knowledge of what it is like. Many have agreed—how could they disagree?—that there is something that consciousness is like, some subjective awareness of what it is like. But there is more than subjectivity. There is knowledge. Consciousness gives us knowledge of what the conscious state is like. To do this, consciousness must somehow enable us to conceive of what the state is like. For we lack knowledge of what something is like until we can conceive of what it is like. We must have some conception, some representation, of what the state is like from the presentation, the experience of the state itself. Moreover, to have knowledge of what the conscious state is like, it is not sufficient that the conscious state supply us with a conception or representation of what it is like. It must also supply us with truth. Knowledge requires truth. So the conscious experience must supply us with a conception of what the experience is like that is true of the experience. The explanation of how this happens is that the conscious experience becomes representational in a special way. The conscious experience is used as an exemplar to exhibit what the content is like. This use of the exemplar representation, exemplarization, takes the exemplar to represent content, a plurality of objects, which includes itself, as it is used as an exhibit to show us what the objects are like. The exemplar becomes a term of representation of the objects and may be affirmed of them in the way that a predicate is affirmed of a subject. So it is true that the exemplar applies to those objects it represents. Exemplarization marks a distinction defining content in such a way that the exemplar of representation is true of itself, that is, it is true that the exemplar applies to itself as it applies to other objects it represents. This is explained in Chapter 2, "Consciousness, Exemplars, and Art."

Now we confront the deeper question of how to distinguish between what art does, or what aesthetic awareness of art does, that takes us beyond the content of simple consciousness to the complexities of artistic content. In much of conscious experience there is automatic representation, and some of this carries over into our response to art as well. When, however, we interpret art more reflectively, we confront our choice, our autonomy in how we interpret the object. Suppose you view *Monochrome Blue*, a rectangular blue painting by Yves Klein [**Web ASK 1**]. Is the color blue sad? Often blue is sad, but blue can also dazzle us with how pretty it is. Blue can express the gaiety of a clear sky. It can express the moody sea of a cloudy

day. And that is only the beginning of how we can use the color blue. The exemplar is given. The interpretation is taken from the exemplar as we mark conceptual space to define content. We confront our autonomy as creators of form and content as we think about the blue.

Take another example, *L'Origine du Monde*, a painting by Courbet [**Web ASK 2**]. It is a painting of a female sex organ. It confronts us in the Musée d'Orsay. It says, "Look!" Try not to. You will fail. But what then? Prurient interest is blocked by the confrontation. It is not a pornographic experience, however accurate the representation. There is a sensory confrontation and interrogation. What does it mean? That confrontation and interrogation lead to the experience of it as art. You interpret it. Carolee Schneemann in her later feminist work, *Interior Scroll*, shows us how [**Web ASK 3**]. We do not fall from heaven, we fall from there. All of us. The origin of our life, of our world. It must be sacred. We hide from the sacred biology of our origin. "Not from there please." "Yes, from there." The sensory experience marks the content of the origin of us all. That is art. So, what does art do? It chats with us on the edge of experience (Hein, 1993). The chapters on art and feminism: "Aesthetic Theory, Feminist Art, and Autonomy" (Chapter 3); art and death: "Aesthetics, Death, and Beauty" (Chapter 6); and art and globalization: "Value, Expression, and Globalization" (Chapter 4) show us how to use art to extend the reach of sense into the making of a world.

We loop back onto our experience to construct a story of ourselves in our world and note the connection with freedom as Fischer's (2009) work tells us. Chapter 5, "Artistic Creation, Freedom, and Self," is an attempt to explain how our conception of ourselves arises from the exemplarization of experience. As the representation of the self loops back onto itself exemplarizing the experience of a life, the self becomes unified in the story of a life. The ownership of the components of the self is explained by a choice, an ownership choice that expresses the freedom of the self to choose what experiences to exemplarize into the story of itself by itself.

Art reaches into philosophy to show us something about what our world is like beyond what can be said. In Chapter 7, "Aesthetic Experience, Intentionality, and the Form of Representation," which focuses on intentionality, we turn to art to show us what intentionality and representation are like as we exemplarize experience. When we use the sensory exemplar as the term of representation, we take it as an exhibit of what the represented objects are like. We know what the exemplar itself is like from the exemplarization of it, but we may take it, at the same time, as an exhibit of how we represent what those objects are like. The exemplar, when we focus our attention upon it in aesthetic experience is Janus-faced, showing us in one direction, what is represented, and, in the other, showing us how we

represent it. In an aesthetic moment we know what intentionality is like and what the activity or form of representation is like.

As we consider definitions of art, we find that theories of art as expression, communication, and form, omit the central role of art as world making. Art is that part of the world that reconfigures the content of the world as we create the content of our world by marking distinctions in new ways. This is discussed in Chapter 8, "Theories of Art, and Art as Theory of the World." As we accept the distinctions we mark with art, we confront the question of what reason we have for accepting what we do. We confront self-trust, and the question of whether we are worthy of our self-trust. The answer to the question is that our being worthy of our self-trust is a keystone in the edifice of justification. We include Chapter 9, "Self-Trust, Disagreement, and Reasonable Acceptance," to explain the relationship between the evidence arising from self-trust and the testimony of peers with whom we disagree. Self-trust, we find, leads to reasonable acceptance in the face of disagreement.

Disagreement, however reasonable, expresses cognitive diversity, the importance of which reveals itself in Chapter 10, "Social Reason, Aggregation, and Collective Wisdom." Beyond the disagreement between individuals, there is sometimes opposition between individual judgment and social consensus. We may collectively judge that an individual is incorrect. When our collective consensus is an aggregation of individual diversity, it trumps individual judgment. Consensus aggregating individual diversity leads us to truth.

In the last chapter, Chapter 11, "Knowledge, Autonomy, and Art in Loop Theory," we consider the implications of what motivates our discourse, most notably that we seek to explain how art can contribute to our obtaining truth about the world. We seek an explanatory theory. However, as we seek such a theory, we recognize that the acceptance of the truth of the explanatory theory itself admits of explanation. We must provide an explanation of why we should accept it as well as the other things we accept in the quest for truth. Truth theory does not stand outside the system of justification and explanation, peering divinely down on the other things that we accept. Truth theory is part of the theory, part of the conception of the totality, and, perhaps the grandest conception of them all. What ties that conception to experience is the exemplarization of experience. As an exemplar is used as a term to refer to what it represents, it is part of what it represents. The exemplar is true of itself, whatever errors might otherwise arise. It ties experience to the system of representation in a keystone loop in art and science.

We began with the claim that art connects us with the world outside of art rather than standing in isolation from it. We discovered the way in which

the experience of art changes the content of experience. Sometimes the content of experience comes from the world outside of art and the direction of the transfer of content is from the world to the mind. As we construct art and create content in the art experience, the direction of the transfer of content is from the mind to the world. The artwork is a physical object in the world, which becomes a mentalized physical object, as we direct aesthetic attention to what the conscious experience of it is like to construct an interpretation of what it is about. We mentalize the artwork and transfer the mentalized content to the world outside of art in an autonomous moment of self-trust. We experience our world and our place in our world as an expression of our freedom, though not only that, as we place the keystone loop in the system of it all. Art shows us what it is like.

CHAPTER 1

Knowing the Content of Art

My general thesis about art is that art reconfigures or transforms experience by creating content. Art is that part of the world that changes the content of the world. Of course, art is part of the world whose content is changed by art. So art changes the content of art. That is part of what accounts for the difficulties of attempting to define art by generalizing from instances of art objects, no matter how paradigmatic and diverse they might be. To define art, one needs theory. However, this chapter has a different objective than the definition of art, though I shall confront the issue of definition in a later chapter. I am concerned here with the way in which the content of art reconfigures experience. The content of an art object is what it is like. When you experience what a painting is like, for example, you know something about the content of it, however puzzled you may remain.

My objective in this chapter is to explain how we know what a work of visual art—a painting, for example—is like. This knowledge of what the work of art is like is knowledge of the content of the work of art. I use the concept of content like the concept of personal meaning and construe it as a role in the mentality of the viewer who marks what is contained under the concept. When we know what the work of art is like, we know the content of the work of art in a special way that incorporates the experience of the work of art into a state of understanding and knowledge. We cannot know all there is to know about what a work of art is like without experiencing it because the experience is used to represent the content of the work and at the same time becomes part of the content. The representation of the content incorporates the experience as a term of reference, including phenomenology of the artwork, into the representational understanding of the content of it.

I now want to explain how we can know what the content of the work of art is like. My explanation is that the experience of the work of art results in representation that uses the experience of the work of art as an exemplar to stand for a class of experiences of which it is a member. The process is something that might be called *exemplar representation*. It differs from other forms of representation, verbal representation, for example, because the exemplar, rather than a word, is the term or vehicle of representation. The exemplar is used to represent a class of objects that is distinguished from others. It stands for the objects it represents as a predicate. However, unlike a predicate, it is, at the same time, one of the objects represented, and functions to exhibit or show us what the represented objects are like. I call the process of exemplar representation, using an exemplar to represent a class of objects, *exemplarization* (Lehrer, 1997). Exemplarization yields a representation of content in terms of an experienced particular that stands for other particulars. Exemplarization involves the generalization of a particular.

The notion of exemplarization stems most directly from the empiricist tradition most closely related to Hume (1739) and Reid (1785). However, it has a connection with Plato, who thought of the forms as something like an exemplar, a standard of the objects that exemplify it. The exemplar representing itself and other things that are like it goes back to Plato as Brickhouse and Smith (1983) note. However, the exemplar on the theory I am proposing is not some separate eternal and immutable form. It is the experience itself used as an exemplar or standard to stand for experiences. This use dispenses with the metaphysics of separation, though the relation between exemplar and what it stands for is suggested by the relation between the form and what it stands for. The exemplar is an individual experience used as a standard, however, and not a universal separate from experience.

THE CONTENT OF WORKS OF ART

The special form of representation that yields knowledge of what the work of art is like, exemplarization, explains the somewhat puzzling features of representation of a work of art. Description of the content of a work in language, though providing useful information for many purposes, seems to leave out something essential to what a work of art is like. This leads philosophers to say that the content of a work of art, even a representational painting, is ultimately ineffable. There is a point to speaking about the ineffability of the content of a work of art—of a painting, for example—but it leads to a paradox when one adds that the ineffable content can be known

to an observer and appreciated many times over as being the same content. How can the content be known and recognized repeatedly and be ineffable?

A related issue concerns the particularity of the content. There are many paintings of Venus, and someone may observe that the Titian painting of Venus [**Web ASK 4**] is a member of the class of Venus paintings. But to know what the Titian painting is like, it is not sufficient for the purpose of aesthetic appreciation to know that it is a Venus painting. One must know what the particular content of the painting is like to appreciate it aesthetically or even to know fully what it is like. It is what this painting is like in the full particularity of the experience of it that is required for aesthetic appreciation. This appreciation rests on a special particularized knowledge of what this Venus painting is like. Moreover, the particularity of the content is not captured by distinguishing between digital and analogue representations as Goodman (1968) proposed. Digital and analogue representation, however detailed they may be, still fail to explain the particularity of the content of the work of art. The distinction between digital and analogue representation can mark the distinction between a representation of a species and that of an *infima* species, but an *infima* species, even if it has only one member, is still different from the one member. The member is a particular, and the species is general no matter how determinate it might be. If the content is particular, then knowledge of what the content is like must also be knowledge of the particular in that content. Knowledge of the particular content is based on representation that gives the particular a role in the representation. This observation, however natural and plausible, also leads to a paradox or, at least, a puzzle. For the content of the painting is something that can be repeatedly experienced. The repetition involves different particular experiences, however similar the experiences might be to one another. The common content of the different particular experiences seems to require both that the representation of the content, as well as the content represented, be both particular and general at the same time. But how can the representation and the content itself be both particular and general? How can our knowledge of the content be both knowledge of what something is like as a particular and, at the same, knowledge of something common to a class of particulars?

Another problem concerns art and representation. Suppose the content of a work is similar to the content of the perception of identifiable objects. It might enable one to recognize some perceived object from the content of the painting, as Lopes (1996) suggests. As a result, we might hope to characterize or explain the character of the content in terms of its relationship to the perceived object. However, the content of a painting may be expressionistic and not enable one to identify any perceived object. Or the artist

may be interested in reconfiguring and distorting his model, as Picasso does, for example, to create new content. Moreover, paintings that bear a likeness to some perceived object, a model for the painting, for example, are not, as a result, about the model. This simple and familiar example shows us that any causal account of intentionality, of representation, must fail. The model is no goddess. A painting of Venus is about a goddess and not about a hired model, though the goddess in the painting may have a close likeness to the model.

The reason, of course, is that the artist may seek to reconfigure the model to represent Venus. The likeness may be incidental to the intended content of the painting. On the other hand, the figure in the painting may fail to bear a likeness to a person intended to be the content of the painting, and represent that person successfully without attaining the likeness. Madame de Pompadour thought that Boucher was not good at capturing her likeness, but she approved of the content of his paintings of her [**Web ASK 5**]. He represented her as a woman having the position and role she sought and obtained. We, of course, think of what Madame de Pompadour was like from the paintings of Boucher. Perhaps her contemporaries did as well. They may have seen her as the content of the paintings. That may have been her wish.

However, there are paintings, many of them these days, which are abstract or minimal. It is natural, though incorrect, to think of such works as lacking content. Some minimalists have sought to produce contentless paintings. They mostly fail. The reason is that the observer naturally finds content because he or she creates it. We look at a painting and wonder what it is about. The first time one observes a Mondrian [**Web ASK 6**], for example, one might just wonder what it is about. One may soon come to think of it as representing spatial relations. Even if our reflections do not connect it with some previously understood content, we may find a content in the painting that enables us to identify it again and to identify what it is like in a way that would enable us to recognize other works of Mondrian. We now know what a Mondrian is like. Words may fail us as we seek to describe the content of the work, what it is about, even though we know what it is like. We might convey the content more successfully with gestures of the body, even movement, than with words. I have experimented with philosophy students interpreting paintings with gestures of their body, with movement, with great success. We cannot always articulate in words the content of what we perceive.

Minimal art may intentionally challenge the doctrine of content. We might see a large nonfigurative painting, a Rothko [**Web ASK 7**] or Mossett [**Web ASK 8**], that does not represent any object at all. But we may represent the content of it nonetheless. It may be a representation of nothingness, of

the void, or of color in the void, or of emotion and feeling in color. We seek meaning in experience, including the experience of art, and, seeking meaning, we find it by creating it. A painting created by an artist seeking to present the possibility of art without content will probably fail to present a work without content to most observers. The observer searching to find the content of the work may, if they find nothing, conceive the content of work paradoxically to be a work about lacking content. What it represents to them is a work without content, and, paradoxically, it will be about contentlessness. Contentlessness becomes content. The reason is that we create content by marking a distinction, as Spencer-Brown (1969) suggested, and which we shall study later. You mark a distinction between the painting, the one without content, and other paintings, those of a person, for example. What is contained in the marked space of experience, the contentlessness, is the content. There is a content of contentlessness marked in experience. The content of contentlessness can be exhilarating in the expression of freedom or saddening for the nullification of the figurative.

EXEMPLARIZATION AND REPRESENTATION

It is now time to provide a more detailed account of the process of exemplarization by which we obtain a representation of what a painting is like. Consider an analogy I find helpful, namely, to one who has never previously experienced color and now experiences color for the first time. One example, a fictitious one due to Jackson (1982), is the scientist Mary who has a complete understanding of the science of color but has been confined to a black-and-white room. Or, if you prefer, someone who was born colorblind, and has always seen the world in black and white, but has all the knowledge of color that it is possible to obtain from the study of science. Call him Henry. Now both Mary and Henry know a great deal about color and about what properties colored things have. But both of them lack a certain kind of knowledge about what colors are like, what the color red is like, for example, that those of us who have seen colors possess.

Imagine, now, that Mary or Henry suddenly experiences color, perhaps the color red, just a flash of red light, as we would describe it. We would not expect Mary or Henry immediately to connect the experience of red with their scientific knowledge about the color red when they experience it for the first time. The antecedent knowledge they have about the color must be connected with the sensory experience of the color through learning, association, and inference. Nevertheless, there is something that they do know, something about what the experience is like, when they have an experience of it. First of all, it catches their attention. They notice the

particular novel experience. The particular experience becomes the basis of representation as the result of generalization from it. The exemplar represents a general class of things for them, even before they fix a word to the exemplar, in the way that hearing a new song for the first time represents the song for one, as Goodman (1968) noted. Representation requires generalization. The exemplar, whether of sound or color, represents a class of instances picked out by reference to the exemplar.

This claim concerning exemplar representation by exemplarization rests on an ability that I conjecture is innate. The innateness of it may help to explain how we obtain knowledge of what colors are like from the sensory experience of them by explaining why we generalize in the way that we do. We are constructed in such a way, I conjecture, that we generalize from sensory experiences in a specific way without tutelage. This sort of generalization enables us to re-identify what we experience and recognize repeated instances of the sensory experience. Exemplarization involving generalization from an exemplar yields a general representation based on a particular experience, an exemplar, which is the term or vehicle of representation.

Why do we speak of the exemplar representation resulting from exemplarization as knowledge? We have many representations that apply to themselves, the word "word," for example, whose self-application should not be confused with exemplarization. The other representations that apply to themselves do not ensure knowledge. They may be applied without thereby attaining knowledge. Words that apply to themselves may be applied to themselves in a way that falls short of knowledge in some instances because, though the application may be correct, there is nothing about the process of applying the term that connects it with truth, that is, with correct application. A person who applies a word, even the word "word" to something, may get it wrong because they mistake something to which the word applies for something to which it fails to apply. The advantage of exemplarization for obtaining truth or the correct application of the exemplar in the process of exemplarization is the functional character of the process itself. The exemplar is used as a term to represent a class of instances which, by the nature of the process, applies to itself. The exemplar is used to pick out instances under a general conception that includes itself as an exemplarized instance.

So, the general conception resulting from exemplarization is one that applies to the exemplar as a result of the way in which the exemplar functions as a term of representation in exemplarization. The exemplar exhibits what the content is like and functions to pick out the objects represented. This role of exhibiting what the content of the conception is like is an irreplaceable constituent of the conception. Exemplarization trumps formal

computation, digital or analogue, because of the essential role of the exemplar to exhibit what is represented by it.

This distinguishes the use of the sensory experience of red in our examples from the use of the word "word." We do not use the word "word" as an exemplar to pick out instances of words including itself. We do not use the word "word" to identify words in the way in which Mary and Henry use their experience to identify sensory experiences in exemplarization.

Thus, one reason for speaking of knowledge of what sensory experiences are like as *knowledge* is that the representational process of exemplarization from a particular exemplar of experience to other experiences yields a general conception that is correctly applied to the exemplar as a result of the process of exemplarization itself. The exemplar plays the functional role of a term of representation of the general conception. It is at the same time a parcel or exhibit of data used to identify further instances of experiences of the same general kind. Thus, the exemplar is part and parcel of the representation in a way that ensures truth as a result of the process of exemplarization. It is natural to speak of a truth-ensuring process of representation as knowledge of an immediate sort. Another way to consider the exemplar is as a sign, since it represents the exemplarized content. However, it is a peculiar kind of sign. It both signifies the content and exhibits what it is like.

I note an analogy taken from Sellars (1963), when a person is asked what a word in a foreign language means—"rot" in German, for example—and one replies that it means red. The reply conveys the answer, not by fully explaining the meaning of the word "rot" but by exhibiting the word "red" to exhibit the meaning. Of course, explaining the meaning of a word by exhibiting a second word that has the meaning will only succeed if the second word is in the active vocabulary of the listener. Nevertheless, the analogy between exhibiting a word to explain the meaning of another, and exhibiting an exemplar to explain meaning is important because of something the exhibits have in common. The word and the exemplar exhibit a particular that plays a conceptual role and identifies the role by example.

This kind of knowledge may remain primitive until the representation is conceptually enhanced by being connected to a semantic network. I have distinguished (Lehrer, 2000) between primitive knowledge, which may give us a disconnected and isolated truth, from discursive knowledge that enables us to use what we know in reasoning and justification. Mary and Henry may initially fail to represent their experience in a way that enables them to use the representation they obtain by exemplarization in reasoning and justification. For the functional role of their general conception may be solely ostensive at first, generalizing from one experience to other experiences, and lack connection with other conceptions. Remember that they may have completely failed in the first awareness to

connect the experienced exemplar, the term of representation, with anything they understand about colors or objects. The conception, though it would enable them to recognize other experiences of red, is unconnected conceptually from other objects or properties. The knowledge contains a primitive truth that may prove useful to them later even though it fails initially to provide a useful premise for reasoning. As a result, the knowledge obtained from ostensive exemplarization is not what I have called *discursive knowledge* (Lehrer, 2000), which is essentially connected with the justification of other claims.

The point just made can be clarified by considering the initial sensory experience of red by Mary or Henry when a red light flashes with sufficient intensity so that all they experience is a homogeneous and undifferentiated field of red. To put it another way, they experience a visual sensation of red filling their visual field. When they have such an experience, they might not initially connect the experience with any quality of any object. Indeed, they may initially fail to connect this sensation with any object or any property of which they have antecedent knowledge. They experience red, however, and they have a kind of knowledge of what that is like as a result of exemplarizing the experience. The experience is an exemplar representing a class of objects and may be affirmed of them in a way that is, therefore, true of the objects represented. But it is one of the objects it represents and, therefore, is true of itself just as it is true of other members of the class of objects it represents. Exemplarization gives the particular a functional role, the role of a primitive sign, using it to identify what we would call *red* experiences. As a result, the particular experience acquires a functional role of a general sign functioning like a predicate that applies to the class of objects of which it is a member and exhibits what all the members are like.

It is useful to notice three layers of exemplar representation. The first is *exemplar generalization*. Generalization does not presuppose using the exemplar as predicate of judgment of the subject-predicate sort, though it may guide activity and influence thought. The second layer I would call *ostensive conception*. It adds the formal structure of negation to exemplar generalization, yielding a representation of what is not like the exemplar. At this level the exemplar is already a kind of predicate that is affirmed of the exemplar itself as well as other things. It is, by implication, denied of different things. Then there is a third layer, *full exemplarization*, exemplar representation, which involves adding to the formal structure of negation a formal structure opening the use of the exemplar to formal and semantic connections of the usual complex varieties. As the exemplar takes on the third layer of representation, it functions like a predicate in that it may be affirmed of objects it applies to, but unlike a linguistic predicate it has the

function of representing objects by showing us what they are like by exhibiting what it itself is like.

There is a problem that arises from our attempt to characterize exemplar representation by using a sign in a natural language—the word "red" in English for example. That word is used in English as part of a semantic network including a variety of semantic connections. The initial layer of ostensive generalization arising from the exemplarization of the experience is, therefore, not equivalent to the meaning or general conception associated with the word "red" in English. Suppose that Mary has a general conception of the quality red that she associates with the word "red," which she has obtained from reading scientific literature before experiencing red. When she first experiences red she may not immediately connect her experience with the general conception she associates with the word "red." Moreover, the general conception she forms upon her first experience of red by exemplarizing the experience to obtain an ostensive conception and representation will differ from the semantically more complicated general conception associated with the word. For example, though the exemplar functions to represent a class of experiences, which we would call "red," and marks a distinction between that class and what is not contained therein, the exemplar representation is not yet inferentially connected to the distinctions between what we would call "blue" and "yellow."

How should we conceive of the connection between the exemplar, which has a functional role in an ostensive conception for identifying instances of the denotation, and the word "red" associated with the semantically connected general conception? Once Mary connects the word with the exemplarized sign, which could happen soon after the experience is exemplarized, the general conception will be functionally altered. For now Mary will use the information obtained from exemplarizing the sensory experience of red in her application of the word "red." Since she now knows what red is like from her experience of red, she will now use that knowledge to apply the word "red."

However, that does not mean that the conceptual role of the word and of the exemplarized sign is the same. The exemplarized experience has the functional role of identifying sensory states by exhibiting what they are like, while the word is applied to things that are red without showing us what they are like. Some things that are red do not give rise to sensory experiences because of circumstances that are known by the subject to prevent the sensory experiences—the lack of adequate light, for example—and some things that are not red will give rise to sensory experiences indistinguishable from the exemplar though they are not red—white objects illuminated by a red light, for example. One might try to put the point by saying that the exemplar functions like "looks red" rather than "is red," but that

could be misleading. The exemplarized experience is a sign that is innocent of the distinction between being red and looking red and is therefore semantically and conceptually simpler and more primitive.

The foregoing suggests the following question: Is the exemplar part of the content of the representation or part of the way the content is represented? The answer is that it is both part of the content, for the content incorporates the exemplar as part of what the content is like and, at the same time, the process of representation gives the exemplar a special functional role of exhibiting what the content it represents is like. The exemplar is used as a sign in the process of representation to represent the content it exhibits. What the content is like depends on what the exemplar is like.

It is important at this point to relate the understanding of the exemplarized sign to our knowledge of art. We noted at the outset that the content of a painting incorporates the exemplarized particular into a conception of the content of the painting. The particular, the exemplar, is a sensory experience that plays an irreplaceable functional role in the conception of the content for the viewer so that we know what the content of the painting is like. When I paint a picture of the House of Seven Gables—*Two Chimneys* [**Web ASK 9**], for example—one needs to experience the painting in order to know what the content of the painting is like. Of course, one knows something about the content of the painting from the description, and, if the description were more complete, one might be able to distinguish the painting from other paintings, especially with a different subject matter altogether. Yet without seeing the painting, there is something one would not know about what the painting is like and, therefore, about what the content of the painting is like. Observing the painting results in exemplarizing the sensory experience so that we know something new about what the exhibited content is like from the representation of it.

We know something new about the content of the painting, about the House of Seven Gables in the painting, in the same way that Mary knows something new about the color red when she observes the color red and knows what it is like when she experiences it. The exemplarization of the sensory experience of the painting yields knowledge of what the painting is like by enhancing the conception of the painting that we might obtain from a description of the painting, no matter how complete. The person who sees the painting adds a sensory conception of the content obtained from exemplarizing the particular as an exhibit of content. The exemplar enhances or enriches the descriptive content of the painting, becoming part of the content that exhibits the content. It is the conception of a house in this case enhanced by a sensory concept to yield a new conception of the content of the painting including knowledge of what it is like.

The foregoing remarks might suggest that the enhancement of the conception of content by means of exemplarization is a simple addition of one kind of content to another. That may be wrong. The enhancement that results from exemplarization is an alteration that may change the functional aspects of the conception of content in more complicated ways than the simple addition of a means of identifying the painting. One may realize when one observes the painting that one has changed one's conception of the House of Seven Gables in negative as well as positive ways. The positive aspect is that the subject has a new way of identifying particulars, particular experiences of the painting and the house, and so gains knowledge of how to identify them. But that is not all there is to the matter. The exemplarization of the particular experience does enable us to identify further experiences of the painting and the house, but it does this by converting the exemplarized particular into a sign that both represents particular experiences and exhibits what they are like. Thus, the enhanced conception requires an accommodation of one sign, a word, to another sign, a sensory experience, and the accommodation may involve more complicated changes in the content or meaning of the word or descriptive expression.

Consider the person viewing the painting of the House of Seven Gables after reading about the house, first in Hawthorne, and then in a book about historical buildings. One might have a definite conception of the house and what it looks like as a result of imagining a house that fulfills the description. The imagined house based solely on descriptive discourse may have a functional role in the conception of the house. Now suppose the person views the painting and exemplarizes the sensory experience to obtain a sensory conception of the content of it. The sensory conception—that is, the exemplarized conception—may give the person a conception of the House of Seven Gables that conflicts with the descriptive content and, especially, with how the person imagined the house from the description. Moreover, the person may now choose to alter the functional role of the descriptive conception enhanced by imagination to accommodate the sensory conception as a replacement for how the person imagined the house based on the description. Or, on the contrary, the person may refuse to alter the antecedent conception of the House of Seven Gables to accommodate the sensory content of the painting. Notice, moreover, that the same problem would arise with a photograph of the house. The person may be more inclined to accommodate the sensory experience resulting from exemplarizing a photograph, but, since photographs of the house at different times and under different conditions may vary greatly, the same issue arises, namely, of what role to give to the sensory concept, if any, in the amendment of the descriptive conception. Indeed, the same problem arises

from actually seeing the house itself as it now appears and exemplarizing that sensory experience.

The point can be formulated in a way suggested by the excellent account that Lopes (1996) gives us of the way in which representation is related to the ability to recognize the external object represented. A change in conception that incorporates the exemplarized experience as a dominant component for identifying or recognizing the object represented in the painting may require rejection of preconceptions of what the sensory experience of the painting would be like. So the sensory conception resulting from exemplarization might require a negative amendment of the antecedent conception to accommodate the functional role of the sensory experience. In earlier work, Lehrer and Lehrer (1995) proposed a theory of word meaning that took the various factors influencing the meaning of words to be vectors that are mathematically aggregated to obtain meaning. A similar notion of content as the aggregation of innate, personal, and social influences will explain the process of generalization and accommodation in the use of exemplarization.

Notice that the problem becomes more interesting when the question arises of how one might modify one's conception of the actual House of Seven Gables in Salem—for it still exists—as a result of observing a painting of the House of Seven Gables—mine in Tucson, for example. For a person might change his or her conception of the House of Seven Gables as a result of seeing the painting in Tucson. Moreover, the person might, as a result of accommodating his or her conception to the exemplarized sensory experience of the painting, perceive the actual house in a different way by focusing attention on some features and ignoring others in the invariably selective process of perception. Thus, the painting might alter perceptual knowledge of the real house, by focusing more attention on the tree standing next to it, for example. So, knowledge of what the content of the painting is like resulting from exemplarization of sensory experience may influence perceptual knowledge of what the actual house in Salem is like when one sees it. In this way, therefore, the content of the painting and what it is like may determine the content of the conception of the house and what it is like. The world of art and the world of perception may combine to provide a conception of a new world.

AN ANALYSIS OF ISENBERG AND GOODMAN

It is useful to compare this notion of our knowledge of what things are like by exemplarization to what has been said by others about art. Isenberg (1949), in his justly famous article on critical communication, suggests the

meaning of words used to describe works of art is filled in by the sensory experience of the art object. Since he places emphasis on the role of the critic in calling attention to features of the work of art, he is sometimes interpreted as providing a noncognitive theory of critical discourse. Whatever his original intention, however, his account is compatible with a cognitive account. The way in which the meaning or content of the critical discourse is filled in by sensory experience, by observing the work of art, is explained by exemplarization. Since exemplarization yields conception and correct conception yields truth, there is a cognitive account of critical discourse that results naturally from the account of exemplarization. It is important to notice, however, that descriptive discourse, and metaphorical description used by the critic, can influence how the person observes the work of art. Consequently, the sensory experience exemplarized may be in part the result of how attention is directed to the art object by the critic. Once attention is so directed, however, the content of the discourse of the critic is enhanced by the exemplarized content. There is an interaction between discourse and exemplarized content, between representation by words and representation by exemplar, that results in the amalgamation of discursive content and exemplarized content to yield new meaning, new content, and new perception of the world.

It is most useful to compare this account of knowledge with one proposed by Goodman (1968), for Goodman insisted on the symbolic character of the arts. The notion of exemplarization is indebted to Goodman, though it is at the same time, and perhaps more deeply, indebted to the Hume (1739), Reid (1785), and Sellars (1963). Goodman insisted on the importance of exemplification as a form of symbolic representation, and there are similarities between the notion of exemplarization and Goodman's notion of exemplification. Goodman's idea was that some individual that exemplifies a property or a predicate, which is his nominalistic basis for talk about properties, is used to refer to the predicate that denotes the individual exemplified as well as other individuals. The similarity of this account to the account of exemplarization is that a particular or an individual plays a special role in the symbolic representation of a class of individuals of which it is a member. Moreover, the symbolic representation effected by the use of the exemplified individual is, according to Goodman, a source of knowledge as a result of the role that it plays in representation.

My account of exemplarization is clearly similar to Goodman's, and I gladly acknowledge my indebtedness to his work. There are differences, however. Goodman, when he exchanges the property formulation for what he regards as the more philosophically fundamental nominalistic discourse, connects the exemplarized particular with other particulars by means of a notion of reference. The exemplified particular refers to a predicate that

denotes a class of particulars that includes the particular that is used to effect the exemplification by referring to the predicate. The differences between this account and the account of exemplarization I have offered turns on the role of a predicate in Goodman's account. As Goodman formulates the matter, exemplification is a form of representation that is dependent upon and is derived from linguistic representation in terms of a predicate despite the fact that Goodman insists on the difference between description and other forms of representation.

Perhaps the idea that exemplification is achieved by reference to a predicate should not be taken seriously. However, it is clear that requiring reference to a predicate is a serious limitation imposed on the notion of exemplification. I would contend that the kind of representation effected by exemplarization distinguishes it from linguistic representation by allowing us to use a sensory particular to represent a class of particulars in a way that may transcend linguistic representation and is not constrained by it. In short, exemplarization bypasses linguistic representation and allows for a novel representation and reconfiguration of experience that may not be affected by linguistic representation. Exemplarization transcends linguistic representation, however it may become functionally connected with it. Exemplification, which effects representation through reference to a predicate, is limited to conventional representation within a language however those conventions may be extended by metaphorical usage.

Suppose that we construe Goodman's account of exemplification as he formulates it at first in terms of properties and leave out the reference to predicates. Exemplification then consists of a particular of sensory experience referring to some properties that it exemplifies. However, the objects exemplified on this account are just instances of the properties. So an individual exemplifies a property if and only if it is an instance of the property. This, however, undermines the idea that the particular experience that exemplifies the property is a symbol referring to the objects exemplified. It does not refer to them. It may be used to refer to the properties, but it is not a symbol representing the objects that exemplify the property. In short, on this view the sensory particulars do not stand for other sensory particulars. The sample of cloth, to take Goodman's example, does not stand for other pieces of cloth on his account of exemplification. It refers to properties that it and other pieces of cloth exemplify. But in that case, though the properties may be true of the things that exemplify them, the sample is not true of them because it does not represent them.

It may be objected to this account of Goodman that the properties referred to by the sample play a representational role allowing the sample to represent other particulars indirectly as being things that are instances

of the properties. So the sample represents something, X, if and only if the sample refers to a property of which the thing, X, is an instance. That might then be the account that combines exemplification with representation by the sample allowing the sample as representation to be true of objects represented. However, a problem remains concerning truth. It is that there is no special connection between the sample being used as a sample and being true of itself. On this account, the sample refers to properties which are true of instances. The sample may be one of the instances, of course, but there is no guarantee that it is. A sample could be used to pick out a property of which it was not an instance. A sample of color could be used as a sample to refer to a property of paint when it is not itself paint at all but a digital image. There is, therefore, no direct connection between the sample being representational and the representation being true of the sample itself. That is not an objection to Goodman, but it does distinguish exemplarization from exemplification concerning the way in which exemplars are true of themselves as a direct consequence of exemplarization but not of exemplification.

Moreover, representation by exemplar, exemplarization, allows us to explain the basic role of the particular in representation. The particular is itself a sign, a sensory sign, rather than being only the means to refer to a genuine sign, a predicate, in the account of representation. Thus, exemplarization of an individual enables us to explain how something ineffable, the sensory particular, can at the same time allow us to obtain knowledge of what the content of a painting is like by being used as part and parcel, representation and exhibit, of the content. The exemplarized particular represents a class of particulars itself rather than simply running surrogate for such representation by referring to a predicate that represents the class. By being the sign that effects representation in exemplarization, the exemplar becomes autonomous with respect to linguistic description rather than being dependent upon language as a kind of referential surrogate for a predicate. Exemplarization transcends linguistic representation and the conventions on which linguistic representation depends to offer us new content in experience, just as it may precede it in the experience of some painters prior to the acquisition of language.

The difference between exemplarization and exemplification reveals a deeper philosophical difference. Goodman thinks of linguistic representation at the level of predication as being based on convention and the social entrenchment of a predicate. Talk of properties is, for Goodman, paraphrastic for talk about entrenched predicates. To be sure, Goodman insists on the potentiality for novelty achieved through metaphorical predication. Though there is genius in his development of a nominalistic account of

representation based on denotation and the insight that metaphorical usage is also based on denotation, Goodman's semantics does not take adequate account of the psychology and phenomenology of the artistic representation.

Paintings of Olympia are paintings that represent Olympia. Goodman's semantic analysis of such remarks reduces talk about Olympia in a painting to talk about Olympia-pictures. There is brilliance in the analysis, and if one is only concerned about formulating truth conditions for claims like "That is a painting of Olympia," one may rest content with the analysis. Hyphenation eliminates reference to a nonexistent Olympia. But there are conditions that remain unexplained which suggest that another kind of account may provide a more satisfactory account.

For example, there is the phenomenology that one sees a female in the picture, as Wollheim (1980) would insist. Moreover, the female in the picture is a goddess, Olympia, in the make-believe world of Greek mythology, as Walton (1990) would emphasize. The phenomenology for someone familiar with mythology and the artistic tradition is one of seeing a goddess, Olympia, in the painting. Moreover, one sees Olympia in a special way that connects the paintings with other paintings of Olympia. It is the way in which she is portrayed in the painting. One knows what Olympia is like in the painting.

My suggestion is that one knows what Olympia is like in the painting in the same way that one knows what red is like when one sees red as Mary did. The sensory experience of the painting is exemplarized to yield a representation of the content, namely, Olympia as she appears in the painting. This example is one in which the sensory experience that is exemplarized is combined with a general conception of a mythological figure. A person knows what the content of the painting is like as a result of exemplarizing a sensory experience to obtain a conception of the content that interacts with antecedent knowledge of Olympia. The antecedent knowledge may be a combination of the mythology of Olympia as a goddess combined with knowledge of what the content of other paintings are like. Thus, the antecedent knowledge of Olympia is already a combination of descriptive content and sensory content resulting from the exemplarization of experiences of other paintings.

Moreover, the present exemplarization may conflict with the antecedent representation of Olympia when knowledge of what Olympia is like in the present painting conflicts with the way Olympia has been painted traditionally. The controversial painting of Olympia as a prostitute by Manet [**Web ASK 10**] is intended to provoke a revised conception of Olympia. Thus, the knowledge that we obtain from exemplarization might contain and provoke conceptual revision.

THE ONTOLOGICAL STATUS OF THE CONTENT OF ART AND EXEMPLARS

The foregoing remarks raise questions about the nature of the content of the painting. It is important to distinguish the content of the painting from a model, whether a person or a work of art, for the painting. Should we say, with Goodman (1968), that the content of the painting may be characterized in a way that avoids talk about a nonexistent intentional object, Olympia, by saying that all that is meant by saying that the painting is a painting of Olympia is that it is an Olympia-painting? I have already noted that this characterization fails to capture the phenomenology of seeing Olympia in the painting. It also fails to accommodate the fact that the novelty of the painting that yields a new conception of Olympia would at the same time alter our conception of Olympia-paintings. Goodman could, of course, admit that much, but his account of exemplification would fail to explain how the novelty is introduced into our conception of Olympia and of Olympia-paintings. For if the experience of the painting is exemplified in Goodman's sense, then it refers to the predicate, "Olympia-painting," which, as that is entrenched in our usage, might fail to denote the present unconventional representation. When, on the contrary, we recognize that the experience is exemplarized, introducing a novel conception using the exemplar as a representational sign that applies to a class of experiences picked out and exhibited by the exemplar, the novelty of the sensory conception is part and parcel of the exemplarized experience of the content of the painting. Incorporation of the novel exemplar in exemplarization yields a novel conception of Olympia as well as a novel conception of an Olympia-painting.

At this point in the discussion, the question naturally arises about the ontological status of Olympia. Olympia is an intentional object that, in fact, does not exist. I assume with Reid (1785) and those who followed, most notably Brentano (1874), that it is a noncontroversial feature of conception that one can conceive of things that do not exist. The conception of the content of the painting exists, of course, as a mental state of the observer, even though the intentional object of the content does not exist. Of course, the sensory experience, which is exemplarized to yield the exemplarized content, is something that also exists. Exemplarization involves generalization from the exemplar to other individuals and is, as we have noted, a conception that is both particular, in that the particular has a functional role, and general, in that the functional role involves generalization from the particular. This account is close to that of both Reid (1785) and Hume (1739), particularly when the latter gives an account of how an impression may stand for other impressions and thus become general. Contrary to

contemporary criticism of Hume, as well as that of Reid, Hume saw the importance of generalizing from a particular to obtain a general conception that would enable us to conceive of things that do not exist.

Here an objection will arise. If we generalize from a particular that exists, a sensory image of a painting, how does that particular come to stand for things that do not exist? The exemplar exists, and it comes to stand for a class of things that do not exist. To make sense of this, we must distinguish between the ostensive exemplarization of the sensory experience to a general class of sensory experiences, those that look like the exemplar, and some more extended and inferential conception of a class of things for which it stands. We shall discuss this further in a later chapter on intentionality and the form of representation. It must suffice here to note that an exemplar used to represent things has the same potentiality for ambiguity of the meaning as a word. An exemplar of sensory experience can be used to stand for other experiences, as Hume would insist, but it can also be used to stand for material objects exhibiting how they look. The security of a sensory exemplar representing itself is lost when the exemplar is used to represent things that are not sensory exemplars. Notice, however, that when the sensory exemplar is used to represent other sensory exemplars that we are not now experiencing, the security of truth is lost in the possibility that such exemplars do not exist. That loss of security is the immediate result of generalizing from what one is experiencing to what one is not. Exemplarizing to a class of objects carries intentionality into the conception of representation. The form of representation insures the power of intentionality at the cost of the loss of the insurance of truth.

None of this talk of generalizing commits one to the existence of properties, types, or any other entity that is not an individual or a particular. It is worth noting, however, that a tenable psychological account would involve generalizing from an individual quality, the individual red quality that Mary experienced, which exists as an individual and is not a general quality shared by other individuals. It acquires a function of being used to represent other individuals, of course, but that does not mean that individual is itself anything other than a particular.

THE ONTOLOGICAL STATUS OF PROPERTIES

There is an illusion created by the mental activity of generalizing. Once we generalize from one individual to others, we may think of them as having something in common, which they do, and conclude that there is something that exists, a type, sort, or property, which they share. That is a mistake. We can, of course, think of a property or general quality that they share, the

general property of being red, for example, but to think of something, of some intentional object, does not entail the existence of it. As Reid (1785) correctly observed, we can, if we wish, say that all red things share a common quality, a property, or a universal, but that does not commit us to the existence of these entities. We may, instead, note that it is only the general conception that exists and hold that claims that the individuals share the general quality is but a paraphrase for saying that we have a general conception, which applies to them all, or that such a general conception is a logical consequence of a general conception we have. Thus, talk about intentional objects, though it requires that we have general conceptions, in no way commits us to the conclusion that those objects, whether they are individuals, like Olympia, or general properties, like being a goddess, exist. The spirit of nominalism affirming that everything that exists is an individual is perfectly consistent with the account of exemplarization.

Indeed, as Reid noted, but Hume failed to note, the claim that the individuals that fall under some general conception resemble each other does not commit us to the existence of any general property of resemblance either. To say that two things resemble each other raises the question of in what respect, or in terms of what properties they resemble each other. The property of resemblance is no more basic than other properties, and may be equally regarded as an intentional object. This is not to deny that there may be individual qualities of resemblance, of course, but the admission of such individual qualities also does not commit us to existence of some general property of resemblance. This nominalism need not be accepted in order to accept the account of exemplarization proposed above, it must be noted. My claim is only that exemplarization is consistent with the nominalistic claim that only individuals exist, even though it does not entail that claim.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE CONTENT OF ARTWORKS

With this brief excursion into metaphysics, let us return to the theory of exemplar representation, exemplarization, and consider the implications of it for accounting for our knowledge of abstract art as well as other art forms. Moreover, let us consider how the content of that knowledge might be extended to explain the emotional content of works of art. Finally, let us consider how the knowledge of what a visual work of art is like is related to discursive knowledge concerning the work of art. The exemplarization of the sensory experience involves generalization from the exemplar to other individuals, as we have noted. The generalization will be influenced by innate dispositions, social conventions and cognitive

schemata characterized by Gombrich (1972), that have been incorporated in the individual mind as well as more idiosyncratic dispositions derived from personal experience.

The role of innate dispositions as well as social and personal associations accounts for the emotional content of art. Let us consider the innate component without assuming that it is more important than other influences. Some sensory experiences have an emotional content because the exemplar of representation carries the emotional expression of the sensory experience. There are some innate responses to sensory experiences that connect them with expression of emotions. The infant sees something fearful in certain expressions of the face and cries in response. My conjecture is that some sensory data are innately connected with expressions of emotions in a way that is encapsulated. That implies that the response to the expression is not entirely extinguished even when background information indicates to us that the response is inappropriate. There are expressions of the face that are not feared by the adult when they occur in an actor, but the meaning of the expression remains even when we have information that overrides the innate impression.

An analogy to the innate encapsulated representation of emotions in sensory experience is the impression of a bent stick when a stick is inserted into water. The impression that the stick is bent remains even when we have information that overrides the innate impression. These impressions are encapsulated in the sensory experience because of our innate response system. I am not claiming that all emotional responses are innate, for many are due to associations, of course. My point is rather that the emotional expression may be encapsulated in the sensory experience given our innate responses in just the way that the appearance of the bent stick is encapsulated in our sensory experience. Thus, the expressions of the emotions are in the sensory experience—of an angry face, for example—and, therefore, in the exemplar experienced when observing the work of art. In this case, emotions are in paintings in the same way that shapes are in paintings. The exemplarized experience contains the emotion in the same way that it contains shapes.

Moreover, associated emotions are in the painting in the same way that associated shapes are. We know that emotions are part of the content of the work of art, that it is sad or joyous, for example, because those emotions are encapsulated or associated with the sensory experience exemplarized. When we know what the painting is like as a result of exemplarizing our experience, we know what the sadness or joy of the painting is like in the exemplarized content of it.

The content of the painting might be abstract. When we observe an abstract painting, there is a problem of understanding it. Suppose you

understand an Albers painting, a Mondrian [**Web ASK 6**], or a Rothko [**Web ASK 7**]. In that case you know what an Albers, a Mondrian, or a Rothko is like. You generalize from a sensory experience. You obtain a general conception by exemplarizing the sensory particular. The exemplar is part of the content and a vehicle of the content at the same time. It exhibits to you what your conception of the content of the painting is like. The way in which you generalize and, consequently, the general conception you form of the content may be influenced by background knowledge that you have about art. Nevertheless, someone inexperienced might generalize from the exemplar in a way that enables him or her to recognize an Albers, a Mondrian, or a Rothko quite as efficiently as one who is more learned. The general conception, which has the role of enabling the subject to identify the denotation of the conception, might not incorporate background information about art history into the general conception. On the other hand, the exemplarized conception might be combined with more information of the history and conventions of art to yield a more complicated and sophisticated conception.

In either case, the sensory exemplar is part of the exemplarized content that exhibits what the content is like. A verbal description of the content of a painting may tell us what the content is like in quite elaborate ways, but it cannot show us what the painting is like. That is the special contribution of exemplarized content. It shows what cannot be said.

Knowledge of what a painting is like is obtained from the exemplarization of sensory experience and connects it with discursive knowledge used by a critic or art historian writing about the work. Such discursive knowledge, which presupposes that the claim to knowledge can be justified, may contain an appeal to exemplarized experience for part of the justification. The historian or critic may, as Isenberg (1949) suggests, make claims whose justification requires that some meaning of the claims be filled in by sensory experience. Thus, the critic or historian may make claims to the effect that the person reading what they have written will agree with them about what the painting is like. On the account offered, this means that the exemplarized experience will confirm or disconfirm what the critic or historian has claimed. The test of the claims rests upon a test of sense and the exemplarization thereof. Knowledge depends on the trustworthiness of the subjects in the way in which they seek to accept what is true and avoid accepting what is false, I have argued (Lehrer, 1997). The trustworthiness of the subject is enhanced by conceptual use of ostensive exemplarization that is connected with the truth of what is accepted to yield some knowledge of what the painting is like. At the same time, the trustworthiness of the subject for those who consider his or her claims depends on whether they are guided by his or her discourse to

exemplarize in a way that confirms what he or she says. If they fill in the meaning of his or her discourse by exemplarizing in a way that confirms his or her claims, that will confirm his or her trustworthiness for them and sustain his or her claim to expertise. The test of discursive knowledge is, therefore, contained in what the painting is like for the observer obtained from the exemplarization of sensory experience.

CHAPTER 2

Consciousness, Exemplars, and Art

The history of art is often represented as beginning with art as representation, turning to art as expression, and then, in postimpressionism, turning to art as form. There is something highly artificial in this as early representational art often is replete with expression of emotion, and, as the great promulgators of the theory of art as significant form have noted, representational paintings as well as expressionistic ones have significant form which may become the focus of attention. Danto (1964) has argued, rather bravely if not terribly plausibly, that the kinds of art in question—expressionistic art, for example—come into existence as a result of art history. This implies that the early works that expressed emotions were not expressionistic works at the time they were created. It is as though the expressionism of the works had to wait upon developments in art theory and history before they became expressionistic art. One cannot suppress the reply that, though such works might not have been called expressionistic, expressionism in works of art—the expression of despair, for example—did not wait for the existence of an art movement in order to exist. The truth is rather that theories were invented to make sense of what was already contained in works of art. Movements came into existence as the result of the innovative work of artists! Put the matter another way, the representation, the expression, the significant form was already in the artworks before someone invented a word or even a general conception of the movement. Consider the famous Monet painting, *Impression*, for example [**Web ASK 11**]. The impression of sea was in the painting before anyone thought of the art movement of impressionism.

But in what way are impressions, expressions, or significant form in the work? The answer is that the impression, expression, and significant form are things we are conscious of in the work. When we attend to the works,

when we focus our attention on the qualities of the artwork, we are conscious, or can be conscious, of what is contained in the painting. This way of directing attention is not automatic, though, if Reid (1785) is right, the child begins with this kind of consciousness. We adults, no longer children, have learned a set of practical representational responses which supplement, according Fodor (1983), the innate representation responses of an input system. The idea is that we respond to sensory stimulation, not by representing sensory consciousness, but by bypassing such representation for a more practical mode of representation of the external world. It is notable that Bergson (1912) insisted on this much earlier, and, in a way, deplored the practical representational response as leading us to ignore the immediate deliverances of consciousness. He deplored this ignorance as ignorance of what reality is like, that is, the immediate reality of consciousness.

THE METAPHYSICS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

There is a metaphysical dispute here that rests on a dispute about what consciousness reveals to us about the nature of reality. Some think it reveals to us the immediacy of consciousness, the given presented to consciousness, while others think we begin with the representation of the external world. However, even the most radical of those who defend the view that the representations of experience are in the first instance representations of the external world, must acknowledge two aspects of the role of conscious experience. The first is sensation. We experience sensations, and our attention is called to them, especially pain, because noticing pains is useful, indeed, essential, for adaptation to the world. The second consideration, which Fodor (1983) himself acknowledges, though he suggests it is a sophisticated rather than original response, is that we attend to what consciousness of artwork is like. That kind of response, that attention to what the conscious experience of the artwork is like, might naturally be called *aesthetic attention*. I do not intend my use of aesthetic attention to be a theory-laden conception. I take it that sometimes, and especially when appreciating art, we focus our attention on what the artwork is like in itself, which is what I mean by aesthetic attention. In the previous chapter, I proposed that the cognitive or conceptual response involved in attending to what conscious experience is like is exemplar representation.

Why insist on the role of the conscious exemplar in an account of aesthetic attention and the direction of attention to the conscious state? The answer, given in the preceding chapter, is that such direction of attention gives us knowledge of what the object of consciousness is like. To have such

knowledge of what conscious experience of the artwork is like, we engage in exemplar representation—*exemplarization*, as I have called it—in which the conscious state becomes part of the content of the conception of what the artwork is like. The conscious state becomes an exhibit of what the artwork is like. It is part and parcel, vehicle and instance, of the representation of what it is like. You have to experience the artwork, become conscious of it, to have this kind of knowledge of what the artwork is like. Exemplarization yields a conception of what the artwork is like in terms of the consciousness of the artwork itself.

Whatever the artwork represents for the viewer, whatever it expresses to the viewer, whatever the form is like for the viewer, presupposes that the viewer knows what the artwork is like, what a conscious experience of the artwork is like. Without that conscious experience, there is some knowledge of what the artwork is like that is missing no matter how elaborate one's discursive knowledge articulated as a description of the work may be. What is missing from discursive knowledge is the kind of experience of what the work is, just like what is missing for the blind person who has never experienced color, the deaf person who has never experienced sound, or, to return to our example pain, what is missing for the person whose nervous system abnormality prevents the person from experiencing pain.

To make out this position, we need a detailed account of our knowledge of conscious states. We have already suggested the role of the sensory exemplar in our knowledge of what the artwork is like. However, that does not complete our task. For, as Goodman (1968) suggests at times, material objects—a piece of cloth, for example—can be used as a sample that stands for a class of objects in what he calls exemplification. I have objected to this view on the grounds that, though it offers us an account of how a particular can play a special role in verbal description, referring to a predicate, it fails to explain how a person can have knowledge of what an experience of an artwork is like by simply experiencing the artwork with attention. This knowledge may be prior to any attempt at articulating, socially or privately, any description of the work. My granddaughters knew what *Monochrome Blue* [**Web ASK 1**] by Yves Klein was like when they viewed the work—which they did with a fascination and attention that surprised and pleased me—before they attempted to describe the work. Attention yielded exemplar representation, and the conscious experience to which they attended showed them what the painting was like.

To understand the representation of conscious exemplars, we need to examine the character of consciousness. There is widespread agreement that consciousness poses a philosophical problem, but what that problem is as well as its solution remains controversial. I shall begin with a theory of the epistemology of consciousness. There are certain conscious states,

those that most attract our attention, that are immediately known to us. Some affirm that we are directly acquainted with them, which may be true, but it does not explain how the experience of conscious states gives us knowledge of them. I do not think that all conscious states are immediately known. On the contrary, some conscious states, sensations of touch most notably, provide us with information about the external world, information about the hardness of an object, for example, without calling attention to themselves and what they are like in themselves. Some conscious states pass through the mind without our having any representation of them because they serve only to represent external things.

Other sensations, pains, for example, attract attention to themselves and are immediately known. I am inclined to think that all conscious states can be immediately known when attention is directed to them. It is a purpose of aesthetic experience to direct attention to the sensory character of experience, to what the artwork is like. I do not think that it is a defining characteristic of a conscious state of a person that the person immediately knows of the existence of the state, however. Some have argued that the phenomenal character of a conscious state necessitates or entails that a person has a representation of the conscious state. This claim is either trivially true by definition, given the use of the expression "phenomenal," or false. For a person may remain conscious even though the capacity to represent things is temporarily blocked or permanently lost. Some seek such unrepresented conscious states in meditation, and I see no reason to deny that they may succeed in achieving a state in which they experience intensely rewarding conscious states without having any representation of those states. To take a more familiar example, suppose you are awaking from sleep and experience in your initially confused waking state a sensation without yet knowing what kind of state it is. You are conscious but not yet at a level that carries representation essential to knowledge along with it. Representation is not necessitated by consciousness.

Yet we have immediate knowledge of many of our conscious states, especially in our aesthetic appreciation of sensory experience, consciousness of a color or a shape. Indeed, once we direct our attention to a conscious state, we immediately know what it is like. Consider an intense pain that we cannot help but notice. We immediately know what the pain is like upon our experience of it. The knowledge of the conscious state is somehow intrinsic to it. Such knowledge is unlike descriptive knowledge, where we might search for the right representation of a known state or object. Representation of the conscious state somehow contains the conscious state itself yielding immediate knowledge of the state. How do we have this immediate knowledge of our conscious states?

My answer to this question presupposes an answer to the question of how we represent those states to ourselves. Notice that an account of how we represent conscious states to ourselves does not entail an answer to how we have immediate knowledge of those states. Representing a state to ourselves does not entail knowledge of the state, much less knowing it immediately. I have indicated above that a conscious state might occur without being represented at all. Many philosophers argue that conscious states are representational states. Moreover, even those who would not defend the identity or logical equivalence of the conscious state with a representation might argue that the phenomenal character of the state, which makes the state conscious, necessitates or entails some representation. This I deny for the reason that representational capacities can be blocked, by drugs or a neurological abnormality, without destroying consciousness. Conscious states that are not represented and do not represent anything else are a possibility and, indeed, at times, an actuality as well resulting from a brain lesion. Moreover, our lack of attention to conscious states in ordinary experience is part of the source of the excitement of aesthetic appreciation, which reveals something ordinarily ignored and, perhaps, concealed by a practical stance toward experience. When we direct our attention to the character of conscious states in aesthetic attention, we uncover aspects of consciousness, expression, form, and immediacy that surprise and delight us. Immediacy and the representation of it in aesthetic experience is not our standard or practical mode of awareness.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE IMMEDIACY OF REPRESENTATIONS OF CONSCIOUS STATES

Conscious states are represented in a special, direct way. They also might be represented indirectly in other ways, in a linguistic representation, for example. So an account of immediate representation that contains the conscious state is needed. Such an account must explain how the representation of the conscious state can be immediate, how the state can be intrinsic to the representation, and how the representation can contain the state itself. If, however, the conscious state becomes, as I have argued, the representation of a conscious state, which is not entailed by the mere existence of the conscious state, a question remains. How can the representation be direct or immediate, intrinsic to the state and contain it, when it is possible for the state to exist without such representation?

A satisfactory answer to this question must give an account of representational lucidity, as I have called it, and will rest on the notion of exemplar representation, exemplarization. My reason for describing the exemplar

representation as lucid is that content of the representation of the state incorporates the state itself. It shows us what the content it represents is like. The representation contains the state itself rather than being something extrinsic to it. Though the representation is not identical with the state, the state is intrinsic to the representation, even though the state does not entail or necessitate the representation of it. I do not place great emphasis on the terminology, but what interests me is the challenge of explaining how the conscious state can be directly, intrinsically involved in the content of the representation and the representation itself without logically necessitating that the state is represented. My explanation is that the conscious state is represented in terms of the state itself. This is an alternative to representing it in terms of something else, some other sign or symbol of it. Self-representation accounts for the intrinsic or direct character of the representation. It is exemplar representation or exemplarization of the state. Exemplar representation is a kind of representation that uses the exemplar as the message or vehicle of the representation of itself as well as other things.

However, even when an account is given of the exemplar representation of the state that explains how the state is incorporated as a term of representation of the state to yield some kind of lucid, intrinsic or direct representation of the state, our full, or as I have said earlier, discursive knowledge of the state is not yet explained. Once again there is a logical gap confronting us. Just as the state does not entail an immediate representation of itself, so an immediate representation of the state does not entail the kind of knowledge of it that plays a role in inference and justification, that is, discursive knowledge. Representation, though a condition of primitive knowledge mentioned in the previous chapter when it ensures truth, is inferentially isolated knowledge, which does not entail discursive knowledge that has a role in justification. Even if the representation is true as a consequence of the mode of representation, exemplar representation, that still does not entail discursive knowledge. There is a gap between true representation and such knowledge just as there is a logical gap between true belief and knowledge.

I insist upon this point because it will become important in an account of our knowledge of our conscious states. Such knowledge is the result of the immediacy of the representation, but knowledge is not entailed by the representational immediacy. Knowledge of our conscious states, though it involves immediate representation, and inherits that immediacy, depends on a background system that converts immediate representation into knowledge. Our knowledge of our conscious states, arising from immediate representation of them, depends on the justificatory support of a background system. Justification is, as I have argued elsewhere (Lehrer,

2000), coherence with a background system which, when irrefutable, converts to knowledge. The explanation of knowledge of conscious states does not support the thesis of foundationalism that such knowledge rests on self-justified beliefs or representations. Justification has a systematic component that is essential to it.

THE REPRESENTATION OF CONSCIOUS STATES

It is now time to turn to the explanation of how conscious states that do not logically necessitate or entail any representation of themselves are, nevertheless, components of an intrinsic, direct, lucid exemplar representation of themselves as the lucid content of the representation. I have been arguing (Lehrer, 1996, 1997) that there is a loop in representation of conscious states. Reid (1785) argued that conscious states are both signs of external objects and, at the same time, signs of themselves. Brentano (1874)—as my colleague Marek (forthcoming) in Graz and Kriegel (2002, 2006) in Arizona have reminded me—also held the view that conscious states represent themselves at the same time as they represent other things. The idea is an old one and goes back further than the modern period to Carneades, as represented by Chisholm (1996), who held that such states are self-presenting. So the idea is old, but the old idea is also an old enigma. How can a conscious state be at the same time a representation and the content of the representation? How can the state be both a sign and, at the same time, the thing signified?

My answer is that the conscious state is in some way self-representational. The representation must be a loop as Reid, Brentano, Carneades, and now Kriegel all aver. The loop is effective, as Rosenthal (2000) concedes, at avoiding a regress of representation at higher orders. But how does the conscious state represent itself? How are we to understand how that conscious state can be used to represent itself? I suggested in the preceding chapter that the conscious state can function as an exemplar of a kind of conscious state incorporated into the exemplar representation, exemplarization, of the state. It is used to represent itself as an exhibit of a state of that kind. I am conscious of a pain, for example, and the particular pain is used as an exemplar that represents pains as an exhibit of what they are like. Of course, the pain used to represent pains, to exhibit what they are like, is itself a pain. So, when exemplarization works in a paradigmatically simple fashion, the exemplar is an instance of the kind of state the exemplarized state is used to represent.

This might suggest that exemplarization produces infallible representation. How, the infalliblist might ask, can the exemplarized state fail to be an

instance of the kind of state the exemplar is used to represent by exemplarization? The answer to the foregoing question is that whether the representation has the exemplar as an instance depends on how the exemplar is used in the process of representation. It depends on how you take the exemplar as an exhibit of what the represented content is like. Illustration of how an exemplar can fail to be an instance represented by the exemplar arises from a consideration of other examples of exemplarization. Consider a case in which I am curious about a song of which I have only heard the title—*The Shoop Shoop Song*, for example—and I ask you what a singing of the song is like. You might wish to show me what a singing of the song is like and sing the song, even though you sing poorly in the process of attempting to accommodate me. Some of the notes you sing are too flat and some are too sharp. In this case, assuming that I am musically sensitive, I might, using your singing as an exemplar of a singing of *The Shoop Shoop Song*, form a conception of what a singing of the song is like in which I rather automatically correct for your errors of singing flat or sharp or both. In this case, my exemplarization of your singing of the song has the result that your singing does not fit the representation or conception that I form of the song. Your singing has played a role in my forming a representation of what singings of the song are like that starts from your exemplar and generalizes from the exemplar to a class of instances that does not include your singing.

I am not suggesting that exemplarization of conscious states proceeds in a way that fails to include the exemplar as an instance of the kind of state exemplarized. On the contrary, the conscious exemplar would be included as an instance of the content, of the class represented, in the normally functioning mind. My point is that such inclusion is a contingent result of the way the mind functions in exemplarizing conscious states to form representations. Including the exemplarized conscious state as one of the states represented is a result of psychology, a result of cognitive functioning, and not a logical consequence of using the exemplar to generalize to a representation of a class of instances. I shall for convenience use the expression "standard exemplarization" in a restricted manner in which the exemplar is used as a kind of standard of representation used to pick out the instances resulting from exemplarization. Exemplarization of conscious states, when standard, picks out the exemplar as an instance in typical operations of the mind because it is used as an exhibit of what the state is like. This remains a contingent fact about exemplarization, however. It is a contingent fact that a conscious state is used as an exemplar to represent, to exemplarize, what a kind of state is like that includes the exemplar.

Before turning to the question of knowledge, it may be useful to contrast exemplarization from other examples of self-representation and self-reference. Consider the example of the word "word," which represents itself

or refers to itself as well as to other words. This self-representation of the word "word" is not exemplarization, at least not as the word "word" is ordinarily used. We do not, as noted in Chapter 1, ordinarily use the word "word" as an exemplar of a word to pick out other words. Indeed, the word "word" would be an odd exemplar for picking out instances of words because of the unusual way in which it refers to itself by referring to words. It would, for that reason alone, be an odd standard of what a word is like. It would, used as a standard, lead one to think of words as things that are typically used to represent words as "word" does. Exemplarization, by contrast, uses the exemplar as the basis of generalization to pick out the other instances represented by the process. The word "word" is not typically used in this way. One might use any word as an exemplar to represent the class of words by quoting the word—the word "yellow," for example. Of course, the word "yellow" will be an instance of the exemplarized representation of words in terms of the word "yellow" used as an exemplar. That remains a contingent fact about representation, however.

It is clear from the examples that the exemplar is part of the content of exemplar representation at the same time that it is a parcel, medium, or vehicle of the representation. In Reid's (1785) terms, the conscious state is both a sign representing a class of states and is at the same time one of those states represented. The process of exemplarization gives the conscious state a functional role in the identification of states represented because the conscious state is used to identify the states that the exemplar represents. It is used as an exhibit of what the states are like. Thus, the exemplar is used as a representational token to represent a class of states as does a predicate, but, in addition, the exemplar has a functional role in picking out the tokens in the extension represented by exhibiting what they are like. The representational token loops back onto itself as one thing represented as the result of the generalization from the exemplar in the process of exemplarization.

Some would be inclined to argue that generalization is the result of observed similarity. However, as Reid (1785) argued against Hume (1739), similarity is always similarity in some respect and, therefore, appears to presuppose generalization referring to some respect rather than being able to account for it. There are interesting scientific questions about how we generalize, but there is a level of generalization we share with other animals in the responses to objects that suggest that generalization is a more fundamental operation of the mind than the understanding of similarities. An animal may generalize without any understanding of similarity. This is controversial, and the position I am defending does not depend upon it, but it is important to note that generalization is possible for a system without first being able to observe similarities. As a result, the exemplarization, involving generalization

from a token conscious state, does not presuppose the observation of similarities.

It should also be noted that the special kind exemplarization that only generalizes from one conscious state, the exemplar, to other conscious states provides us with a functionally limited form of exemplar representation. Let us call this initial level *ostensive representation*. To obtain full conceptual representation, the functional role of the representation must include inferential connections to other representations in addition to generalization from the exemplar to other instances. A specific account of inferential connections required for conceptual representation would be too controversial in detail to add to the account of exemplarization of conscious states. I note here only that the addition of inferential connections is required to take the theory of exemplarization beyond ostensive representation to fuller conceptual representation. Spencer-Brown (1969) has argued that conceptual representation arises when a distinction is marked in the space of extension between what is in the marked space, the class of objects represented, and the unmarked space, which is not occupied by the class of objects represented. I shall later argue that this is sufficient for the conversion of exemplar representation to conceptual, that is, inferentially grounded representation.

No doubt learning the relationship between ostensive representation arrived at by exemplarization and linguistic representation is sufficient to raise the representation to a conceptual level. I doubt, personally, that it is necessary from my reflections on Spencer-Brown. I believe that ostensive representation and linguistic representation interact in experience. The interaction modifies the ostensive representation of exemplarization in terms of linguistic representation and modifies linguistic representation in terms of ostensive representation as well. New ways of generalizing involved in exemplar representation may modify the inferential connections in the functional role of linguistic representation.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF CONSCIOUS STATES

With these ideas before us, let us turn to the relationship between the exemplarization of conscious states and our knowledge of them. When exemplarization yields only ostensive representation, self-representation of the exemplar as one of the states represented by the exemplar, it falls short of knowledge. The representation of the state by itself in the ostensive representation may result in the exemplar being an instance of the states represented by itself. The representation of the exemplar by itself in this way will be a correct, or, if one prefers, a veridical representation when the exemplar

is affirmed like a predicate of itself. The exemplar as a term of representation will be true of itself as one of the things represented. However, the immediacy or directness of the representation may occur without the person having the kind of understanding of the representation that could justify the person in accepting the representation. Moreover, the ostensive representation may fall short of conceptual representation and, indeed, may consist of an inferentially isolated representation. Thus, the ostensive representation could leave the person unable to recognize the correctness, reliability, or trustworthiness of the representation. The person would not be in a position to provide any justification or reasoning in support or defense of any claim concerning the exemplar representation. Crudely put, the person, like a young child, might be clueless about the fact that they have represented anything. At this level of understanding, or the lack thereof, we have representation without justification.

Once exemplarization raises the representation to the conceptual level by fixing the representation within an inferential network, justification becomes possible because the capacity for reasoning is present. It should be noted, however, that fixing the ostensive representation within an inferential network to make it conceptual does not destroy the immediacy of the representation. The ostensive representation arising from generalizing from the exemplar is not a process of inference and does not presuppose the inference of the exemplar token, the conscious state, from anything else. Fixing an inferential role for an exemplar does not presuppose inferring the exemplar from anything else. The exemplar stands for a class of states including itself without being inferred from other states. It thus remains in this way, immediate, direct, and lucid in the representation of itself. Immediacy is not contaminated by becoming conceptual.

One final epistemological question is whether fixing the exemplarized state in an inferential network, assigning it an inferential role, entails that the subject knows that the state falls under the concept. The answer is that it depends on the specific nature of the inferential role that the ostensive representation acquires. If it were to acquire an inferential role that licensed the inference that one was unreliable or untrustworthy in the representation, then the person would not be justified by the inferential connections in accepting that the conceptual representation of the conscious state was correct. I have dealt in rather great detail with the question of what is required to convert the information contained in a representation into knowledge that the information is correct (Lehrer, 2000). I have argued that the defensibility, the capacity of that person to meet objections to accepting that the representation is correct, is what is required to obtain a kind of justification that converts to knowledge when it is undefeated by errors in the system used to meet the objection. This capacity to meet

objections is compatible with the immediacy of exemplar representation. The immediacy of the representation resulting from exemplarization remains when this capacity results from the inferential network in which the representation is embedded to render it conceptual. Fixing a representation in an inferential network does not require inferring the representation from anything else. It may, however, provide the inferential capacity required to meet objections to the representation and result in conversion to discursive knowledge.

I wish to conclude with the simple claim that no problem of consciousness remains other than those of a strictly scientific nature over and above the problems of exemplar representation and immediate knowledge solved above. We may wonder why there are such things as conscious states, and what function they fulfill. The answer is as Dretske (1995) argues: conscious states supply us with information about the world. The question remains as to why we receive information in this way. That is a scientific question, however, like the question of why we use digestion to nourish ourselves rather than nourishing ourselves in other ways. It is a scientific question amenable to scientific methodology for an answer.

Other features of consciousness are supposed to show that conscious states are, ultimately, not amenable to scientific investigation. One of these features is the qualitative subjectivity of consciousness, the feature of *qualia*. The claim, offered by Ferrier (1838–39), is that when a conscious state is studied objectively, from a third-person perspective, you leave out the subjectivity of the state. You leave out what the state is like. Moreover, Nagel (1974) suggested that consciousness reveals to a being what it is like to be that being, whether a bat or another human being. The argument from Jackson (1984) concerning Mary discussed in the previous chapter, who has complete physical knowledge of the world but has not experienced colors, having dwelt in a monochromatic room, was intended to show that there is more to knowledge, and more to the world, than is described in her physical knowledge of the world. Mary knows what color is like when she sees it, and not antecedently. Notice that the argument can be modified so that no matter what objective knowledge Mary has, that is, knowledge one could have from a third-person perspective that does not include the first-person subjective experience, she would obtain new knowledge from the qualitative subjective experience of color qualia.

The foregoing account of the exemplarization of experience takes the mystery out of all of these claims. A person acquires new knowledge of some sort from qualitative subjective experience that they cannot obtain in any other way. Admitted. But how do they obtain new knowledge from this subjective experience? If I am right, they obtain a new representation by exemplarizing the new experience. No one denies there is a new

experience, and the account of exemplarization explains how a new experience yields a new representation and knowledge. It yields a new representation by exemplarization of the new experience. To exemplarize an experience you have to have it. There is a new way of knowing and representing what the experience is like by exemplarization. Does this entail that the new knowledge resulting from exemplarization reveals a new kind of fact that could not be known without the subjective experience? It does not entail that. It only entails that there is new way of representing a fact. It leaves open the question of whether the fact represented is the same fact as one represented in other ways or a new fact in just the way that a new name encountered leaves open the question of whether it names a new object or if it is a new name for an object previously named. In short, our knowledge of what the experience is like is the result of exemplarization of the experience to yield knowledge.

AN ARGUMENT FOR AGNOSTICISM ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF ZOMBIES

Perhaps the most salient argument for the conclusion that there is some fact about conscious experience that goes beyond scientific understanding is founded on the premise that there could be creatures who were our biological duplicates but who were unconscious. That argument, the zombie argument of Chalmers (1996), leads to the conclusion that conscious states are not token-token identical with physical states and, indeed, to the stronger conclusion that conscious states do not supervene on physical states. Identity and supervenience require a kind of necessity in relationships that is precluded by the possibility argued for by an appeal to the possibility of the zombie. There is no doubt that we can imagine the zombie, but the controversial question is whether the imagined zombie is possible. Reid (1785) long ago noted that we can imagine and conceive of things that are impossible—indeed, the ability to conceive of and understand impossible hypotheses is what enables us to reduce them to absurdity. If we did not understand them, we could not show that they were absurd. So, the question is simply whether the conceived zombie is possible.

It must be granted that conscious states do not seem to have physical properties as the conscious subject experiences those states, nor, for that matter, do physical states when externally observed seem to have subjective qualitative features experienced by the subject of the conscious state. These facts of our experience, whether as the subject of the conscious states or as the external observer of physical states, explain why the zombie should be conceivable. But does this entail the logical possibility of the zombie and

the conclusion that supervenience and token-token identity fails? I wish to argue that it does not. What we imagine to be missing in the zombie is a qualitative subjective state of consciousness. How do we know that we have such a state? We have knowledge of it, immediate in terms of the exemplar representation. However, if immediate knowledge is explained, as I have argued, in terms of the immediate exemplarization, then the immediate knowledge we enjoy fails to support the conclusion that the zombie lacks such knowledge even if we imagine him to lack it as others (Papineau, 2002) have also noted. For physical states can be exemplarized. Suppose, as a token-token identity theorist claims, the qualitative subjective state of consciousness is identical to a physical state. There is no objection to the further claim that the zombie exemplarizes the state and has immediate knowledge of it, though we imagine him to lack it. What we imagine may, for all we know, be impossible.

Conscious beings may not be identical to physical beings, for all we know, but the appeal to immediate knowledge and representation fails to prove this. Exemplarization of the conscious state provides us with a representation of that state that differs from other forms of representation and is characteristic of aesthetic appreciation. It explains why a person who experiences a conscious state for the first time, when viewing a new artwork, has a new way of knowing what it is like. A state of a certain kind characterized by exemplarization of the conscious state. Exemplarization provides new knowledge that something is the case. The new knowledge may, for all we know, be knowledge of some physical state identical to the conscious state. We do not know that it is or that it is not. Agnosticism may feel like uncomfortable fence-sitting. In my opinion, if we follow reason as far as it will take us and no further, we will admit that we do not know whether the supervenience thesis or the token-token identity thesis is true, or whether the zombie is a logical possibility. I prefer the modesty of agnosticism in this case as well as others, to the certainty manifested by those who claim that reason favors their claim to knowledge.

CONSCIOUSNESS, ART, AND AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE

With these reflections on consciousness, let us return to the subject of art and aesthetic attention. The special form of attention that aesthetic appreciation of art calls for from the observer leads, I propose, in many cases to the exemplar representation of what the conscious state is like. The conscious state on which aesthetic attention is focused is the exemplar of aesthetic attention evoking exemplarization. I do not claim that this happens for every subject viewing an artwork. When, however, the attention

is optimal for viewing art, when there is attention to what the sensory experience of the artwork is like, the conscious experience becomes the exemplar of representation and the basis of knowledge. We know in terms of the exemplar representation what the experience is like. We need to know what the sensory surface of the artwork is like—a painting for example—in order to appreciate the art. An experience of an artwork that falls short of conveying knowledge of what an experience of the artwork is like is not an aesthetic experience of the artwork. Such focus of attention is not all that there is to appreciating the artwork. Some appreciation requires knowledge of the world of art and of the world that encompasses art. What is important about the immediacy, about the focus on conscious experience of what the artwork is like, is that it opens the mind to reconfigure experience by taking exemplar representation beyond ostensive representation of other conscious states. The mind is provoked to reconstruct the content of the world of art and the world beyond art in a way that keeps it tied in a referential loop to the exemplarized experience. We shall argue below that just as the conscious state can, when attention is focused upon it, become an exemplar representation of other conscious states showing us what they are like, so the same exemplar of consciousness can be used to show us what things are like that lie beyond present conscious experience, and perhaps beyond all experience. If Malevich is right, the sensory exemplar of the *Black Square* [**Web ASK 12**] can show us what something beyond ordinary experience, the supreme, is like. Rothko paintings can show us what experience is like when emptied of the perceptual objects of quotidian experience.

The point of this chapter is a bit paradoxical. It is by focusing attention on the conscious experience of art, the exemplar representing what the conscious experience is like, that art can take us, in an exercise of our autonomy, to new conceptions, to the construction of new content beyond conscious experiences. That it does so is familiar to any art lover. The consciousness of what art is like takes us to a new consciousness of what we and the world are like. That is why we love it so. A metaphor, suggested by Ismael (2007), is a person looking at a map in a mall that says, "You are here." You say, fixing your attention on that spot, "Yes, I am here." Now you are free to move where you will find your own construction of space as you move. As I look at a painting, I involve myself totally in the conscious experiences, representing that exemplar of consciousness. I say to myself, "I am here in this conscious awareness of immediacy, in this bit and parcel of consciousness." Fully in the exemplar of consciousness, I find a freedom to take that consciousness into some new content, some new configuration, some new conception, of color, "I did not know that black could be like that," or "I am lost in the black of nothingness and the totality of being,"

with the conscious experience to show me what the color or the nothingness and the totality of being feels like.

Conscious experience, though it leads us into the conception of our world and our selves in our world, and, perhaps, in our world in ourselves, remains as a vivid reminder, as an exhibit, of what the content of our conception is like. So the paradox is that, to choose a term from Peggy Brand (1998) is that we must, in the aesthetic experience, toggle back and forth between what the sensory experience, the immediate content of consciousness is like, and what it shows us about what everything else is like. The point of art, and it is a point well appreciated in the use of scientific representation as well, is that you must, in a moment of intentional world forgetfulness, absorb your attention in the immediacy of consciousness to obtain the insight and autonomy to remake your world and yourself. This requires explanation and illustration, which is the purpose of the rest of this book.

CHAPTER 3

Aesthetic Theory, Feminist Art, and Autonomy

At the end of the previous chapter, I argued that the immediacy of aesthetic attention results in exemplar representation of what the artwork is like. I left you with the claim that the focus on conscious immediacy and the exemplarization of the experience opens the possibility for the reconfiguration of experience by constructing novel content. I suggested that this reconfiguration may be autonomous. Bergson (1912) argued that ordinary experience ignores immediacy responding with practical representation of what the external world is like. Aesthetic attention, attention to conscious immediacy, leaves open the question of what that conscious immediacy tells you about yourself and your world. In that way, abstract art, minimal art, and some other modern movements in art show you what aesthetic attention is like, for they, being abstract or minimal, provide no obvious answer to the question of what, if anything, it tells you about itself, your world and your life.

Bell (1910) talked about form, as did Fry (1920), presenting us with the idea that art is significant form, a display of color and lines, that elicits, according to Bell, a special emotional response: the aesthetic emotion. There is, from my experience, a moment of emotional intensity and excitement as one directs attention to the kind of sensory immediacy involved in the appreciation of form. However, formalism takes us beyond formalism in the appreciation of art and does not end there. Once your attention is directed to sensory immediacy of form, a new question is posed. What does this mean? Once you turn your aesthetic attention toward the conscious exemplar and the form thereof, the question of what the exemplar means, of what content

it contains, confronts you, evoking your response. The response may be autonomous because the aesthetic response takes you to what your conscious experience of what the form is like, and it challenges you to construct content. Why construct content? You want to interpret the work. Beyond that, you consider whether to transfer the content from the work to understand the world outside the work. The aesthetic response to the experience of art is that part of experience that changes the content of experience.

There is a great deal of talk about form in aesthetics. Attention to form, attention to the sensory aspects of color and lines in painting is what matters, we are told. But how do colors and lines become form? They are converted to form by the activity of the viewer, who may also be the creator, but need not be. How do we construct form? We use the exemplar of experienced colors and the lines to mark a distinction, to mark a space. What is contained in the space is the content, created by marking the distinction, distinguished from what is not in the space. This account for the activity of constructing form by using what we experience to mark a distinction is the contribution of Spencer-Brown (1969). We will consider the account again, but here I insist on the fundamental role of marking a distinction in the creation of form. We secrete content in response to experience. If you ask how we secrete the content, the answer I propose is that we mark distinctions. It is the nature of the human mind to mark distinctions. It is our way of creating order out of chaos. The creation of art is an exhibition of creating form by marking distinctions.

I was nearby when the famous choreographer, Doug Nielsen at the University of Arizona, choreographed a work, *Looking Up/Looking Down* [**Web ASK 13**], for a dance performance in the Tucson Museum of Art, responding to an exhibit from his personal art collection, *Thanks for being with us*, on display there. I asked if I could watch. He replied, "Come watch the confusion." As dancers began to move, one movement was selected, marked as the one to imitate, and form was created out of the chaotic movement of shapes. The marked movement was contained in the space of the dance becoming the content of the experience of movement (Lehrer, 2010). That is art. That is life.

It is notable that performance art, dance, but not only dance, uses movements of the body, gestures, to articulate or represent content, especially, the content of expression of feeling, but not only feeling. Nielsen has combined visual art—paintings and prints—with dance, one enhancing the content of the other in a symbiotic artistic relation. An earlier dance performance of his led me to experiment with the use of improvisational dance and gesture in collaboration with choreographer/dancer Karen Ivy, to lead students to interpret portraits in the de Saisset Museum at Santa Clara University, as well as abstract wooden sculptures placed in a dance

studio, that I recorded as a collage painting [**Web ASK 14**]. Reid (1785) claimed that we have an original understanding of the meaning of gestures of the body. That suggests that experiences of gestures of the body, carrying content, could be used to exemplarize the content of art objects. The interpretation of the visual art by the philosophy students was remarkable and showed that you do not need words or discursive thought to represent the content of a work of art. The experience of the artwork can be exemplarized with gestures of the body, with movement, that reconfigure the content of the artworks in another artistic action. The improvisation led to further construction of artworks—collages—responding to the experience of the dance. Creating an artwork, like creating a world, is the creation of form and content out of experience with thought and movement.

Having mentioned performance, I shall use feminist performance art to illustrate the way in which exemplar representation leads to the reconfiguration of the content of experience. It is essential to consider some examples of art and what the experience of the art is like to understand the way in which new content arises from exemplar representation. Exemplar representation replaces the more ordinary forms of representation. Of course, there are ordinary and even encapsulated representational responses. These play an important role in the appreciation of art. The painting *The Gay Moon* by Jack Yeats [**Web ASK 15**], for example, may strike one initially as abstract, devoid of the figures and shapes of ordinary life. But then, suddenly, one sees human subjects and other ordinary objects: trees, animals, and so forth. The shift, something like a gestalt shift, results from the technique of not delineating objects, and, in that way, is an exaggeration of impressionist technique. It is amazing how it works. In this case, attending to the sensory exemplar leads to exemplar representation of objects without the viewer exercising any freedom of interpretation.

One sees—a face, the side view of head, a large moon, and some landscape—as a result of simply attending to the sensory exemplar. A person who took a quick look and did not focus attention on the painting might not linger long enough to see the figures. Once you do see them, it is your conscious experience, the sensory exemplar that exhibits or shows you what the men, moon, and landscape are like in the painting as the exemplar represents them. This level of exemplarization, though it involves the freedom of attention, does not reach the level of exemplar representation of autonomously choosing the exemplar to exhibit further content of what the work is like. Some would interpret it as the sadness of one of the figures, one of the men, over the loss of the other. Here there is freedom of interpretation and the construction of content. Should I construe the painting of having the content of loss, perhaps the loss of a brother? It is my choice to let the sensory exemplar carry that message. The painting confronts you with

the challenge of constructing an interpretation of the content of artwork carried by the experience of the exemplar representing the content.

FEMINIST ART AND FREEDOM

Feminist art and feminist aesthetics illustrate the role of freedom in exemplarization of consciousness. I turn to feminist art as an illustration of what art does, not just feminist art. In fact, as indicated previously, I am very suspicious of the utility of dividing art into schools and types. I see this as a pedantic task, interesting socially and historically, but distorting aesthetic appreciation and construction of new content for art, and, by free transfer from art to the world, to the story of our life. There is pedantic value in dividing things into classes, into finding the right *ism* for the classification of the individual. But it is not the *ism* that makes the artwork, rather it is the artwork that makes the *ism*, by eliciting the conscious experience of the work, yes, the individual and unique sensory exemplar, that evokes exemplar representation, exemplarization, to show us what cannot be said. What the form and content of representation are like results from exemplarization. I choose feminist art because of the vivid way in which it confronts us and challenges us to exemplarize the novel content of the work. All art does this, but feminist artists, seeking to provoke and challenge ordinary consciousness, conceptions, and conventions, break down quotidian responses to things, including art, to reach beyond the ordinary to the extraordinary experience of the creation of content out of experience.

Art reconfigures experience; feminist art reconfigures the stereotyped consciousness of women. All art uses a physical object to confront consciousness, endowing the physical object with features of mentality, with intentionality and immediacy of conscious experience. Art, especially feminist art, is a mentalized physical object. Since feminist art is often performance art, the human body used in it obviously has a mental life. Danto (1994) remarks that art is embodied meaning. Hein (1993) says that feminist art chats on the edge of experience. Our mental life is filled with meaning, but art opens the question of the meaning of experience. There is the felt quality of it, which, when it becomes the focus of our attention, allows us the autonomy of reconfiguring how we respond to our sensory encounters with the world. A salient aspect of the art experience, the way in which our attention is directed to the immediate, to the sensory exemplar, in an aesthetic stance, frees us to rethink and re-feel as an act of self-trust. Brand (1998) has noted how we toggle back and forth between the immediate experience and how we think and feel about our world and

our place in that world. Art, chatting on the edge of experience, invites us to choose our stance in that world.

I suggest that is the beauty, or, at least the value, of art. The art experience presents us with a sensory exemplar that can convey and exhibit content. The exhibited content of the mode of presentation of the exemplar suggests a reconfiguration of the content of experience outside of art as well as within. Art, then, is that part of experience that changes us by changing the content of our experience. My claim here is that feminist art provides us with a paradigm of what art does and that is why I admire it.

Let me begin with my personal experience. My first encounter with feminist art was Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party* [**Web ASK 16**] in San Francisco. I had no idea what to expect. The lines were long, the wait was excessive, but the experience was exhilarating. The first view was the dinner table. I live in a house in Tucson that Margaret Sanger had built for herself and thus sought her place setting [**Web ASK 17**]. Like most of the pieces, the relationship to the female sex organ was unmistakable. It was blood red, and, yes, I remembered. Margaret Sanger had been radicalized by witnessing the butchering of women resulting from illegal abortions. But blood is the material of life and that was more fundamental. My thoughts, raised by the encounter, evoked conceptualization of the experience of *The Dinner Party*. Beyond the particular place setting there was the grandeur of the triangle, the strength of the triangle, and, the feminine biology of the triangle. The power of the feminine confronted me. And thought raced on. The femininity was on every plate. Georgia O'Keeffe may have denied the often noted similarity of her flowers to the vaginal opening, claiming it was only an interest in scale that led to the flower paintings, but Chicago in her place setting [**Web ASK 18**] left no ambiguity. It was a new view of the female sex organ as a source of creativity and power. My thought was, "Of course, even Courbet portrayed it as the origin of it all." I made ceramics at the time I saw *The Dinner Party*, and found it hard to take my eyes from those amazing pieces: subtle, brilliant variations in the grounding of us all, of woman and earth.

The movement to the walls and rooms documenting the role, the contributions and the experience of women was equally amazing. It was not so much the detail as the overall impact of the feminine in life. I was left thinking at the time of the paradoxical character that is the art character of the experience. It was a revelation of the concealed, a revelation of what we knew and did not know about the known and unknown world of woman. I walked and gawked with my eyes hanging out. After a disappearance from public viewing, *The Dinner Party* is back on exhibition in Brooklyn. That venue seems correct to me. Brooklyn is somehow the earthy place, not as pretentious as Manhattan. It is the alternative place. Jackie Robinson was

with the Brooklyn Dodgers and Judy Chicago is with *The Dinner Party* in Brooklyn.

The long disappearance of *The Dinner Party* after its remarkable initial success is an indication of the artworld's discrimination against female artists and feminist artists. The Guerrilla Girl movement was a critique of the art establishment and remains so. My sympathies are with them. I read Pierre Bourdieu (1993) and was impressed by the sociological acuteness of his work explaining the cultural value of art in terms of the exercise of the power and institutions of the commercial artworld establishment. But, I objected, that is not what the value of art is about! It was rather brilliant of Wartenberg (2007), in his text, to place the reading from Bourdieu between pieces on feminist art and African art that connect the value of art with the role it plays in our life. As an artist, I am revolted by the soundness of Bourdieu's analysis. His account and the critique of the Guerrilla Girls tell the same story of the museum object being socially constructed by the power of the wealthy and privileged. People sometimes ask why I do not charge more for my art. Art is about what the art object does, how it changes and reconfigures experience for the viewer, not about commercial value and the artworld status of the work. The Guerrilla Girl movement, however central the feminist motivation, is a protest against the power of the artworld establishment. The central role of art is not the creation of cultural capital for the sophisticated few. It is the transformation of the life of us all.

I love to show my work and watch the response of others. Vik Muniz [**Web ASK 19**] remarked that he does not make art for himself, he makes it to watch how others respond. Much feminist art is a protest against established commercial art traditions. However, feminist art objects that become mainstream retain their feminist power to change consciousness. There is a deeper point about feminist art, and I think it is widely recognized among artists even when it goes unexpressed. Feminist artists remind us what art is about. Their point is to change experience, to reconfigure with conscious experience how we think and feel about ourselves, our world, and our relation to each other. There is an external world that is not of our making, and there is our internal world of how we think and feel. The content of that internal world is constructed out of exemplars of conscious experience.

Feminist art raises consciousness about feminist issues because it confronts us with a question. What do you think and feel about this? How does this relate to what you and your world are like? Feminist art confronts you in the way in which art can and should. It says something, often very explicit, but asks you something at the same time. What are you going to think, feel, and do about this? It raises the personal question. What does this experience mean to you? In bringing that question to consciousness, feminist art

shows us what art does. It reconfigures experience using the exemplar of experience to create new content, a new way of conceiving of experience in terms of the experience itself. Or it fails. If it fails, we can say that it fails to be art or that it is bad art, and that it is nothing. Art makes you want to laugh, cry, think, or feel.

So there is a paradox about feminist art. As it succeeds, it raises your consciousness about feminist issues and in so doing shows you what art beyond feminist art is and does. Feminist art transcends itself and reconfigures what art is for us. Art, when it succeeds, reconfigures experience in terms of conscious experience. It leads you to create new content by remarking distinctions in a new way. As you remark distinctions about art when confronting feminist art, you change your conception of what art is like. You reconfigure your experience of art in terms of the conscious exemplars feminist art offers you to change your consciousness, your exemplar representation of the content of art. A novel exemplar representation is provoked. Distinctions are marked in a new way. The content of art is changed for you in your exemplarization of your consciousness. Standard artworld absentmindedness leads us to forget the central importance of the power of art to change our experience, to use experience to change experience. In a provoking aesthetic moment, feminist art reminds us of what art does, not only feminist art.

After *The Dinner Party*, I retained an interest in feminist art because I knew that it worked to change how I felt and thought; it changed me. Change is uncomfortable, but the alternative to change of consciousness is thinking and feeling the same thing for a life. Not for my life, thank you. In Tucson, Arizona, Bailey Doogan (2005) works and shows, so I know about uncomfortable feminist art. And Peggy Zeglin Brand has been a friend since she sat in a tightly analytic seminar of mine ages ago thinking god knows what, and I have had the joy of watching her philosophy and art change mine. Her art and her presentation of Orlan (Brand, 2000) have become part of my philosophy of art course. I show Orlan [**Web ASK 20**], who uses plastic surgery done on herself as her feminist medium, to my philosophy of art classes, usually only a JPEG, or three. The response reveals the success of the art. There is always some very bright male student who associates her performance art with violence, with castration or the production of snuff movies. I first ask why the association is made since plastic surgery is cut-of-the-mill stuff in our lives. Then I tell them. They have understood. The Orlan performance is, after all, an emotionally profound attack on the dominance of the male conception of female beauty as she alters her body to take on the features of women intended by male artists to represent female beauty. They are right, not wrong, in feeling it to be an attack. However, once the why-question is asked about the response, re-feeling and rethinking

occurs and experience is reconfigured in terms of the provocative exemplars of plastic surgery. It is not just that you know of the domination of stereotypes of female beauty. You see them cut away.

As you put your face into one of the holes in Brand's (2008) repaintings of women by male artists and get your picture taken [**Web ASK 21**], there is amusement that works in the same way as the anger in response to Orlan. Peggy Brand has a lighter touch. Your take on the traditional art is changed by both. Art changes the content of art as it changes the content of experience. Both take me back to the originals, to the male chauvinist side of the male painters, to their role as *flâneur* and their sometimes hostile vision of the feminine. I re-enter their world with heightened consciousness. Sometimes I am critical or even hostile and sometimes not. Art, as Tolstoy (1995) says, is shared communication of feeling, and to enter a world of reconfigured experience in a chauvinist painting of a woman confronts you in a way that art does with the question, the personal question, so what do you make of this? It is like the arches of a chapel that you tie together in the keystone loop at the top of the chapel (Lehrer, 2007) that supports the structure of your life as you experience your autonomy in what you make of the art object.

I received a similar response from some students when they viewed an image of *Interior Scroll* by Carolee Schneemann, a performance art piece in which she—in a birthing squat—extracts a scroll from her vagina. Offense. Outrage. So, I ask, "How many of you have never seen a naked woman?" "How many of you do not know that something comes out of the vagina of a naked woman, indeed, how many of you do not know that sometimes a woman extracts something from her vagina?" And finally, "Where do you think you all come from anyway?" My take is that *Interior Scroll* is about the mystery and sacredness of the biology of life. Sorry, we do not drop from heaven, we drop from a woman. The paradox in this work is that we come to know what we already know, but we know it in a new way, and that matters. We know about it in terms of a conscious experience Schneemann courageously presents. The consciousness of the exemplar of the extraction of the scroll provides us with a new exemplar representation of the sacredness of biological origin. It changes how we feel and think about our experience, about ourselves, about others, about our world.

Now here is the point. Feminist art shows us, often by confrontation we cannot ignore, what art does. Art changes and reconfigures experience, including our experience of art in terms of our conscious experience. We rethink and we re-feel in a new way, in terms of a new experience creating new form and content, as a result. In that way, feminist art, however focused on feminism, reminds us what art is all about. Orlan's surgery can teach you how to look at paintings of martyrs. I do not think I ever understood the

Renaissance paintings of martyrs until Orlan. The martyrs had the courage to confront material harm for their cause of spirituality as Orlan confronts material harm for her feminist art. Of course, that is obvious. The paintings are about the ecstatic in suffering. One student, a male artist, responded to Orlan's art, "She has balls to do that for her art. I admire her." He was an artist, a film artist. His choice of words was deliberate. It was a capsule of performance art.

So what about the wonderful color and form in those martyr paintings? They are exemplars of color and form that are not just about color and form. They are about suffering, cruelty, and spiritual transcendence of the body. You do not have to believe in God to understand. You only need to open yourself to the experience. Let me return to *The Dinner Party* to close the loop and tie in the immediacy of experience of color and form and the value of it. Wollheim (1987) called our attention to a kind of double vision in our perception of art. Peg Brand reminded us of it. Let us use her metaphor of a toggle switch. We toggle back and forth between an immediate awareness of color and form and an awareness of meaning we find in the color and form. Every artist is struck by a special kind of sensory immediacy that becomes the focus of aesthetic attention in aesthetic awareness. Dickie (1994, 1997) denied the importance of aesthetic distance, but there is a special way of attending to art that is aesthetic and distanced from meaning. Brand suggests we toggle from this immediacy into the complexity of the meaning, and the notion of a toggle suggests we can return to immediacy.

I like the metaphor, but I am not sure the psychology is quite right. Once a certain meaning, a gestalt, for example, is part of our perception, it may not be possible to toggle back to the immediacy. One of the most striking painters to exploit the two stage character of perception is Jack Yeats mentioned above. Looking at *The Gay Moon*, at first you will not see the faces, and then you do. Once you see the faces, you may not be able to toggle back to original immediate awareness of color and shape. The point I want to make is that there is an initial perception which may be quite formal and not figurative. Once the initial take is surpassed, however, you will find it difficult to return. One way to do so may be to turn the painting upside down. However, that may, as in a painting I supply, rapidly produce a new figurative take, a different one, when inverted. I do not want to urge the importance of a fixed, as opposed to a more flexible, response.

My point is that you become aware in such processes of your configuration of the experience. In the gestalt response, you might experience the perception as compelled and one from which you cannot get released. Other ways of configuring an experience—for example, my configuring of *Interior Scroll* as being about birth and the mystery of being—is one that allows the viewer greater autonomy in the configuration of meaning. It is

the special feature of a good deal of feminist art—Brand (2000, 2006), Orlan, and Schneemann provide examples—that you know that it is up to you what you make of the artwork, what meaning you give it. A good deal of Renaissance art seems to close the toggle switch pretty early in the perceptual process, though the imagination of the viewer may find some residual opportunity, some free play of the faculties as Kant (1914) suggested, for autonomous assignment of meaning. One great strength of some feminist art—*The Dinner Party*, for example—is that that it leaves the toggle switch open. You can put aside your interest in meaning and appreciate the color and form of the plates in *The Dinner Party* as well as a broader view of the triangular table. Here, of course, there is an opening for beauty. *The Dinner Party* is imbued with beauty. Is the beauty a carryover from the response to immediacy? In part, perhaps, but I find beauty in *The Dinner Party* in the meaning of the sensory components, in my exemplarization of my consciousness. There is a value, I suggest a kind of intrinsic value, in the way the meaning is exhibited in the sensory materials. I am not sure that this intrinsic value of experience is always beauty or even a source of pleasure. There is a value in the way the message is expressed in the sensory materials. The value is in the experience of what the sensory meaning is like. I shall return to the issue of value in a subsequent chapter. These remarks are only intended as an illustration, and, perhaps a temptation toward a conception of value.

I think I shocked Brand once in responding in a positive way to the face Orlan created. Of course, it is artificial, as are many of the faces we see, especially on the silver screen. But there is a value in the sensory experience of that face, in the critique being embodied in the experience. Is it beauty? It is value. What is the value like? You have to experience it to know it. I shall propose later the value is exemplarized in the experience. Once you experience the value, you are changed. The way you feel and think and experience is changed. Or to put the point more cautiously, there is a suggestion of how you might change. Hilde Hein (1993) proposes, as I noted above, that the feminist aesthetic is not theory, but chatting on the edge of experience. It is not only feminist art that should be viewed in this manner. Art chats on the edge of experience. The sensory materials exhibit meaning, and it is that exhibit of meaning, that embodied meaning, as Arthur Danto (1994) puts it, that yields the value. There is beauty in the conversion of matter to meaning. Why? We are, ourselves, mentalized bodies. The work, when it is art, is a mentalized physical object. It lives, full of feeling and thought, as we live full of feeling and thought. The intrinsic value of art is the extension of the intrinsic value of our humanity.

There is a natural connection between the intrinsic value of art and the extension of art to performance art. Feminist art exhibits that connection.

The struggle of the artist to mentalize the physical object—the painting or the sculpture, for example—to fill it with meaning, with thought and feeling, leads naturally to the idea of using a body that is already mentalized as the medium. You are confronted with a reconfiguration of experience in a mentalized body, a person. I do not argue for the superiority of performance art. I only attempt to explain it. If art chats on the edge of experience, and that activity and mentalization is a source of intrinsic value, the use of the already mentalized body has a power to engage the observer in the chat.

Think about the difference between Courbet's *L'Origine du Monde* [**Web ASK 2**], and Carolee Schneemann's *Interior Scroll* [**Web ASK 3**]. The latter, unlike the former, cannot be disregarded as mindless. The mind, the thought and feeling of Schneemann, confront you in the experience. You may not like it. You may think it is tasteless or offensive. But you are confronted with the meaning of the thought and feeling of the act. You have to decide what to make of it. The body you see is a mentalized body asking you what you make of it. The Courbet confronts you but allows you to make nothing of it. The Schneemann confronts you more directly and profoundly.

My conclusion loops back to where I began. Art challenges you to exercise your autonomy, your basic autonomy to remake yourself and your world. When it succeeds, you find value in the art object, indeed, that is part of why you consider it art. Is the value beauty? The experience of reconfiguring yourself and your world incorporates the value of the self and others. It joins personal autonomy with social connectedness in a moment of sensory thought and feeling. There is a pleasure in experiencing the content of your world as your own, in the value of your autonomous reconfiguration of yourself and your world. That reconfiguration is what I value. I find beauty in that expression of autonomy.

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CHAPTER 4

Value, Expression, and Globalization

This chapter deals with some apparently unrelated issues about art that are, I shall argue, tied together by exemplar representation. The topics include value in art, expression of emotion in art, and the impact of art on globalization.

VALUE IN ART

The first issue—value—was discussed at the end of the previous chapter. People find a special value in art. I have been inclined to think that a special kind of value may be a defining requirement. There are many questions that press in upon a person when she asks whether something is art, questions about art history, questions about pleasure, but I think a value judgment is implicit in the affirmation that something is art. An artwork may be disturbing in a way that blocks pleasure, such as some of Goya prints and paintings [**Web ASK 22**] about war, and other works that disturb us, but we value the representation of war, we value representation of war in that way. Our experience of what war is like in that work, the conscious experience of war it presents to us, has value.

At the end of the previous chapter, I claimed I experienced the value of an artwork because of the way in which the conscious experience of it evoked a reconfiguration of my world and myself in terms of the sensory experience, the exemplar, which became the vehicle of novel conception. So what kind of value is the value of the artwork, the value of the experience it provides? Some will rush in with the answer, wanting to dissect value into species, that it is aesthetic value. But that is not a felicitous way to answer the question even if it has a point. The point it has, the correct point, is that

the value arises from the special focus on what the work is like, this focus may be rightly called aesthetic. If, however, the attitude that we take toward the object, the attention to what it is like, may properly be called an aesthetic attitude, it does not follow from this that the value of what it is like is aesthetic value. My claim is that there is a kind of value, a generic kind of value, that attaches to our experience of what a thing is like that is characteristic of our experience of artworks.

Where does the value reside? I want to suggest that the value of the artwork arises from a relation between the person and the artwork. The value arises, as my examples of Goya and Schneemann [**Web ASK 3**] exhibit, from the way in which we use the sensory materials, the way in which we exemplarize them to represent the content of the artwork. I cannot appreciate the value of the artwork without experiencing what the artwork is like. Moreover, the special kind of value I am proposing that artworks have is both intrinsic to the experience of what they are like, intrinsic to the relation of experience, and generic. Here I must rush to draw distinctions. Artworks have value of many kinds, moral, political, and hedonistic. They are useful for many ends. But when the object is a work of art for the viewer, he or she has an experience that has a value intrinsic to it. To say that the value is intrinsic is not to say that it is inexplicable. There is nothing inexplicable about a kind of value that arises out of the reconfiguration of experience evoked by the artwork changing the content of experience as an expression of our autonomy. The value is the value of an experience of our autonomy in the making of the content of our world and ourselves.

I shall argue below that the kind of value in question is like the value of the experience of a life. A life need not be attractive aesthetically or morally to have value. The relation of value in the arts is one that is less perplexing than one might expect, not because of widespread agreement about value, but because divergence of interpretation of what artworks are like is both acknowledged and accepted as appropriate. We do not expect everyone to agree on the value or merit of an artwork because we expect disagreement in interpretation and the construction of the content of the work. If different people exemplarize artworks in different ways, they will disagree about the content of the artwork. Moreover, and this is my theme, the value of the work of art is part of the content and, therefore, is something that you experience in your relation to the artwork. The beauty, perfection, elegance, and, in general, the value of the artwork is to be experienced in your relation to the work of art. Put the matter the other way around, if the value cannot be experienced in the painting, then it is not there. The value and values of the painting are in the experience of the painting. We may speak of the value of paintings no one ever sees, but that, I suggest, is paraphrastic for claiming that, though unexperienced, the value of the painting, like the color of the painting, would be evoked by the experience of the painting.

My thesis runs contrary to a great deal of aesthetic theory. Indeed, I suppose that Hume (1739) and Kant (1914) are unified in rejecting the thesis with respect to beauty. The beauty of the artwork is treated by both as a sentiment or feeling in us to which they add differing views of the supplemental features of the sentiment such as being consensus in the experts or being demanded of us all. The differences in these views do not matter because they are both in error. I do not deny that some sentiment or feeling may accompany the perception of beauty in the object, but it is a mistake to identify the sentiment or feeling with the beauty of the work. Someone who appreciates beauty will, no doubt, experience pleasure in the experience of beauty. But not everyone who perceives beauty enjoys it.

Rimbaud (2008) remarked that the taste of beauty was bitter. You may think him odd. Consider, however, the person who is surfeited with beauty. I went to a Monet show in Chicago. After an hour, I thought, "Too much beauty in one place." There ceased to be any pleasure in the beauty. I saw it, but, alas, jaded. Too much. Take a somewhat more familiar example. You see a person who is very beautiful; I leave open whether such beauty is the same as the beauty of art, and you do not like what you see. Perhaps you are someone whose experience with beautiful people has been disagreeable. A woman I knew, a very attractive woman, was married to a beautiful man. His response to his own beauty and the response of others to his beauty became tiresome. Everyone was just too fascinated with his beauty. She was attracted to him for his beauty initially, but she lost her taste for his beauty and, indeed, for male beauty. She could still see it; indeed, she saw it with great acuteness having become sensitive to the implications of it. The taste of male beauty was bitter for her.

There are replies. One is that the Monets and the men were no longer beautiful to the person perceiving them. That is false. My experience is that the beauty of the Monets was perceived, in some sense, admired, but there was no pleasure in it. Too much. Similarly, too many beautiful faces, and no pleasure in it. You can perceive beauty and find no pleasure in it. The pleasure response to beauty may be robust, but it is not encapsulated. That could be denied, of course. Hume or Kant might reply either that the beauty is not experienced or that the sentiment or feeling connected with beauty is itself rejected.

Let us develop the first objection in the Monet exhibit. What happens, the objection might go, is that I see yet another Monet, *Haystacks* [**Web ASK 23**], for example, but I do not experience the beauty of it. The objector might add that I see features of the painting, the pleasing colors and shapes, and I know that there is beauty in the painting, perhaps from past experience, but I do not experience the beauty. That is not right. I saw the beauty of the painting, indeed, I think I could rate the beauty of the paintings more

precisely as a result of having lost my enthusiasm for the beauty I perceive. I see it. It just does not move me. I must say that is characteristic of my response to Leonardo di Vinci. I see the beauty of the paintings, I understand the method of composition and the use of color well enough to even understand how he creates the beauty, but, to confess, they do not please me, and the beauty does not please me either. Why? The beauty is too perfect. I see it, but I do not like it. Is that intelligible? If my critic continues to reply that I have not experienced the beauty, I believe that is just another way of saying that I am not pleased by the beauty, and that begs the question. I claim I see it, and it does not please me. Moreover, postmodernism largely shares the Rimbaud and Lehrer disapprobation of beauty. It is like sweets that one enjoyed as a child. You can still taste the flavor, but there is no longer any pleasure in it.

The claim that art has some intrinsic generic kind of value confronts the objection that there is bad art as well as good art. I think the plausibility of the claim is complex. There may be art which has some intrinsic value but so little when contrasted with other works that it rates low. However, that is not a satisfactory reply. The truth of the matter is that we call many things, "art," that are without value and are not art at all, though they are produced in the way art is produced by people who produce art. It is tempting as an artist to think that everything I produce is art, some good, some bad, but all art. The truth rather is that sometimes I set out to produce something that is art, but it has no value, what it is like has no value, and I fail to produce art. People may be inclined to think that whenever I create something intending to create an artwork, it is an artwork, even if a bad one. They are wrong. When I look at what the object is like, I know that I have simply failed to produce an artwork. One might object that I am begging a question of usage. I am proposing a change in usage that corresponds to the idea that there is some value in anything that is art. Art without any value is not art at all. If that is a change in how we conceive of art, I hope there is art in it.

The question that now confronts us is how value can be in the experience of the work. I want to suggest that the value is in the experience of the work in the way in which feelings and emotions are in the experience of the medium of the work. The experience of value in the work is like the experience of feelings or emotions in the work. We might say that the work expresses feelings, emotions, and, I propose, value. You experience the sadness or the terror, the happiness or ecstasy, and merit or value, the demerit or disvalue of the work in your conscious experience of the work. As you create an exemplar representation, as you use the exemplar to mark a distinction, the exemplar becomes a vehicle of representation of feeling, emotion, and value.

ART AND EXPRESSION

We are here touching on issues examined by expressionist theorists of art, Croce (1922) and Collingwood (1938). A brief consideration of their insights and errors in treating the expression of feeling will be illuminating in the development of the theory of exemplarization to account for feelings and emotions in works of art. Croce contends that the expression of feeling in images, which are conscious experiences, is a lyrical intuition common to all the arts. He claims, developing his thesis, that there are two components, images and feelings, in the expression of the lyrical intuition that combine to provide the experience of the "contemplation of feeling." Croce is given to denying that there is any genuine distinction between the expression of the feeling in the physical medium and lyrical intuition. He argues for the identity of the expression in the medium and the intuition in the mind. Collingwood insists that the feeling or emotion expressed in art is expressed in the artistic medium. This leads to a puzzle, if not to a paradox, of maintaining that something mental, an intuition or expressed feeling, is in the material object that expresses it.

Both Croce and Collingwood were content with concluding that the solution to the puzzle is idealism, to wit, that the material medium is itself something mental. It is not clear, however, that this is anything more than a superficial response. For the idealist still must explain the relationship between feelings, emotions, and intuitions in the mind and those in the medium, even if the medium itself is ultimately to be construed idealistically. Nevertheless, both Croce and Collingwood are right in proposing that the feelings and emotions are expressed in the medium and, moreover, are actually in the medium, however that is to be explicated.

Moreover, both of them are correct in denying that the correct analysis of the expression of an emotion in the medium is that the emotion is evoked or has the potentiality to be evoked. A face that expresses sadness can evoke good cheer as every clown knows. Furthermore, the analysis of the expression of emotion in art as revealing the emotions of the artist is incorrect for the same reason and illustrated by other examples as well as the clown. This is obvious from the consideration of the expression of emotions in drama. A character may express anguish or anger, you can see the anguish or the anger in his face, but he may evoke pity, not anguish, from the audience, and that may be the intention of the artist who also pities the character he has created. Some people enjoy sad sentimental music because it cheers them up. The composer might have been equally cheered by composing the piece of sad music. Consider, moreover, the young infant who cries when confronted with an angry grimace produced by someone wishing to amuse himself at the expense of the infant. The face expresses anger, which the

child understands on some superficial level, but it does not evoke anger in the child. It evokes fear. Moreover, the person whose face expressed the anger felt no anger and, therefore, was not communicating the anger he felt.

This leaves us with the question of how feelings or emotions or intuitions—lyrical ones involving images animated by the feelings, as Croce says—can be in some material medium that is not conscious, like a painting or the sounds of a symphony. There are two tempting lines of reply to the question. The first is that the commonsense attribution of expressed feeling to the material medium is just an error. Of course, the semblance of the sadness or gaiety of the music or the painting still requires explanation on the error theory. Moreover, the explanation must be consistent with the example of the expression of anger by the actor who neither feels anger nor evokes it in his audience. The most natural error theory is one that says that the medium communicates a thought of the feeling expressed rather than the feeling itself. You can have a thought of anger or sadness without feeling it. Indeed, some results concerning simulation suggest that the thoughts may be similar to the ones you would have if you perceived someone experiencing the emotion or, in the case of the actor, acting as though he was experiencing the emotion.

The problem with the error theory is that thoughts or feelings caused by an object may result when the object does not express the feeling. I may see some work of art, a smiling painting of *The Countess von Schönfeld and Her Daughter* [**Web ASK 24**] painted by Vigée-Lebrun for Marie Antoinette and have thoughts of the sadness of peasants who suffered while she smiled. But the painting does not express sadness. The response might be widespread, after the French Revolution in France, for example, but the painting still does not express sadness. That is not in the painting. In short, the error theory, attempting to explicate expressed feelings in art in terms of thought about those feelings, disconnects the expression of the specific feeling from what is in the medium, by allowing for association to replace expression. We must distinguish between reflections caused by a work of art from what is expressed in the work.

A DISCUSSION OF LANGER AND DAVIES

This reflection on the error theory leads us to the idea that the expressed feeling, the lyrical intuition, is symbolically connected to the feeling expressed. The idea is that the expressed feeling is somehow symbolized in the medium. That is the view advanced by Langer (1957). Langer is particularly important for advocating that the feeling expressed is symbolically

presented in a special way. The feeling is a presentational symbol, symbolized by being presented in the medium of the artwork. She insists, moreover, that the feeling presented in this way is something subjective. The symbolic presentation is essentially beyond the reach of language. It presents the inner life to us so that we may "understand its intricacy, its rhythms and the shifts of total appearance" (Langer, 1957, 149). Langer continues, arguing that the feeling is "perceivable through a symbol, not inferable from a symptom" (1957, 149). The emotion is presented—the subjective is made objective.

It is interesting to notice that Davies (1983), criticizing the view of Langer, objects that the presentational symbol, according to Langer, gives rise to a conception of an emotion and symbolizes it by virtue of giving rise to the conception. He claims that this severs the relationship between the emotion in the artwork and the emotion in life. He also rejects Langer's view (1957) that there is an isomorphism of form between the emotion in life and the emotion in the work so that a commonality of form accounts for the expression of emotion in the work of art. He concludes by arguing that rather than supposing that there is a resemblance between the emotion in the work and the emotion in a person, the proper explanation is based on similarity between the artwork, the music, and expressions of the emotion in human behavior.

What should we make of the dispute? Davies may be correct in rejecting the formal isomorphism account of how the emotion can be presented by the work. However, Langer has insisted that the conception of the emotion presented by the artwork is an apparition, an appearance, of something. She acknowledges, anticipating Davies, that "since we lack intellectual access to pure subjectivity, the only way to study it is to study the symptoms of the persons who have subjective experiences" (Langer, 1957, 149). But, she correctly notes, "it tells us nothing about the phenomena of subjective life" (Langer, 1957, 149). She insists, "A work of art presents feeling (in the broad sense I mentioned before, as everything can be felt) for our contemplation, making it in some way perceivable through a symbol, not inferable from a symbol" (Langer, 1957, 149). This is phenomenologically validated and counts against the view of Davies. In his view, the emotions expressed are not something perceived in the work but inferred from the similarity of some features of the work to features of human behavior.

Now there is an oddity in this dispute. Davies attributes to Langer a view that would disconnect the perceived emotion in the work from the emotions felt by persons, while Langer is at pains to argue that her view is the one needed to explain how subjective feeling can be perceived in the work. On the other hand, Davies' view treats emotions in the work as resembling something, behavior, which is only symptomatic of the emotions. So the

emotion in the work resembles a symptom of the emotion in people on his view, while it is supposed to provide a closer connection with the emotion in people than the account of Langer. But she insists that emotion in the work is an appearance or apparition of the emotion itself rather than an appearance of behavior that is symptomatic of the emotion. She seems right in this. Yet, Davies is correct that according to Langer, emotion presented in the artwork is explained by a similarity of form between features of the artwork and features of the emotion.

Langer seems to have the phenomenology right. We perceive the emotion in the work by recognizing what the subjective feeling is like in the objective presentation of it in the medium. On the other hand, the formal isomorphism argument is not very convincing, and there does seem to be some similarity, as Davies suggests, between the behavior of people experiencing the emotion and features of the work of art, even if the perception of the emotion in the artwork is less inferential and more immediate than his account suggests. We do not experience the emotion in the work as an inference from something that resembles the behavior of people having the emotion. The emotion is presented in the work as something subjective embodied in the work of art.

There is a solution to this. It is that phenomenology, the appearance of the emotion in the work of art, is a conscious exemplar representing the emotion in the work. The conscious exemplar exhibits what the emotion is like in the work. One may know what sadness is like in oneself, but not know what sadness would be like in music. To know what sadness in music is like, one must hear the music. The sadness in the music is presented by what is consciously experienced, as Langer avers. That is why she is so insistent that the symbolization of the feeling is unlike discursive symbolization. Discursive symbolization of sadness, by the use of the word, "sad," does not exhibit what the feeling of sadness is like. It just denotes it. It would not matter if another word, such as *traurig*, in German, were used. Neither word exhibits what the feeling is like. Neither word provides an appearance or an apparition of the feeling. But the work does. Words describing emotions are not appearances of the emotions. They are words denoting the feelings without showing us what they are like. The exemplarization of a conscious experience refers to that experience because it picks out a class of experiences by exhibiting what they are like to us. You have to experience sad music to know what the sadness is like, even if the experience is imagined, in which case the imagined awareness or consciousness of the sound is exemplarized.

How are we to understand the way in which artworks can express feeling so that they present an appearance of those feelings? The answer may take us in the direction Davies suggests. Some feelings are connected

with sensory stimulation, expressions of the face, for example. Consider smiles. Young children love to have people smile at them, and so do adults. Why? Because smiles are the appearances of being pleased. Good retail managers encourage, even insist, that their sales staff smile at the customers. Attempting to get genuine smiles out of their employees, managers tell them repeatedly how pleased they should be by the presence of their customers from whom all benefits flow. "The customers are kings and queens, so smile at them!" The point is that we perceive pleasure in the smiles of people, and if they smile at us, then we perceive their pleasure with us. This is close to Davies. The smile is an appearance of pleasure. Now, I am not insisting that all emotions in artworks are to be explained in this way, for this response to the smile is probably innate. Perhaps a good deal of the perception of emotions in works of art is based on innate response systems, but sometimes learned systems of response mimic the innate ones closely enough so that the response is perceptual, that is, the emotional content is perceived as being in the artwork which presents an appearance of it. We know what appearance of pleasure is like from the exemplarization of the experience of it in ourselves or in another.

Consider the example mentioned before of the appearance of the bent stick as it is partially immersed. We may know that the stick is not bent, but the appearance remains. Similarly, we may know how employees are trained, but we still like it when they smile at us because the appearance of pleasure remains even when we know that they smile under instructions. The pleasure is in the appearance. That is what modular response is like. I surmise that the same is true of music. The emotions in the music are an appearance, as Langer says, even if her account of how it presents that emotion might be challenged. The ultimate point is that to know what that kind of emotion is like, you need to experience the artwork. Why? The thought that the music was sad might be conveyed second hand after all. Someone might tell you. But you would not know what the sadness in the music was like. To know that you have to experience the music because experience is part of what sadness is like. It is music sadness. Langer spoke of a conception of sadness arising from the appearance of sadness. The critical point, rather often missed, is that the conception of sadness arising from music contains the experienced sounds as an exhibit of what the sadness is like. The conception of the sadness of the music has the experience of it as a functional part, an exhibit of what it is like, that is inseparable from the experience. The expression of sadness in music is not the conception of an abstract property but the exemplarization of a conscious state of the music.

ART AND GLOBALIZATION

The exemplarization of feeling in experience will sometimes be the result of innate response systems, like those yielding the appearance of a bent stick or of anger. Art that uses these responses, and all art does, shows us the way in which art transcends culture as we noted in the previous chapter concerning feminist art. It reaches to shared components of human experience, birth, death, love, and war. I noticed this capacity of the aesthetic response to the sensory experience of reaching shared feelings and problems of human existence in an unusual way. I was ask to address a conference in Hanoi on philosophy and globalization and decided to talk about art and philosophy. Having lived through the Vietnam War, I felt some trepidation. Can art connect me, once an enemy, with a shared content of feeling and thought to people with whom my nation was recently at war? I could look at abstract art, and did, finding a similarity between my own abstract art and that of an artist in Vietnam. But what should we think about the war, more specifically painting about the war in question? That is the test case. Is there art in Vietnam about the war with exemplarized content that connects us with shared feelings and unified understanding of our human condition in the confrontation with our war and with each other? I went to a Hanoi museum, and there was my answer: a very simple oil painting by Dang Duc Sinh, *In Every Hamlet* (1984) [**Web ASK 25**], of three women, each with a scarf over her head holding a picture of a man on her lap. Each revealing her loss in the war, the universal cost. The expressions were diverse and complicated. They somehow captured the emotions of loss and the courage of a mother. The sensory expression of emotion in the painting transcended time and place and the specifics of war. After all, this is *every* hamlet—it illustrates our *universal* loss. Look at the painting. Your experience will show something universal, some feeling and emotion that is universal. Art chatting on the edge of experience about the universality of loss and courage in war that goes beyond any sentiment I could express in words. Experience the exemplarization of the consequences of war.

Moreover the painting uses experience in another way that transcends cultural barriers; it breaks down walls that insulate us from each other, because exemplar representation, the workhorse of aesthetic response, reaches the level of autonomous reconfiguration of experience. As we confront that level of autonomy, the domination of convention is undermined by the confrontation with our freedom to change the content of our experience and, therefore, to connect culture and change.

Globalization carries with it the threat of domination of one culture by another. I propose that art, conceived as the reconfiguration of experience in terms of exemplar representation at the level of autonomous innovation,

protects us from the dangers of globalization. Exemplar representation of the individual confronts global views with the conscious experience of the individual as the basis of representation of world, culture, and self.

Aesthetic attention on art reconfigures the content of the experience of an individual in terms of that experience. This includes the experience of culture. Art is the appropriate mode of discourse to avoid co-optation, confrontation, and conflagration in the age of globalization. I seek to aestheticize the content of philosophy in the art object. The art object is a mentalized physical object. You can only know what the artwork is like by experiencing the object. The art object is about something. It has content. The remaining question might be put this way. What is the special advantage of embodying philosophy in the artistic medium in the age of globalization?

How does an artwork convey content? Art has the capacity to convey content in a special way that takes us beyond the cultural conventions of linguistic communication. The sensory experience, the sensory phenomenology of the surface, is not merely a vehicle or medium for conveying a message. It is, instead, part of the content of the message. The experience of *In Every Hamlet* is an exhibit of what the content of the painting is like, and what the emotional content of war is like. The sensory experience is part of the message, about what war asks of us, as well as the parcel conveying the message. Someone can tell you what a painting is about, about the loss of men for the women that love them, for example, but something is missing in the description: experience. The artwork must exhibit its content to you in experience for you to know what it is like. You may require information and assistance to understand, but the understanding is in part sensory. That part puts the artwork to the test of experience, your experience of the representation of war in every hamlet, for example. This is related to the way in which the sensory puts the scientific work to the test of experience, as we shall consider in a subsequent chapter. To summarize, the artwork has a content that is exhibited by the sensory experience of the work that is part of the content.

The inseparability of the sensory experience from the content of the work is a result of the sensory experience being that part of the content that exhibits what the content is like. Moreover, it is the success or failure of the work of art to show us what the content is like, what it is like to confront the loss of war in every hamlet, that constitutes the aesthetic success or failure of the work. A painting may convey religious, political, or commercial content, but if it does not succeed in showing us what it is like, then it does not succeed as a work of art. You may know a great many truths about a religion, a political system, or an economic system, and not know what they are like. The art of narrative literature is an aesthetic method to overcome the

abstract objectivity of the usual mode of philosophical discourse to show us what it is like to live in a certain way as well.

The question I now want to address is: What is the relevance of all of this to the issue of the role of art in the age of globalization? First, what is the problem about globalization anyway? There are problems of the destruction of culture, ways of life, and the environment. That is not all there is to worry about, but that will suffice. The first thing to notice is that the ties of globalization force upon us the question of whether we should change our conceptions of ourselves, and, if so, how we are to change. The same question arises concerning our religions, our politics, and our economics.

The question of whether to change or not to change is often co-opted in the age of globalization by power and wealth. Globalization is a protean and heraclitean force for change. Let us look at the structure of change. People are confronted with the problem of whether to amalgamate their views and culture with those of others or to attempt to isolate themselves. The problem with isolation is that it may lead to confrontation with the power of others. The problem with amalgamation is that it may lead to the destruction of what we value by co-optation. The problem is that we either aggregate or refuse to aggregate—assigning the others a weight of zero (Lehrer and Wagner, 1981). The cost of assigning the others a weight of zero, that is, refusing to aggregate with them in a positive way, may be alienation, confrontation, and the threat of conflagration. The cost of aggregation and compromise has become the sacrifice of culture. We appear confronted by the choice of alienation from others or from ourselves. This is a philosophical paradox that we see realized today as a politically desperate problem.

The special role of art is its capacity to reach a new conception, a new content, which has a kind of autonomy based on its special artistic character. The content of art is, of course, influenced by context and community, and yet it reaches back into the response systems that are universal and biological. The sensory content loops through culture, religion, politics, and economics in a way that ties them all up, down, and together in a loop with our common nature and biology. Universal religions, political systems, and economic systems have been a dream. Some would say that the dream has become a nightmare. Universality cut loose from the constraints of sensory experience fails to exhibit what the meaning or content of it is like. That is the problem with discourse outside of art. Aestheticized philosophy contained in the content of the art object exhibits what it is like in a way that connects it with the content articulating our common nature. It ties universal content to experience in a loop.

You may doubt the universality, or believe that the universality of content is restricted to practical representations of the world necessary to survival and adaptation triggered by sensory stimulation without attention to what

it is like. There is more universality of response to art than that. Sinh shows us what it is like *In Every Hamlet*. The artist, or the philosopher become artist, has the capacity to reconfigure experience by the presenting us with exemplars of experience that challenge us to create new content. The aesthetic attention to the sensory exemplar, to what it is like, blocks the standard or conventional representation of the world. When the work is successful, when it has the value we discussed above, it provokes marking distinctions in new ways, creating content in new ways, changing the content of our world. The test of the reconfigured experience rests with those who receive the artworks. There is no guarantee this will work miracles or work at all. The universality of a philosophy is embodied in the artwork that realizes the exemplarization of new content to reconfigure our world.

There is a role for reason and objective analysis in confronting the problems of globalization in our representation of our world. At the end of the road of reason, the choice to aggregate or isolate may remain. The problem is to find a way to change, for we inevitably will, so that our identity is not co-opted by the aggregation of the identity of the other with our own. So how do we change without a loss of identity? Is there any way of incorporating identity? The question, once posed, suggests an answer. The answer is art. It is the art object that allows us to mentalize an externality. The mentalized physical surface of the artwork in exemplar representation articulates what we are, our thoughts, our feelings, our culture. It exhibits what the content of culture is like for us. It is the work of an individual incorporating the significant other in his or her externalized identity in the artwork. It shows us that the egocentric predicament, or the sociocentric predicament, is an egotistic socioistic fiction. In the work of art, we are always in a process of change. We reconfigure. We transform. The original starting point of representation of our world is reconfigured, for the change in representation autonomously exhibits to us what we are like as we change what we are like.

So far, I have placed emphasis on the creator who reconfigures experience by showing us what content is like in the work of art. However, what something is like depends on the receiver, on what it is like for the receiver, who becomes, therefore, an essential force in what the artwork is like. The content of the artwork is at the same time, synchronic, diachronic, and socially activated. I am leaning toward a postmodern conception of art in what I am about to say: the artwork, experienced as art, not propaganda, must empower the viewer. This goes beyond respect. The content of the artwork is a consequence of the autonomy of the receiver as well as the artist. It is not simply that the meaning or content of the work of art changes over time, that is also true of the meaning or content of words, it is that the

content or meaning of the work of art must await the response of the receiver, observer, or spectator. For part of what the artwork is like is what it is like for the receiver.

I do not deny that there is a chance of co-optation of culture in works of art. The risk of co-optation, of being taken over by the other, is always there. But the artwork confronts the viewer with the challenge of creation, which is the same challenge that confronts the artist. It is the challenge to reconfigure experience in creation of new content out of a sensory experience, an exemplar, in the representational process of exemplarization. The exemplar exhibits what the content of the artwork is like. This is crucial to the issue of co-optation and identity. The receiver must experience what the content is like in the same way that she experiences his or her own consciousness, including the consciousness of culture. Experience of what the content of the work is like takes one into subjectivity, whether individual or social, as the content is experienced and exhibited in the experience of the receiver.

Art takes us into an experience of what the content of religion, politics, and commerce are like in our experience of the artwork. When we experience what the sensory exemplars of the artwork are like, it is we, in collaboration with the artist, who decide what the content of the artwork is like. The artist may intend that we be inspired to find some meaning, some hurrah for what he or she advocates. Yet our experience of what the content is like may lead us to represent the content of experience in another opposed way. Indeed, we may experience the intended meaning as absurd. We have the capacity to be autonomous receivers of the artwork. The success of the artwork is not measured by some abstract message but by the empowerment of the viewer who experiences what the message is like, what the content is like, in a moment of creative reaction. The receiver preserves identity because the experience of what the content of the artwork is like is an expression of that identity, indeed, of what the viewer is like in that protean, heraclitean dynamic of experience. Change expresses identity rather than diminishing it. And what if you do not like what the content of the work of art is like? That is part of what you are like in the experience of the artwork. Your dislike, the offense you find in the content of the artwork, enhances your identity.

You can see the loop of content, identity, and expression. You refer back to yourself in the experience of content, in seeing what it is like. It may change you, of course, but it is you changing you in the experience of what the work is like. That loop of the individual and social self ties the content of what the artwork is like to personal and cultural identity and the reconfiguration of it. Art changes us by changing how we autonomously think

about our world and our place in it. I seek to explain how art can enhance our autonomy, whether individual or communal, as we reconfigure experience in art. Can art become the vehicle and exhibition of how we may reconfigure our world, our place, and ourselves in our globalized world? It is we who decide as we autonomously create and receive the exhibited content of our reconfigured world and ourselves within it. That is the value of art. The value of art is inseparable from the autonomy it gives us in how we represent our world and ourselves in terms of our experience.

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CHAPTER 5

Artistic Creation, Freedom, and Self

Artists sometimes find it difficult to talk about artistic creation, about how and what they are doing, except in terms of the technical processes. They refer to their artworks as what they are creating. The reason, I propose, is that to represent what they are creating in words fails to represent what they have created. The explanation should be familiar by now. It is the experience of the artwork, the conscious exemplars of the work, that carry the content of the work. It is the experience of the artwork that tells you what the artwork is like as you focus aesthetic attention on the conscious exemplars of your experience. And, though you can say something about what the experience is like, which can offer illumination and pleasure, there is something that cannot be said but can only be shown to you by your experience and the exemplar representation of it. All this may explain why the artist cannot fully explain what the content of his or her artwork is, however loquacious they may become.

Some artists refuse the verbal take on their work by only using words to call attention to what you can experience in the work. The artist can mark a distinction with paint, sound, or movement, but the content is in the paint, sound, or movement rather than in the discourse. A famous choreographer, Antony Tudor, when asked what the movements of his ballet meant, answered simply, "The movement is the meaning." The experience of the movement marks a distinction in space with gesture, sometimes a flowing sequence of gesture, but it is the experience of what the movement is like that carries the meaning and is an essential part of the meaning. Describe the movement, however clearly and exactly you will, and some of the meaning of the movement is lost simply because the experience of the movement, not the description of it, carries the form and content by

marking a distinction. The exemplarization of the conscious experience is a representation of meaning created by what the experience is like, the way in which it marks the world.

ARTISTIC CREATION

It is notable how naturally a discussion of the creative activity of the artist moves to the experience of the artwork, which may be an experience of someone other than the artist, as well as the artist. That is natural when the meaning of artwork results from the exemplarization of the exemplar of conscious experience. For the conscious experience may vary, and however it may vary, it is the conscious experience of someone. The burden of my argument is that it is a mistake to Platonize form and content in a way that castrates the role of experience. The fecundity of art depends on experience and the way we exemplarize it into the meaning and content of the work and the world beyond. Anyone can exemplarize the work, and the variety of responses, which is equivalent to an ambiguity of content, is the strength and value of art in our lives. Nevertheless, the feeling remains that the creative act of the artist is more important to the experience of art than the view articulated suggests. Indeed, the exemplarization theory articulated seems to marginalize the role of the artist in the experience of art. It appears to incorporate a view of the death of artist, as Barthes (1977) advocates, to provide for the autonomy of the viewer. Is there no more to be said about the role of the artist than that he or she provides the occasion for the autonomous construction of content from our experience of the work providing the exemplars for exemplarization? Some artists, Rauschenberg, for example, seem to evade being brought into the consideration of the viewer, and cater to our autonomy. But others, Picasso in *Guernica*, notably, seem engaged in a communicative act, as Tolstoy (1995) proposes. They have something to tell us as they stimulate our senses, feelings, and thoughts.

So what about the artist? Why do they do what they do? Often they say, as Goldsworthy did when asked about his natural artworks—earthworks, iceworks, beachworks, that are as evanescent as the heraclitean flux of nature—replied on a television program aired by PBS, "When I do not create my art, I do not exist." Goldsworthy exists when he creates, and, I suggest, his existence is his creative activity. We want to find the artist in his work, and we do, but that is because the creative acts of the artist create the life, the story of the life, of the artist. We do not need to reach beyond the work, behind it or around it, to find the artist. The work is the artist. Our experience of the work is the experience of the artist. You may object that we can misunderstand the artist. We may. But I would add that the artist

can misunderstand his creation as well. The reason is that the artist, however clear his initial intentions in the creation of the work, recedes out of view, out of his view, in the creative process. At a certain point, all that exists of the artist is the creative moment. Guston, quoted by Dennett (2001), replied, when asked what it is like to create art: "When I first come into the studio to work, there is this noisy crowd which follows me there; it includes all of the important painters in history, all of my contemporaries, all the art critics, etc. As I become involved in the work, one by one, they all leave. If I'm lucky, every one of them will disappear. If I'm really lucky, I will too."

The act of creation is something new, something beyond the plans or the intentions of the artist, as that act becomes a new moment in the story of the artist. We, the viewers and, he, the artist, stand before the artwork, though not at the same time, left to construct the content of the work out of our experience of it. The connection between the artist and the viewers is not a simple act of communication of thought or feeling, contrary to the theory of Tolstoy (1995). We do feel a connection with the artist, something communal arises, but that is because we both stand before the work, together transcending time and place, involved in making content, meaning, worlds, and ourselves out of what the artist has created. It is because he or she provides the occasion for our common and uncommon creative construction of form and content out of the experience provided by his creative act that the bond arises. We may conjecture that he feels and thinks what we feel and think confronting his work, and experience some identification with him or her. But, in truth, we are ignorant of why he did what he did, and, in that, we may share the deepest empathy and identity with the artist. For, in that creative moment, as Guston indicates, control and intention dissolve into spontaneity and immediacy. We are left with the conscious experience of what has emerged and the construction of meaning out of sense and feeling, out of our consciousness. We stand together looking for the meaning. Our experience shows us the meaning of content and feeling. Is it the same? Is the experience of one person ever the same as another? We are deep in metaphysics that may not matter to either of us. We may love talking to the artist about her response to her work, for, of course, she made it. But she may love talking to us about our response, because, though we did not make the object, instead we created the content of it. What matters is not who made the object, but what we make of it, what our experience of what it is like shows us about the work, the world, and ourselves.

Goldsworthy was clearly fascinated with arches, which he made of stones and ice. The arch is a good example of an art object and a good metaphor for the social construction of meaning. So far I have laid emphasis on the conscious experience in the mind of an individual. But how an individual constructs meaning in the activity of exemplarization, in the activity of marking

a distinction, creating form and content in the marked space, is socially influenced. We do not exemplarize egocentrically. Our construction of meaning is socially influenced. If we think of the arch as a metaphor, stones are piled on stones, meanings on meanings of others, to create the meaning of the work for the individual. We may think of the meaning of the artist as a keystone which supports the other stones in the arch, but remember that it is also supported by them. We all construct meaning out of the exemplars of art, so there is a keystone in the exemplarized conception of each of us. As we think of a circle of arches, like those supporting a chapel, there will be a circular keystone at the top. We may, if we wish to raise the metaphor, think of the artist as configuring the keystone loop joining and supporting the arches in a wall of the consecrated chapel of meaning. It is only a metaphor. I shall later, in another chapter, move from metaphor to mathematical representation of shared consensus based on the respect or weight one gives to another. The weight that we give to the artist may create a fixed point of agreement about the meaning of a work.

Sometimes someone else places the keystone arch of meaning of an artwork and not the artist. Think again of Georgia O'Keefe. The meaning of femininity of the artwork may be supported by others, not her, and fixed in place, as I suggested, by another artist, Judy Chicago by the construction of the O'Keefe plate at *The Dinner Party*. A second artist can create the meaning of an original work by another for the viewers by showing them how to exemplarize their experience of it in the autonomous choice of form and content. It depends on how much weight we give to the work of the second artist referring to the work of the first. And that may depend on the value we attach to the reconfiguration of experience offered by the second artist. Manet [**Web ASK 10**] or Peggy Brand [**Web ASK 21**] may show us that a painting of Olympia, goddess that she is supposed to be, is portrayed in a different way from Venus as a sensual sex bunny by Titian [**Web ASK 4**]—no mystery to some men of the time—undermining some more noble exemplarization of the experience of the painting. That is not to deny the beauty of the painting, even taking a feminist stance. Remember, it is wrong to suppose that beauty must be experienced as pleasure. The taste of beauty might be bitter (Rimbaud, 2004).

However, the burden of this chapter is to explain the relationship between artist and the artwork. She, like the rest of us, experiences the artwork, responds to what she has done with aesthetic attention to the conscious exemplar of experience, constructing a vehicle of representation out of it. Her conscious experience shows her what the work is like, and, beyond that, what the world is like and what she is like in that world. The artist, unlike us, also experiences the process of creation, even those rejected components that do not appear in the artwork. The final result may exhibit

to the artist and to us, though not in the same way to us as to the artist, what the process was like that created it. Her conscious experience of the final product shows her what an episode of creation was like. It is not a record of the moments of the episode, but it may, nonetheless, remind her of those moments, showing her what they were like as far as the hand of present experience reaches into the dark well of memory. The exemplar representation of the conscious experience of the creative process's end result shows the artist what an episode in the story of her life was like. She returns to her work to experience the story of herself.

To give an account of how the artistic creations of the artist become part of the story of the artist, we need an account of how free action and self-expression become the story of the life of the self. Both Velleman (2003) and Fischer (2009) have offered an account of the story of the self. Velleman and Fischer think of the self in terms of narrative. Self-expression is a step into the narrative of life. Fischer argues that the construction of the narrative of the story of life is artistic expression. Freedom is self-expression taking agency into narrative. My free actions, according to Fischer, are the sentences in the story of my life. Velleman sees the tying together of a life as giving meaning to the events and actions of life. Meaning, in this sense, is content. My free action creates the meaning of the story of my life.

LIVES ARE STORIES

I shall focus on the account of Fischer. In his brilliant and original book, Fischer (2009) offers us a theory connecting acting freely, self-expression, and the story of the life of a person. Fischer writes, "When I act freely, I write a sentence in the story of my life…" and continues, "As I said above, our lives are stories…" (Fischer, 2009, 167–168). Then he concludes, "I have argued that there is a sense in which our lives can be understood as stories" (Fischer, 2009, 173). Fischer tends to equate the story of our lives with our lives. He has excellent reflections to offer on free action as self-expression. However, there is a problem. Simply put, it is that the story of my life is one thing, and my life is another. My life may consist of my actions. There may be a meaningful narrative constructed out of descriptions and interpretations of those actions by myself or another. On the other hand, those actions may be full of sound and fury signifying nothing as Shakespeare wrote. Whether there is a narrative constructed or not from the actions, there is the life of the person composed of those actions, meaningful or not. That life, consisting of those actions, is distinct from any description, any narrative string of sentences. The life might be lived without a narrative being constructed, and a narrative might be constructed that

does not describe an actual life. Fischer is left with a chasm between the story of a life and the life the story is about. He switches in his discourse between the story the life is about and the life the story is about. How can the story be the life? My solution to this problem is that the actions may be treated like samples or exemplars used to represent themselves. This account is offered as a constructive addition that Fischer could consistently accept as a solution to the problem. I shall then make some further proposals for development of the view, inspired by Fischer, that are less clearly consistent with his theory.

Fischer (2009) qualifies his view of our free actions as sentences in the story of our lives. He says our behaviors are:

> "vehicles" for storytelling or the determination of narrative content. Our lives, then, considered as sequences of behaviors or even bodily movements, could be thought of as a way of telling a story—a certain sort of vehicle of narrative content. . . . Strictly speaking then, our lives are not stories but ways of telling stories, or, perhaps more carefully, ways of constraining admissible narrative content. They are—as with poems or plays or novels—the vehicles of content rather than the content itself. The point is similar to the notion that a sentence (or perhaps a sentence in a context) is the vehicle for content (say, a proposition that is expressed by the sentence in the context). It is illuminating to distinguish the properties of the vehicles of expression from those of content itself; for instance, some philosophers hold that the vehicles of content are structured linguistically, whereas the proposition expressed—that content itself—is not structured at all or at least not linguistically structured. Of course this particular claim is contentious; for our purposes it is enough simply to mark the distinction between the properties of vehicles of content and the properties of content (Fischer, 2009, 173).

EXPERIENCING MY ACTIONS

I am fascinated by the idea that the story of the life of a person, especially an artist, could result from or consist of the free actions of self-expression. I am attracted by the idea that acting freely could be construed as a form of self-expression in the construction of the story. I resonate to much of what is said, but I have my difficulties with Fischer's telling of the story of our telling the story of our lives. My remarks are intended to offer a modification of Fischer's account of meaning, stories of the self and the value thereof. I believe that an account of the self lies coiled like a worm at the center of an account of self-expression, free action, and the story of the life of the self. The story of my life, told by myself or another, is a story of me. The meaning of my life, and, of me, starts with my experience of my life, even if it does not

end there. Others take over the story, but it is a different kind of story when it is a story told by me about me. I experience what I am like, what my actions are like for me, and, therefore, what the content of my story is for me. Others do not experience my experiences.

Let me focus on the role of experience in my story of myself, my life. I move my body and by so doing engage in actions, including free actions of self-expression. However, there are multiple descriptions of actions as Anscombe (1957) and Davidson (2001) have taught us. There are, in short, many different ways of representing an action. To say, as Fischer does, that the movements of my body are the vehicles for representing the content requires an explanation of my way of representing my actions. There is a way open to me, namely, in terms of the way in which I experience those movements as my action. Many people may experience the same movements I make but represent them in different ways as actions. I have a way of representing my actions, constructing the story of myself and my life, that is unique to me. Simply formulated, I can represent my action in terms of the way I experience the action. My experience of the action can be my vehicle of representation of the action, and, avoiding regress, can be the vehicle of representing itself. I can tell the story of my life, in terms of my experiences of my actions.

When Fischer speaks of my bodily movements as the vehicles of content for the story of my life, he is taking a third-person perspective on the story of my life. Other people, he suggests, may tell the story of my life differently, but my bodily movements and my free actions of self-expression constrain how the story can be told. Those actions, he says, constrain the stories that can be told. It is clear, given the multiple descriptions of one action, that what action I have performed is open to multiple representations. That is, perhaps, why Fischer switches between bodily movements and actions as the constraints on representations of the story of my life. Those movements admit of diverse interpretations, different representations of what action is performed, but the movements of the body seem to provide a constraint on interpretations and representation. However, my story of my life, what my life is like for me, depends on how I represent my actions. My proposal is that I represent my actions in terms of my experience of them. This brings us back to the account of exemplar representation. It is the conscious experience of my actions, the focusing of aesthetic attention on the exemplar of experience, that converts the exemplar into representation, showing us what the action is like and, in part, what the life containing the action is like.

An illustration, suggested by his account of story telling as artistic activity, is when I paint on canvas, as I often do, engaged in artistic activity. What I paint may constrain interpretation however diverse those interpre-

tations may be. In my painting of *Blue* [**Web ASK 26**], whether you interpret it as a painting of sky, gaiety of a clear sky, painting of water, ominous as the sea, the painting of blue is the vehicle of representation. There are features of painting and features of movement that provide constraints on the story they are used to tell. My interpretation of those movements, my construal of them as some definite action, is grounded, not just in the intersubjective account of movements, but in my experience of them. It is my experience of what I do that leads me to represent it the way I do in terms of my experience.

How do I represent my actions or movements in terms of my experience of those movements to tell the story of my life? The role of conscious experience in representation used as an exemplar answers the question. Once the exemplar role of conscious experience is included in the story, it becomes odd to include only actions realized in bodily movements as parts of the story of my life. Are my thoughts and feelings not part of the story of my life? Fischer is interested in the role of action as self-expression to connect the story of our lives with freedom and responsibility of action. But the thoughts and feelings on which our actions are strung, like clothes on a line, are central ingredients in the story of our lives and the meaning of them.

THE VALUE OF A LIFE

Let me comment first on the question of value discussed previously, for the meaningfulness of life depends on the value of the story artistically created. Fischer concentrates a good deal of energy on the question of what kind of value the activity of constructing the story has and what kind of value the product, the story told, has. A robust literature has developed on the relationship between aesthetic value and moral value. Fischer notes correctly that telling the story of our life selects something from among the totality. Storytelling involves choice. As we choose what to include in the story, we ask what experiences and activities are an expression of self. The choice is artistic, governed, Fischer suggests, by aesthetic concerns and aesthetic value. The product of this choice has another kind of value: moral value.

To be candid, I do not buy this way of dividing value up into the activity and product of our constructing the story of life. The activity may be morally corrupt. Those concocting the stories may serve their vanity, their lust for fame, and other worldly concerns. And the product may be one of beauty, a beautiful mind. I think that the bifurcation in value, as noted previously, is a deep philosophical error stemming from eighteenth-century theories of beauty, though not only that. It is a theory of beauty detached from the concerns of life. Our early ancestors had aesthetic concerns as they

painted walls, themselves, and the utensils of life but would not have understood the isolationist theory of beauty. Whether something was beautiful was, and is, a matter of how it is connected with life outside of art.

So is the value that endows our stories, either the process of construction or the product thereof, aesthetic or moral? I think there is mischief in the question. The construction of the story and the story itself have a kind of value that is, as I have suggested in previous chapters, generic. The telling of the story and the story told may be the story of a life that has value. We may ask whether the life is morally good or aesthetically good. It may be both. More deeply, it may be neither. It may be a life of value even if it is neither morally praiseworthy nor beautiful. The film, *A Beautiful Mind*, about mathematician John Nash, is misnamed. It is not beautiful as the subject lives in schizophrenic delusion interacting with phantoms of the malady. Is it a morally good life? That seems doubtful. Yet the life has value, a kind of value more fundamental than our concerns with the pleasures of beauty or the morals of praise or blame. This is only a proposal arising from my phenomenal experience of value. I experience the value of something, a life or an action or a work. I may be bewildered by the question of what kind of value it has. One of the most famous paintings of the last century is the *Black Square* by Malevich [**Web Ask 12**]. It blocks the figurative take and leads to an experience Malevich connected with the supreme. There is merit in it. Is the merit moral merit arising from leading us beyond the Veil of Maya? One might say so, but that does not capture the merit of the activity or the product. Is it aesthetic? The *Black Square* is not beautiful. The value of the painting, like the value of the lives of viewers it seeks to enrich, is generic. This fundamental form of value is important in our lives. The dissection of it into species may distract us from the wonder and immediacy of the experience of value or merit. The appeal to linguistic intuitions about the terms "moral" and "aesthetic" to describe the experience of this kind can obscure the experience of value. This is not an objection to Fischer. It is a suggestion that there is more to the value of a life than is captured by aesthetics and morals.

VEHICLES OF CONTENT

Let us turn to the question of the relationship between the construction of the story, considered as a vehicle of content, as Fischer says, and the content of the story, what the story is about, the life a person and the meaning thereof. The idea that the story is a vehicle used to describe the content confronts us with a chasm between the vehicle of the story of life and the content of a life represented, as Fischer notes. The meaning of the life, the

content of the life, cannot be identified with a linguistic description thereof. A description can be a lie, a deceit, a conceit, opening a gap between the representation, a description, and that described, a life.

The gap between the story of a life and life itself is as unnecessary as it is problematic when one takes a first-person perspective. Let me put the matter in the first person to explain. I experience something, an activity in which I engage, for example, as I write this book. My writing is part of the story of my life I experience without my describing it. I may, of course, describe what I am doing, for the record: "On July 31, 2010, Keith Lehrer wrote about the gap between words and life." I may add that description, but I already knew what I was doing, what this episode in my life was like, before I described it. The writing was already part of my life, already self-expression. It was already part of what my life was like for me as I experienced what I was doing. I knew what the activity was like before I described it. There is no gap between my knowing what my experience is like and the experience itself, which is part of my life.

But how can we close the gap between the representation of my writing, on one hand, and my writing, on the other? How can I know what the activity is like, what the content of it is, without a vehicle of content to represent that knowledge? The answer to this question is the same as the answer I have proposed to the question of how I know what my conscious experiences are like without describing them in words. I know what my experiences are like in a way that reveals the content of those experiences prior to description. The same is true of activities. How can I close the gap between the representation of those experiences and the content represented? The answer is exemplar representation as both the vehicle of representation and an exhibit of what the content is like at the same time.

EXEMPLARS

I have offered (Lehrer, 1997, 2001, 2006) an answer elsewhere that I believe compliments the account Fischer offers. This idea, developed earlier in this book, is that my experiences can become samples or exemplars that become representational, that become vehicles of content, at the same time that they are part of the content represented. Using what is represented as the vehicle of representation closes the gap between vehicle and content. Consider a person who experiences a flash of color that they have never seen, a flash of red, and knows what it is like from the experience. The person knows immediately what the experience of color is like from the way it is experienced. Attention is drawn to it, let us imagine, unlike many experiences that pass through the mind unnoticed. One knows what the

noticed ones are like, and what they are like is both presented to the mind and becomes the content of the experience at the same time that experience represents the content.

MARKING A DISTINCTION OF CONTENT

It is important to say something, even if very briefly about the notion of content I am using here, at the expense of some repetition, because the notion of content is philosophically contentious. I do not mean to engage or avoid the discourse about internal and external content. Here I only wish to be clear. Suppose I look, for the first time, at *Monochrome Blue* [**Web ASK 1**] by Yves Klein at MOMA in San Francisco. The color of the painting I experience is an exemplar of color. As my attention is focused on the color, which is beautiful and an invention of the artist, I experience a sensation of color. I now know what the color is like. I may learn the name (I did later), International Klein Blue, but I knew what the color was like before I knew the name. I look forward to seeing it again and would recognize it again. There is an activity of mind, resulting in part from the focusing of attention—aesthetic attention, it might be called—on the experience of color. I take the particular as an exemplar to represent other experiences of the same kind. I use the experience to mark a distinction between what the experience is like and what it is not like. Following Spencer-Brown (1969), a much-neglected genius, the exemplar is used to mark a distinction between what it represents and what it does not represent. There is a class of objects contained in space marked by the distinction. The content, as I use that notion, is inseparable from the activity of marking a distinction. Marking the distinction between what is contained in the marked space, the content, and what is unmarked, that is, what is not in the marked space, generates a conception of the form or kind of object represented as content.

As the exemplar comes to stand for a class of objects, it has a consequence for the mind taking it as an exemplar, namely, that it distinguishes things in the class from things not in the class. Negation is coiled in the spring of distinction. There is no distinction without negation, there is no conceiving of anything for a human without conceiving of what is not so conceived. Ostensive generalization of exemplarization yields content that contains a not.

Michael Tye (2005) has argued, using other terms than those of Spencer-Brown, that marking a distinction is insufficient for the creation of concept or content because of a lack of inferential implications. However, Spencer-Brown has undertaken the task of proving that the combination of marking a distinction combined with a pair of formal rules is sufficient for the

construction of mathematics including topology. The fine thread of marking a distinction combined with formal rules has infinite implications. Spencer-Brown may not have been successful in deducing mathematics, though no less than Bertrand Russell acclaimed the effort, but marking a distinction provides us with a base of conceptual complexity. I propose that Spencer-Brown's work anticipates the idea of grounding truth to avoid paradox.

EXEMPLARIZING REPRESENTATION OF CONTENT

Lopes (1996) in his important work on art has proposed that an artwork represents an object if and only if it enables the viewer to recognize the object. He takes this as a mark of figurative form or content. I propose that when an exemplar is used to mark a distinction, content is created, whether figurative or not. The activity of marking a distinction in terms of an exemplar is *exemplarization* that enables one to recognize objects that constitute the class of objects that constitute the content. So exemplarization, whether of something figurative or not, is partially captured by the Lopes notion of representation. My claim is that the exemplar exhibits the content and is, at the same time, a part of the content. A distinction is marked by an exemplar that is part and parcel of the content it represents. Exemplarization uses the exemplar as a vehicle of representation taking it as an exhibit of a kind or form of content represented.

Marking a distinction, creating content, is an activity of self-expression. This leads us back to the story Fischer constructed of the story of a life. Note the connection between what I am arguing and Fischer's fascinating idea of the activity, artistic activity, of constructing a story of a life as an account of the life of the self. We do not attend to all of our experiences in a way that marks a distinction. We do not exemplarize everything. A special focus and attention is required. This is because of the role of experience in exemplarized content. By contrast, words represents things without being exemplarized, without being used to show us what a word is like, at least most words most of the time. The word "word" may sometimes be an exception, though the word "word" is not a good sample of a word to exhibit what words are like. The exemplarized experience, of an action—painting, for example—exhibits what the represented objects are like. Exemplarizing the experience of action marks the space dividing it into what is and what is not contained in the marked space.

Sometimes we exemplarize without any reflection. The activity requires attention, but attention may result from sensory intensity and be driven in a way that is not of our choosing. Miserable sensations are of this kind.

However, in other cases, we choose to exemplarize our activities in terms of our experience of them, which becomes an exemplar representation of them. That brings us back to Fischer. My proposal, which I take to be accommodating to Fischer's, is that we construct the story of our life out of the experiences of our life. It is those experiences that become the vehicles of representation of the story of our life. The advantage of the exemplarization theory of the story of our lives is that the stories, the representations, are the experiences of our lives, especially experiences of free actions, and are not separate from them. Exemplarization closes the gap between the vehicle representing content and the content represented in a loop.

Some experiences are exemplarized and some are not. The reason we do not exemplarize all of our experiences is that we cannot. Exemplarizing experiences requires a direction of attention that picks out those experiences transferring the experience from short-term memory to long-term memory. If you are shown some configuration briefly—to take an artificial example, of numbers from 1 to 9 printed in a three-by-three quadrant of squares—you will be able to remember any row of three numbers if your attention is directed to that row, but that is pretty much the limit. The direction of attention allows that much information to be transferred from short-term memory to long-term memory. This may seem artificial and is, but life passes us by with great rapidity. The direction of attention to some aspects of experiences, to some actions or events passing on the fleeting screen of life, stores them in memory. I propose that we exemplarize them secreting the content of the stories of our lives in the process of using them to mark the events of our lives.

REPRESENTATION WITHOUT WORDS

Now the proposals of Fischer suggest that the story of our life is a story that would involve further selection. Not everything that catches our attention with enough intensity to become exemplarized has the salience or importance for us to think of it as part of the story of our life. When we move to description, to linguistic representation, that further selection occurs that makes up the story of our life and carries the meaning of our life, the content of the self. Philosophers are engaged in the life of discourse, of description, and they, like narrative artists, are wont to attach special importance to what they do well. Philosophers talk the story.

Others may be less verbal, especially visual artists. There is a story of their life, but the story is contained in the selected episodes, especially those of artistic creation which, being exemplarized, are both part of the content of the life and vehicles of the content. Verbal description may contribute to

the story of a life. But the story a person has of his or her life may be full of representation that is not verbal. The visual artist may examine her art, and, intently conscious of what it is like and what it means about creating it, think, "That is the most important chapter of my life." Content is exhibited and represented by the exemplarization of experience that captures our attention and interest.

To make the account cogent and to effectively close the gap between the vehicle and the content of story, it is essential to notice that there are layers of meaning or content of experience. Return to *Monochrome Blue*. As I attend to the sensory experience of the painting, I may first generalize to a class of experiences and, at the same time, mark the distinction between the members of that class and other sensory experiences, other colors. As an artist, I may think of the experience as exhibiting ultramarine blue, aesthetically perfected. I may use the same exemplar to stand for other things, the paint on the canvas, the paint in tube, the painting *Monochrome Blue*, and more romantically, the potential beauty of a blue mood. An exemplar of experience can represent many things exhibiting what they are like. Some of those activities of interpretation are not at all automatic. I must decide what to make of some experiences, what content they represent. This is something taken—not just given—and created—not just presented. The way we use the exemplars of experience to make content, to make our world, is a paradigm of self-expression.

WORLD MAKING AND THE SELF

I see something missing from the Fischer story of our story. It is the way in which we make our world out of our experiences. Goodman (1978) has insisted on this, so has Heidegger (1971), though he uses other words, of course. This leads back to Fischer in a loop. For as we focus on our experiences and activities and exemplarize them to yield the content of our world, we notice, with minimal reflection, that it is we who are making this world. I compose my world out of salient experiences. This shows me what I am like. I make my world and notice in that self-expression, that freedom, what I am like. My story is not just the telling of a story. It is a multimedia creation out of my experiences, creating content, creating meaning, which may occur prior to linguistic articulation.

Consider the possibility of undescribed stories of meaningful lives embedded in the experiences of them. That possibility is realized in the artistic corpus of great artists—Monet, Van Gogh, Pollock, Vik Muniz—whose art provides a conscious experience of what their lives are like, as far as they are revealed in their art to our consciousness for exemplar represen-

tation of what the creative actions of those lives are like. The work of an artist offers us an aesthetic opportunity for the exemplar representation of his life as he offers it to himself. Representation of conscious exemplars will differ, of course, because the conscious experiences of the same object will differ as will the background information of the interpreter. Moreover, when an artist, myself, for example, picks up the brush and creates a painting, there may be the kind of immediacy in the action, the kind of selflessness in the immediacy of the creative act, placing some red impulsively at a spot in the painting. We often act with immediacy in art without reflecting on how our action fits into the artwork, much less on the story of our life. That unreflective immediacy is like the unreflective immediacy of aesthetic experience. The creative act, the act that changes the content of self and experience, is often unreflective. Tying the act into the meaning of a life is another creative act. The artist focusing attention on the experience of what he has done or is doing marks a distinction in terms of the experience, creating the form and content of the creative action. It is the exemplarization of the experience of my behavior that makes it my action, part of the story of my life, represented by me. I am conscious of creating artistic content by my activity as I exemplarize the experience of it. The experience of the action, like the experience of a color sensation, opens the possibility of the creative self-expression of exemplarizing the action into my life.

I note here the relationship, which again Fischer considers important, between the creation of the story and aesthetic activity. Aesthetic activity, artistic activity, whether of an artist of trade or an artist of life consists in a special reaction, a special focusing of attention on sensory materials that opens us up to the activity of making content and meaning out of our experiences. However, questions remain. One is the question of how the content created becomes the content of the story of a life. This need not be automatic. I may take an action of mine toward a student as benevolent, as an exhibit of my goodness in the world. A bit of further reflection may reveal another side. As the student departs from my views, it may become apparent to me that it was vanity and not benevolence that motivated my education of him. The initial created content does not fit the world and should not be projected onto the world. The arts in the usual sense give a clearer example. I might exercise my freedom to interpret a work of art, to make the content out of my experience of it. Then I confront my freedom at another step as I choose whether or not to view the content of artwork as an accurate representation of the world outside of the artwork. Whether it is the *Black Square* of Malevich blocking representation to lead me beyond the appearance to supreme reality, or Goya blocking the heroism of warriors to show us the extremities of cruelty of war, I have a decision of whether to choose to project this content, this conception, as the content of world outside of

the artwork. The choice of projection is an activity of the self and is an act of self-expression.

The artist in constructing a work of art, in his creative activities, is revealing to himself and to others what the story of his life is like, the artistic part of the story at least. The artist might not have produced the work that awakens our aesthetic awareness of what it is like. We take the experience of creating representation out of our experiences of what the artwork is like as revealing something about the intersection between our story and the story of the life of the artist. We may misunderstand the intentions that initially drove the making of the piece, of course. There remains something invisible about the mind of another no matter how intent the other may be on revealing her thought and feeling to us. However, as we experience the work aesthetically, as we exemplarize our experience of the work to show us what the form and content of it are like, part of the story of life of the artist gets included in the content of the exemplar representation of what the work is like. For our experience exhibits to us how we conceive of the creative action of the other, her creation of the artwork. That exemplar representation of the artwork from our conscious experience becomes part of our story of the story of the life of the artist. We may be wrong in what we think. We may wrong in what we think about O'Keefe as we exemplarize our conscious experience of her painting of *Ice Cave*, for example. But it is part of our representation, our exemplarization, existing before the fall of words breaks the silence of our response, that painting the work is part of the life of the artist. We may be unsure of what is communicated, but the incorporation of action of the artist in our representation of what our conscious experience is like makes the experience communal.

Is there anything special about art in this form of representation? As I am conscious of any action of another, I may represent the action of the other in my representation of what the action is like. There is something special if not unique about the art experience. It is the communal aspect of focusing aesthetic attention on the experience of the artwork to form an exemplar representation of what the work is like in terms of the exemplar to reveal form and content. That is what the artist does no matter how much is accidental and the result of unconscious influences. The artist has chosen, as a free and autonomous agent, to confront you with a task she must undertake as an artist. She chooses to confront you with an object that evokes consciousness and challenges you to construct form and content in the exemplarization of the consciousness of it.

The revelation that takes us back to the story with which we began is simple and transparent. How I choose to construct meaning out of my experience shows me what I am like. I am doing this. Others may intervene and cajole me, but I stand as the point of choice of projection. I am that

point of the story I create and the projection of the content onto the world. My experience of the deeds and episodes of my life are the exemplars that carry the meaning I give them, however biased or even self-serving my exemplarization of them might be. I confess I somewhat mistrust the verbal articulation of the story. There is a story of my life carried by the experiences of my life as vehicles of representation. That level of representation, however mixed it becomes with verbal representation, is, though fallible in construction, still grounded in the experiences of my life. I exemplarize them as the vehicles of content. Art confronts us with the challenge of exemplarizing the experience of the artwork, and the challenge is extended from art to life as we form exemplar representation of the experiences of our life. Art challenges us to exemplarize our experience of art, and extends the challenge to life. Our representations may not be accurate representations of the complexities of life, but they are at least grounded in themselves as they refer to themselves as well as all the rest. They have the security of self-representation, the exemplar is a member of the class it represents, however great the adventure of extrapolation beyond the exemplar may be. Art teaches us to take exemplarization from art to life.

There is another question, raised by Hume (1739). What ties the components of the story together into a unified whole? Notice first, as others have, both Velleman (2003) and Fischer (2009), that interpretation and projection allows for re-interpretation and re-projection by the same individual. Simply put, as long as I live, the story might change, including the story about my past. Another can tell the final story of my life, once I am dead. And then, of course, it is the story of me told by another and not by me. And there will be multiple stories, multiple interpretations, even if I were, per impossible, able to record every moment of my life. It looks, then, as though the story of the self is equivocal, whether told by the person or another, whether received by the person or another.

UNIFYING THE STORY AND THE SELF

There is, nevertheless, a synchronic if not a diachronic unity of the self. At a moment, there is content I have constructed out of the experiences and actions of my life. There is what I make of them. I can observe where I am, the meanings and projects I have made, and say, "I am here." But what about the observation, put in Hume's terms, of what I find as I look into myself? It seems as though that observation must dangle outside the bundle, and when I observe the elements of the story, that observation will remain outside. This creates the illusion that the story of me leaves me dangling outside the story of me. The storyteller is outside the story. But that is an

illusion. The observation, like any experience, taken as the object of attention, may become an exemplar of representation. The observation is at the same time a vehicle of representation, referring to itself as it refers to the other elements of me bundled together. It is representation of all the parts of the story at the moment. So it is a representation of itself as well. It exhibits what it is like to contemplate oneself. It is like having a thought about all of your thoughts. That thought about all of your thoughts is itself one of your thoughts. It is about all thoughts and, being one of those thoughts, about itself. The story about the story is part of the story.

So there are activities of the self that loop back onto themselves, revealing and referring to themselves, as they refer to the story. What holds the story together, I suggest, is those activities. Like other exemplarized activities, those states, which I have called *keystone* (Lehrer, 1997, 2007) states, reveal and refer to themselves. It is tempting to think of these states as higher order or metalevel states, but that is not quite right. Like other exemplarized activities, the keystone states, which are supported by other components of the story, reveal and refer to themselves and are level transcendent and level ambiguous. My choice of a keystone as a metaphor is carefully chosen because of the natural way in which the keystone, while it supports other stones in the arch, is at the same time supported by those stones. Moreover, a keystone may be a loop that connects the arches supporting a dome. It loops back onto itself. Level transcendence finds a natural realization in the keystone loop.

OWNERSHIP CHOICE

To follow Fischer (1994, 2009) further into his story, let me suggest calling the states that hold the story of the life together ownership states. This may seem to depart from the idea of Fischer that the ownership of activities is captured by the view that such activities are ones the agent would think, "This is up to me." I suggest that the ownership states are keystone states. Nevertheless, as I choose activities as being my activities, free acts of self-expression, that choice is itself a free act of self-expression. As my act of choice selects my acts of self-expression and is, at the same time, one of those acts, it chooses itself as a vehicle in the story of my life. That choice is a vehicle of content, but it is also part of the content of the story. It refers to my other actions of self-expression and to itself.

Why, in addition to the actions of self-expression, is the ownership choice necessary? There are two reasons. First, as I have noted, there may be nothing in the character of the actions to tie them together in a

cohesive way. More important, secondly, is that we need some characterization of what makes the sentences in the story a story about my life, that is, a story about me. The story theory of a life contains a problem that resembles the problem that arises for a bundle theory of the self. The problem for the bundle theory of the self is that the components of the bundle are related in a special way, simply put in the first person, my states are not just an arbitrary collection, not even an arbitrary collection of states that are cohesive in some way. They have a special relation to each other as a result of all of them being states of me. There is something wrong with the idea that you can take a collection of states from various people, one from person one, one from person two and so forth, and claim that the collection of states is a person or a self. The states in the collection are, individually, states of different people, and the collection of states is a collection of the states of no one, no person, no self. Similarly, you could take a collection of actions, which, individually, are actions of self-expression, but the collection of such actions is not the story of any life of any person.

If the argument is accepted, we are left with the problem of explaining how the states of a person, or the actions of an agent, are tied together into a collection that constitutes a self or the story of the life of a self. The answer, I have suggested, is an ownership choice. Again, putting the matter in the first person, I observe and choose those actions that are exemplarized, which are both the sentences in the story of myself and are parts of the content of my story. I appropriate them as actions of self-expression by an ownership choice that is itself appropriated as an action of self-expression. The actions of self-expression are tied up, down, and together in a loop of ownership choice. That choice is a free act of self-expression, tying itself into the story of my life.

It is important to notice that the ownership choice has a similarity to the choice that completes a work of art. There are many components of a work, both physically, colors and shapes, and temporally, the stages of the creation of the work. At some point, there is a choice that makes the components of the work all components of one work. In the case of painting, spatial location may suggest the unity of the piece. But other works are spatially and temporally disparate and disconnected. Consider performance works that occur in disparate places but are a single work. It is a choice made by the artist, that these are all parts of the work, my work for example. The story of my work incorporates the choice that all these actions, all these creations, are my life, the story of my life. There is, for the artist especially, put in the first person, my story of my art, my exemplar representations of what constitutes my artistic life and the story thereof. That story is art of the artist.

REASONS AND PREFERENCES

I have insisted on the autonomy of exemplar representation in the content of world making. Now we may put the claim as one concerning autonomy in the construction of the story of one's life and the world thereof. I insist, as well, that not all exemplarization is autonomous; some of it is automatic and dominated by habit, but autonomy plays a role in the ownership choice. It is fundamental in the choice of the artist that a work is part of his work. He chooses it rather than disregarding it, and, of course, he may add the conventional mark of a signature. But now we must confront more directly the autonomy of ownership choice and artistic choice generally.

To move toward an account of autonomy, I first want to explain how this ownership choice looping back onto itself connects with the idea advanced by Fischer that my actions of self-expression are actions that are up to me. I have argued in detail elsewhere (Lehrer, 2004) that there is a special form of choice or preference for choice, a power preference of a preference structure pertaining to a given action. I build upon Frankfurt's (1969, 1971) notion of higher order preference in this but avoid regress with a loop. The power preference is a level transcending preference that is a preference for itself as well as the other preferences pertaining to the action in question. What counts as a reason for a person, I argued (Lehrer, 2004), depends on a preference, which I have called an *ultrapreference*, for forming preferences according to the system of reasons that guides the preferences, choices, and actions of the person. The ultrapreference is itself a power preference because it is itself guided by the preferred system of reasons. A power preference of a person is an autonomous or free preference, and an action realizing the preference is a free action expressing agency when the person has that power preference because he or she prefers to have it.

What more could be required by an action to be mine, for me to be the author or owner of the action, than for it to realize a preference for choice that I have because I prefer to have it? If I am an artist, for example, and choose my work as completed because I prefer that and have that preference because I prefer to have it, then my choice is mine. I am autonomous. Frankfurt (1969, 1971) stresses wholehearted choice as freedom. The notion of autonomous preference based on a power preference for the preference structure itself, differs from Frankfurt's account in not requiring, as he does, a lack of conflict. Artistic creation is, I know first hand, rife with conflict. Yes, sometimes the conflict dissolves in an exotic moment of aesthetic satisfaction with a creation and is wholehearted in Frankfurt's sense. But choice need not result from preference free of conflict to be autonomous, to be mine, that is, for me to be author and agent of it. Dylan Thomas in a radio broadcast remarked that his poetry was always unsatisfactory and

experimental. The remark of an artist indicates that the work, that is chosen to be what it is by the artist, is not chosen without any residual conflict between preferences, including preferences at different levels of preference. I can prefer to have the preference structure I have leading to the preference of my self-portrait, *MetaMe*, in the collection of Prof. Engel in Geneva, reproduced on the cover about my work by Olsson (2003), without resolving aesthetic preferences. It could be more realistic. It could be more abstract. I could look more confident. I could look wilder. The complexity and conflict among my preferences is a conflict I prefer. It enriches my art and keeps it from being predictable. I chose the painting as finished autonomously, though not, in Frankfurt's sense, wholeheartedly, for I preferred the preference structure leading to that choice even though it was not free of conflict.

Fischer proposes ownership as a condition of the kind of freedom required for moral responsibility. The account of ownership choice proposed here in terms of power preference expands into an account of a free action resulting from a power preference. An ultrapreference for being guided by a system of reasons is a power preference that makes the reasons my reasons for action. This goes beyond what Fischer proposes. Guidance by reasons and being open to such guidance must be something I prefer. The account is compatiblist, not semi, but full. Fischer has declared himself agnostic on the issue of the compatibility of freedom and determinism. My proposal is that freedom of action is the result of my action being up to me, as Fischer suggests, and guided by reasons as I prefer. My free action is one I perform because of my power preference for the action to be guided by my reasons.

Fischer and Ravizza (1998) have insisted on the importance of being open to the guidance of reasons. They should recognize that whether something is a reason that will guide my actions—that is, a reason for me—depends on my preference for being guided by such reasons. As an artist, to be autonomous and creative, I have to choose what considerations, what critiques, for example, will guide my work, and, more importantly, by implication which ones will not. An artist may have his reasons for what he does, though at times he will eschew guidance for spontaneity, but he must, if he is autonomous, choose what will guide his work. Being guided by reasons in a way that renders me free and not manipulated by a line of reasoning requires that I choose, or prefer to choose, to be guided in my choices and actions by such reasons. It must be up to me, not only that I do what I do, but that I am guided by the reasons I am. Manipulation by reasons will not make me free. Suppose I am an artist whose work is manipulated by the reasoning of a successful gallery owner imposing his commercially viable aesthetic using financial pressure. My work is not free

action of self-expression. Obviously, if the free action is to be an action of self-expression, it must be up to me what reasons guide my actions. My account of that self-expression is that the guidance of reasons results from an ultrapreference.

This may seem too intellectual, but consider any difficult choice of what to do, what career to choose and where, what mate to choose and when. You will see that you are confronted with a choice of values, a choice of what reasons should guide you. The choice of the action and the choice of a system of values occur together, are tied together. When Martin Luther said, "I can do no other," he was speaking in bad faith. It was up to him and a matter of his choice whether to do what he did. One may admire the determination of Luther without agreeing to his account. It was his choice and so were his values and reasons.

Now we come to the conclusion and the exhibition of the relationship between choice, self-expression, and ownership. There are choices, ownership choices of action and guidance of reasons, that tie together the free actions of self-expression into a story of the life of a self. It is my choice what belongs in that story, though others may demur, and that ownership choice is an action that ties the other choices and actions into the story of my life. That action, like others in the story, has a duality of being at the same time a vehicle of representation of content and the content represented as the vehicle loops back unto itself as part of the content.

CONCLUSION

Fischer argued that the free actions, the actions of self-expression, play a special role in the story of the person in that they are the vehicles of content for the construction of that story. I have argued that those actions are both representations in the story of life, vehicles of content, and, at the same time, part of content represented. In this they are like a sample of the life of the person. A sample plays the special role of being an exemplar functioning as a vehicle of content and part of the content. The exemplar represents content as part of the story. It loops back onto itself to become part of what the exemplarized story is about.

Exemplarized actions loop back on to themselves, referring to themselves, as they exhibit a part of the story they represent. Finally, I have suggested that there is choice, though not always a reflective choice, of what actions become parts of the story of the life of the person. Put in the first person, I appropriate those actions as part of me in contrast to actions from which I am alienated, an unintended offense to another, for example. The choice involves a judgment of value, and, I propose, that is a kind of generic value that a life and the story of the life possess.

The exemplars, sometimes paradigms of actions in the story of a life, are both medium and content at the same time. It is like International Klein Blue in the painting *Monochrome Blue* by Klein. The color of the painting provides an exemplar of experience of color that gives you a new conception of the color by exhibiting what it is like. Exemplary actions make up the story of the life of a person by being exemplarized, conceptualized in the same way, referring to themselves and exhibiting what they are like. Exemplarization of an experience of action involves a loop of self-reference. Minimally, the choice of the experience of the action as self-expression in the story may give the exemplarized experience of the action an inferential role connecting the representation with the experience of other actions in the story of a life. As Anscombe (1957) and Davidson (2007) taught us, there are many ways to represent an action, and the way in which a person represents the action connects it with other parts of the life.

There is, finally, a global choice selecting what actions are part of the story. I have called it the ownership choice. It is the choice of the story told as the story of the person—for example, of the story I choose as my story. That choice is itself an exemplar in the story. It is both part of the telling of the story and part of the content of the story told. It loops back onto itself enclosing itself in the story. The ownership choice is a kind of keystone loop in the edifice of the self and self-expression. It refers to all the choices and actions of the story as it refers to itself and, in that way, is one of grandest free actions of self-expression. It refers to all the free actions of self-expression. It is the choice that might be expressed by saying, "Yes, I choose that as my story up to now. That is my life to date." The ownership choice is a free action of self-expression realizing a preference I have because I prefer to have it. It tells the story of your life referring to what is contained in the story and is, itself, so contained.

This story about the choice of the story of life, about the ownership choice of the components of the self becoming part of the story of the self, is the guide to the story of the corpus of the artist. The rest of us may or may not feel the need to construct the story of our life. We may or may not feel obliged to pick out experiences of salient episodes and actions in our life to exemplarize them and convert them into the form and content of the story of a life. But the artist, whose actions are the creations of artworks serving as vehicles for the presentation of conscious experiences to the artist, at least, and to others, almost certainly, is confronted with the necessity of knowing what his work is like. To know what his work is like, he must exemplarize his conscious awareness of what he does to choose his path of creative activity, of what do leave and what to change and how and when. And the work is his work. If he chooses to leave a piece, he is making a choice about the story of his life as an artist, for it is his work.

So the question arises with respect to every creation: what is it like? That necessitates the exemplarization of the experience of it. As he chooses, preferring to choose because he prefers to choose in that way, from those preferences and reasons for preference, his choice is an ownership choice. He is choosing to make his creation of that piece part of the story of his artistic life. The distinction between art and life vanishes as he chooses his art, constructing form and content in the exemplarization of the form and content of it. He may not be able to tell us what the form and content of his works is like. There is a reason. It is that the conscious experience he creates with his work is part of content, part of what it is like, and is inseparable from the content. He knows what his work is like, even when he cannot say what it is like. When he does say what it is like, he will want to show you the work, so that your conscious experience will fill in that part of the meaning or content that he cannot verbally express. The content is there, in experience, not here, in discourse.

What about the ownership choice of the artist? It is special in the way it is connected with his art. What he keeps tells the story of his life just because it is a salient action in his life. But what he keeps, the artwork, evokes an experience that exhibits the content of the work. So, the choice of his works, of what will be his work and what will not be his work, is a choice of story within a story. The life is a story, but the content of the works is the content of a world that he chooses as he chooses the works. Of course, his choice of the story within the story, the content within the works that he chooses, is a choice of what he his like. Anyone who acts, on the Fischer account, when the action is free action of self-expression, exhibits to you in your experience of his actions, what his story is like. But the artist transcends the first level of representation in the exemplarization of the experience of his actions. He creates works that give us another level of representation in the exemplarization of the experience of his art. We see a story within his story. This is no regress. His story loops back onto itself as he chooses the first level of representation incorporating another level in his story which ties the content of his stories together in his ownership choice. The artist autonomous chooses the world and self of his art. The ownership choice loops back unto itself, tying the created world of the art and artist up, down, and together.

What about the stories others tell? Is the story told by a person consisting of his free actions of self-expression a constraint on the stories others can tell of the life of the person? It is more than that. It is the life of a person chosen by the person as an action of self-expression. Others can comment on the life of a person, retelling the story in their own way. Only the person himself or herself can use his or her choices and actions as samples, exemplars, keystones of free self-expression of himself or herself. I note in closing

that the contrast between the individual and social conception of a person are themselves tied together. The story the person tells, the individual story, is aggregated from the stories others tell about the actions of the person. The story others tell, the social story, is an aggregation of the stories others tell about those actions. The model of aggregation I proposed with Wagner (Lehrer and Wagner, 1981, Lehrer, 1997) is a model of vectors of influence articulated as the weights we give to the stories people tell. The story of aggregation with the mathematical modeling of it is a story I and Wagner have told and is part of my story, a part you may not know, like many of the most important parts of the stories of the life of a person. There is a social aggregation that represents a consensual story of a self. The individual may choose to accept or reject the consensual aggregation of the story. That choice is a special part of the story of self-expression, the freedom of self, and, the self itself. The choice of an artist to remain outside the consensual aggregation is the choice of the artist to remain outside the constraints of social convention. It is that choice that makes art that part of experience that changes the content of experience through the autonomy of artistic choice.

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CHAPTER 6

Aesthetics, Death, and Beauty

"Death is the mother of all beauty."
– *Wallace Stevens*

I have been discussing the role of the artist as he creates an object that provokes a conscious experience that we respond to aesthetically by converting it into an exemplar representation. The exemplarization of experience of creative actions plays a special role in the story of the life of the artist. As he takes ownership of his creative actions in an ownership choice, the representation of his actions, his creative actions most especially, become the story of his life. The exemplarization of the experience of the choice loops back onto itself to complete the story for the moment. The idea of the completion of the story of the life of an artist, of the complete representation of a life, raises the question about the relationship of death to the completion of the story. As we think about the story of the life of the artist, and in this we share a common bond and fate of choosing our story until death, the implications of death for the story of life, for that grand aesthetic act of the exemplarization of the experiences of life that completes the life, it is essential to address the position of death in art, beauty, and the story of life. Death completes the story of a life. But the experienced moments of life precede death, if not the process of dying. So, to put the matter in the first person, where I shall put it for this chapter and hold it there, it seems that my death is not part of the story of my life for me, not an experience of mine to be exemplarized. Yet, I shall suggest, death adds value and sometimes beauty to a life. If I am right in this, then the discussion of death will reveal something fundamental to our understanding of aesthetics. It will reveal that as we

exemplarize our experiences of our actions, and especially those moments of the reconfiguration of experience to create the form and content of art, world and self, we find the source of value in art and beauty in life.

To accomplish the goals of my discourse, I shall speak about the relevance of my death to my story of my life. Someone else might tell a different story. This is my story about the place and experience of death in my life, though it is not the whole story. So, some remarks about my life. My parents are dead. Many of my friends are dead. My life is, at the moment, enhanced by the proximity of my death. I do not know when I shall die. It is the time for me to understand my death, philosophically and artistically. Yes, I know, some existentialists, Sartre (1943), for example, think that death is unintelligible. Others, analytic philosophers, Feldman (1992), for example, reached similar conclusions—that death, like life, is mysterious. The only way to discover whether death is intelligible, whether a person can make sense of his or her death, is to think about it. This is my experiment.

As the father of my first child, in his first year I discovered the anxiety of death. I observed the infant who had recently come into existence, and I realized with wonder that, just as he had come into existence, I would cease to exist. I was doomed to nonexistence. There was nothing I could do to avoid my doom. I was doomed and with it my world, that is, the world that I create from my experience by exemplarizing my actions and experiences. I understood for the first time the Housman (1936) line: "I shall put a knife in my heart, and all you good folks will die." My exemplar representation of the good folks dies with me as my experiences and my exemplarized memories of my experiences vanish with me. My world and I were doomed to nonexistence. I felt the existential angst of Heidegger (1949); felt that my being was being onto death. It was the emotional awareness of my mortality. The subjectivity of death haunted me.

I was a philosopher, and having felt, I began to think. The first thought was close to the materialism of Lucretius (99–53 BCE). I was, after all, a collection of atoms, and, though I might feel that it was very important that the atoms be organized in a way that constituted my life, those feelings were just the result of the way the atoms were organized. Were they organized in another way, I would feel differently. A good friend of mine, who understood existential angst very well, took his own life, and I understood that there was no necessity in the existence of the desire to exist. Objectivity, combined with materialism, seemed to reassure me. The existence of me and my world, though it might matter to some, could not have the importance I attached to it in my subjectivity.

Objectivity confronted subjectivity in a less materialistic mode as I thought about the fact that there was no source of anxiety in the fact that I had not existed before I was born. The absence of me and my world before

I came into existence did not seem to matter, and, by parity of reason, the absence of me and my world after my death should matter no more. This is the symmetry thesis. Yet, empirically, emotionally, death does matter. So why? There are two answers. One is biological. One is existential. Biology first. The utility of a biological drive to continue to exist for an individual and species seems obvious. So perhaps existential anxiety is simply the reflection of a powerful drive to continue to exist combined with the recognition that it will at some point fail to be realized. There are two useful components, a drive to continue to exist and an intellectual grasp of truth. Both are useful, but when they combine there is the stress resulting from the recognition of the truth that the drive will be thwarted. One support for this theory is that reflection on the symmetry thesis does, from my experience, reduce the anxiety connected with death. Another is that many experience the disappearance of the anxiety as age reduces the drive to exist. Perhaps this captures the wit of Zarathustra, who, when asked what he advised about death replied only, "Die at the right time" (Nietzsche, 1967, 69). By the right time, he meant, I believe, when the body is biologically ready for death.

Whatever the truth of the biological thesis, there does seem to be something more problematic and paradoxical about death. It is probably related to the insight of Augustine (1950) and Descartes (1986) about the cogito and, more simply, a kind of necessity in the statement or thought, "I exist." But I think that there is more to the death paradox than that. For someone might reply that, of course, if you think or say you exist, then, necessarily, you do, which means, the thought or statement "I do not exist" is necessarily false, taken literally, at any rate, but there is no paradox in that. The paradox is better captured by the philosophy of Sartre (1943), to which de Beauvoir (1966, 1984) seems committed as well, concerning the self, consciousness, freedom, and the past.

Suppose I ask what I am, and answer in terms of the story of my life to date. Is that what I am? In a way, but as Sartre notes, I am my past in the mode of not being it. The reason is that I am conscious of my projection into the future and the freedom of choice about it I confront. So part of what I am is my future choices. However, they do not yet exist. Of course, my past no longer exists either, except in my present consciousness of it. My future choices do not yet exist apart from my present consciousness of them. My consciousness of memories of my past actions and my conscious anticipations of my future are exemplars I can exemplarize, convert to representations, to tell the story of my life. But my present consciousness is what I am for me now. Looked at this way, the self, the I, is not the past, which no longer exists, nor the future, which does not yet exist, but present consciousness, which is its past and its future in the mode of not being

either. The self, so considered, is a paradoxical or impossible object. It is literally not what it is (Sartre, 1943).

To see the point of this observation, consider again Hume (1739) attempting to observe himself and finding only some impression or idea. His critics note that there is something beyond the impressions and ideas, something that is not those impressions or ideas, namely, Hume, who observes those impressions and ideas. Put in the mode of Sartre, there is something beyond the conscious states you have already experienced, namely, the consciousness of them, which projects beyond them. Moreover, this result is not just the result of Hume's special metaphysics, for no matter what you take yourself to be, it appears that the self is something that is projected by itself into an additional reflection upon whatever you take yourself to be. The additional reflection is something else. What is it? Is it the self?

What is the implication of these reflections concerning the self for the issue of death? If you try to think of yourself as dead, then you are thinking of something, a self, essentially projected into the future, something that is its past only in the mode of not being it. Your exemplarization of past actions to compose the story of your life, no matter how complete, leaves you with the comment, "That is not all there is to my story of my life." At the same time, when you are thinking of yourself as dead, you are thinking of yourself as being just that past which you are not. Something that is not just the past is conceived of as being just the past. Contradiction! So death is unintelligible to the conscious self you are. To think of yourself as dead is to think of yourself as not being what you are.

Is this just a first-person issue? It does not seem to be only a first-person paradox. If I think of another as being essentially a conscious being projected into the future, then there is a paradox in the idea that something that is essentially a conscious being projected into the future is not that. Death of oneself or another is existentially paradoxical. If you think of others as dead, then you think of them as not them. The existential insight is important. There is, however, more to be said. The conception of the dead self, the self that does not exist, may be both paradoxical and contradictory, on one side, and enlightening and clarifying, on the other. We are perfectly capable of thinking clearly about impossible objects. Reid (1764, 1785) noted that we can conceive of impossible objects, and, indeed, our ability to conceive of them clearly and precisely is sometimes what enables us to prove that they do not exist. The dead self is a self that does not exist, but that does not make it inconceivable. Our death is conceivable; indeed, it is known.

Moreover, there is a deeper understanding of death to be obtained from returning to the problem Hume raised about looking into himself we discussed in the previous chapter. Suppose Hume consisted of

impressions and ideas connected in some way that Hume acknowledges is important. So, he is a bundle of impressions and ideas tied together by some identity creating relation. Yet it appears, as we noted in an earlier chapter, that he is not that, because there is something outside the bundle, some entity transcending the impressions and ideas, that is conscious of them. This begins to reveal the self as an impossible bundle. Something consisting of impressions and ideas tied together by the identity creating relation but in the mode of not being that bundle because the self is also that which observes what is in the bundle and, therefore, is not included in the bundle.

The solution to Hume's problem, which we examined in the previous chapter formulated in terms of ownership choice, sheds light on the issue of death. The solution is that the observation of what is in the bundle is itself, in Hume's terms, an impression or perception. Is it in the bundle? The reason for thinking that it is not in the bundle is that it is an observation of what is in the bundle. But it does not follow, as we noted in the previous chapter, from the fact that the impression is an impression of what is in the bundle that it is not itself in the bundle, as I have argued earlier (Lehrer 2002). The reason is that impression of what is in the bundle is exemplarized, and like other exemplarized impressions, refers to itself. It is exemplarized, an exemplar representation, referring to itself as it refers to everything in the bundle. Impressions, when the focus of attention, are exemplarized, and they become signs of themselves as they represent themselves among other things. They may, as Hume (1739) noted, stand for a plurality of impressions of which they are an instance.

I have argued, in agreement with Hume, that there is nothing mysterious about an impression being used to represent impressions of the same general kind by exhibiting what they are like. Indeed, I am indebted to him for the notion of exemplarization. The impression is a particular, to be sure, but a particular can represent, and, indeed, it can represent a class of things. We recall from the previous chapter, that Goodman (1968) gave the excellent example of a sample of cloth used to represent a plurality of pieces of cloth of the same kind, which, therefore, includes itself. The experience of sample is an exemplar, and the process of using the exemplar as a term of representation is exemplarization (Lehrer, 2000). Exemplarizing involves generalizing from the particular and arriving at a general conception signified by the particular, as Hume suggested, though we must add what Hume failed to remark upon, that the process marks a distinction between what is in the class and what is not. As the exemplar comes to stand for a class of objects, it has a consequence for the mind taking it as an exemplar, namely, that it distinguishes things in the class from things not in the class. There is no distinction without negation, there is no conceiving of anything for a human

without conceiving of what is not so conceived. The knot of our conception is tied with a not.

If impressions are exemplarized, then the impression that consists in observing other impressions can, at the same time, represent itself and constitute a representation of itself. In short, the impression that appears to be a residue outside the bundle of impressions and ideas is, in fact, itself enclosed in the bundle by a representational loop of exemplarization. Thus, the impression in question is, contrary to appearances, included in the bundle. As it observes and represents other impressions and ideas, it represents itself as well. The representational loop of exemplarization accounts for our knowing what conscious states are like, as I argued in Chapter Two and elsewhere (Lehrer, 2006). The conscious mind exemplarizes the states of which it is conscious when attention is focused upon them.

Let's return then to the topic of death and consider it from within the loop of exemplarization. The thought of myself as dead appears paradoxical because it is the thought of a living individual. It appears, then, that any thought of myself as dead is going to be contradictory. This is appearance only. It is like the problem of the residue in Hume. The thought that I have of myself as dead is a thought of the living self, to be sure, but if it is a thought of all that I have thought as my life spreads out completely before me in a final moment, it refers at the same time to itself. So that final complete thought, which is a thought of all my thoughts, is itself one of those thoughts. If it is my last thought, then that thought will capture what I am, and the bundle of experiences will be complete. The self-referential character of thought makes the thought experiment of the final complete thought intelligible. To be sure, that thought may be a thought of the future, of which I will not be conscious, but it is a thought that loops back onto itself representationally as it extends into the future intentionally. Again, if it is my last thought, it will be a thought of what I am, completed with my death. It is like the ownership choice of what I include in the story of my life. My final thought of all my thoughts combines with the ownership choice of what I include in my story of my life to complete my story of my life, for me.

I am not proposing that Sartre was unaware of this loop of consciousness; on the contrary, but I think he did not see that the loop could, in principle, give a person a complete conception of what he is at the moment of his death. So, death is not unintelligible, though a clear conception of death may be rare. The homely suggestion that you think of every moment as your last may or may not be good advice in life, but the exercise, practiced once, gives one a conception, and, perhaps a feeling as well, of what the dying self would be like in the last moment before death. It would be just what is contained in that thought about what you are looping back onto itself to completion.

Is there more to be said about death than that it is intelligible and may be captured in a final thought? There is a loop of exemplarization that ties a life together. But that leaves open the question of how to think about the life tied together in a loop. I propose the right way to think about life and, therefore, death, is as Fischer (2009) has suggested, aesthetically. A life and the closure of it with death is a story and an artwork. Heidegger (1949) writes of *Dasein* as being unto death. It is clear that for Heidegger, the angst connected with seeing your being as being unto death was a form of authenticity. But why authenticity? Why lead an authentic life rather than an amusing one, if authenticity does not amuse you? I believe the answer, of which Heidegger may have approved, is that the experience of beauty, and, especially, the beauty of a life requires that life be tied together in a way that requires the recognition of death.

"Death," Stevens (1990) wrote, "is the mother of all beauty." He has fascinated and puzzled people with that remark. It is not so puzzling. I recently attended a ceremony, a large and wonderful outdoor ceremony, to celebrate the death of my friend Glorya Mueller. She died well, sipping some wine with family the night before her death. I thought about the life of Glorya as I had offered to speak. Suddenly, as I focused attention on my experience of her life, a remarkable exemplar representation of it moved me in special way. The life of Glorya was a thing of beauty. My appreciation of the beauty of that life depended, in part, on the exemplar representation of the completion of it, on the wholeness of it, on its being what it was. I could not appreciate the beauty of that life, though I admired the way Glorya lived, until her death. Death gave birth to the beauty of that life. The loop of beauty spread like rings in a pond when a stone is cast. I thought of her appreciation of flowers, her wonderful creation of an environment of her unique hacienda. This seemed to me to be connected with her own sense of death at the end of life, her acceptance of it, her tying it into the loop of her life. Other people had pretty flowers. Hers, especially in her presence, were beautiful. That the life ends, that the world we represent out of the conscious experiences of our life will end, gives us a meaning that creates the experience of beauty. It is not an accident that a sunset, the end of days and a symbol of endings, is a natural source of beauty.

What is the explanation for this connection between beauty and death? It is more complicated than one would think. It is connected with the satisfaction of the senses. We say of wine and women as well as sunsets and songs that they are beautiful. But to find beauty we must be moved. We are moved by intensity and the evanescence of experience. Thought loops back onto endings for completeness. Experience is in the present. Is there just evanescence? Is the point that it will vanish in a moment? There is something else. There is eternity in the moment, in the exemplar representation of

experience, which Nietzsche (1967) captured in the doctrine of eternal recurrence. Death speaks the secret of beauty in the limpid-eared listener. Death says, "Tie this moment into your life for eternity." Is beauty eternal then? Just in the moment of life. Death completes the experience of the beauty of the eternal moment. Every artist knows that the experience of ending a work of art is an experience that completes it.

There is more to be said about beauty. It is the reconfiguration of experience in and by experience that shows you how everything can be changed and nothing remains the same, except in the exemplarization of the eternal moment (Lehrer, 2004). Art aims at that. Artists try to show you what flowers can be, trees can be, colors can be, and lines can be as they have never been before. And the content of everything is changed—flowers, trees, colors, and lines by our exemplarized experience of the form and content of the artwork. Sunflowers will never be the same after seeing Van Gogh [**Web ASK 27**], as we transfer the content of his paintings to the fields of Provence. It is that transformation of experience, of the exemplar representation content of experience, in which everything is changed by the transfer of content from art to life beyond art, though it remains the same. It rests on the assumption that everything is changed by the exemplarization of the end of life though it remains the same. This is an intelligible paradox. The painting of the flowers changes your conception of flowers and what flowers mean. The end of life changes your conception of a life and what life means. The particular flower and the particular life give meaning to other flowers and other lives and tie it all together in a loop of exemplarization.

I have spoken so positively of death related to beauty and meaning, that you might begin to see me as someone who celebrates death. I love life. I acknowledge the importance of the end of it. I add a personal thought. I almost bled to death once. My body had accepted the end of life. I felt an absence of struggle. I did not feel the need to resist or any anxiety. A pair of talented doctors saved my life. I returned to life, accepting my life again, day by day. With a good deal of blood of others and a great deal of dark chocolate (rich in iron) I recovered. I returned to my enthusiastic pleasure of the senses for which I am known by my friends. I love wine, wonder, and women. I love intellectual pursuit and artistic creation, especially as I seek to reconfigure experience, exemplarizing my conscious experience of what appears from my brush in my atelier. The experience is a thing of beauty.

I should end this discourse, but there is an issue remaining—life after death. Some will say that to raise the question of life after death is just to involve yourself with an unscientific and irrational superstition. There is no evidence of it. Others, Kierkegaard (1941) most notably, affirm that it is

passion, not science, that motivates belief in a life after death. We have an infinite passion for our own eternal beatitude, he says, that enables us to believe with certainty in the promise of it. So is it unscientific and irrational to believe in a life after death? I find that answer too quick and dogmatic. C. D. Broad (1958) and C. J. Ducasse (1951), among others, were empiricists who interested themselves with the issue applying the canons of science and reason to the question. I do not think either of them was governed by superstition. As they examined the evidence, especially Ducasse, they found most of it was misleading and/or fraudulent. But some evidence was not so readily shown to be so. A student asked Ducasse what conclusion he had reached about life after death. "Do people survive bodily death?" he asked. Ducasse is said to have replied with the question, "Do you want a scientific answer?" Having received an affirmative reply from the student, Ducasse answered, "Yes, sometimes, for a little while." Having met him when I was a student, I think the reply is one he might well have given. It is far from the eternal beatitude Kierkegaard passionately desired.

So what about Kierkegaard? It is a subjective matter, as he would have insisted. I love life but I do not have an infinite passion for eternal beatitude. Not as far as I can tell. This is not the place to enter into the rationality of believing in the existence of something for which you have an infinite passion. A person with such a passion might succeed and put aside rationality for the sake of faith. But what do I think? I follow the path of reason as far as it leads me, and at the end of the path, I attempt to reside there. Where reason dictates neither belief nor disbelief, I am content with uncertainty.

I have had spiritual experiences, however. I trembled, to my surprise, when I confronted the Wailing Wall and was drawn irresistibly to touch it. Upon touching it, I experienced a powerful emotion of presence. Such experiences are rare and mysterious. What is the explanation? What do they prove? I prefer to enjoy the memory of those experiences and let them become exemplar representations of something sacred. I do not use them as a premise of proof. I do not use the experiences as data to be explained. They become instead exemplar representations of the sacredness of being like a work of art. Is it life or art? It is art and life exemplarized together in a loop.

Does this influence, then, my views on death? It leads me toward Spinoza (2000). I feel myself to be a small modification of being looping back onto itself of something greater, of the modification of infinite attributes of being, of nature, perhaps of God identified with Nature. But are the attributes really infinite? They loop back onto themselves. There is infinity in a closed loop. This is not knowledge or necessity, however, but an exemplarized feeling or sentiment. The loop of the self onto itself in the completion of itself gives rise to the experience of beauty. It becomes a metaphor for a

greater loop of being onto itself of which we are a modification. Life, death, and beauty are tied up, down, and together in a metaphorical loop of being back onto itself. The meaning of life is a metaphor—a loop from the exemplarized experience of a finite moment to infinite eternity back to itself (Lehrer, 1997). Enjoy the figure.

"Man be my metaphor."

– Dylan Thomas

CHAPTER 7

Aesthetic Experience, Intentionality, and the Form of Representation

This chapter contains a midbook review of what has gone before. It is a summary and refinement of some of the details of the theory of exemplar representation developed with special application to the intentionality of mental states and works of art that are about the external world, ourselves, and the representation of both. Artworks and the creation of them confront us with conscious awareness that yield the exemplars of representation, creating form and content, that enters into the story of our life. There are two steps in the process of aesthetic appreciation that yields the value of new content. One step is the creation of new content in the exemplarization of the conscious experience arising from aesthetic attention to the artwork. Sometimes the content arises almost automatically, and sometimes the choice of interpretation of the artwork challenges us. The next step is the transfer of the content of the artwork to the world and life outside the artwork. Again, sometimes the transfer of the content occurs almost automatically, sometimes the choice of whether to interpret the world and life outside the artwork in terms of the content in the work challenges us. We are confronted at both steps with questions of justification and self-trust. These issues of justification and self-trust raise further questions of whether to accept or reject the testimony of others. These questions of how self-trust is connected with social consensus in representation and justification are the subject of a later chapter.

Here is the review of how exemplar representation allows the individual to understand the character of representation and intentionality. Exemplar representation shows us something that goes beyond any description of the

character of representation and intentionality as it shows us what representation and intentionality are like. Exemplars used to show us what the represented objects of exemplar representation are like show us, at the same time, how we represent those objects, and, hence, what it is like to represent or think about the world. Thinking about the world exhibits the relation of intentionality.

EXEMPLARIZATION AND INTENTIONALITY

Intentionality is a mark of the mental, as Brentano (1874) noted. Any representation or conception of anything has the feature of intentionality, which, informally put, is the feature of being about something that may or may not exist. Visual artworks are about something, whether something literal or abstract. So the artwork is a mentalized physical object. Aesthetic experience of the artwork illustrates the nature of intentionality as we focus attention on the phenomenology of the sensory exemplar and it becomes an exemplar representation as we have noted. We generalize the sensory exemplar, as Hume (1739) noted, as a step in conception, exemplarization, which combines with marking a distinction between the plurality of the objects of the generalization, and what is not included in that plurality. This focus of attention on the exemplar in aesthetic experience exhibits what the intentional object is like. It also shows us at the same time what our conception of the intentional object is like. The exemplar is Janus-faced, looking in one direction outward toward the objects conceived and in the other direction inward toward our conceiving of them. Wittgenstein (1922) remarked that the form of representation cannot be described, it can only be shown. Focusing aesthetic attention on the exemplar shows us the form of representation as it provides an experience of intentionality.

We began our discussion of aesthetic experience with the ostensive generalization of the sensory exemplar to other sensory particulars. We moved beyond discussion of ostensive generalization to the inferential exemplarization of the sensory particular to refer to material entities. We turned finally to the autonomous interpretation of the sensory particular. Our aesthetic attention on the artwork, focusing on the sensory, shows us what the experience of intentionality is like. What it is like is exhibited by the sensory particular we exemplarize to refer beyond it. Aesthetic experience of exemplarization shows us how we connect ourselves with our world as we conceive it. When we become reflective, as artists or art appreciators, and see ourselves as choosing how we exemplarize to make our world, the activity becomes part of our story of ourselves. Take the aesthetic step into exemplarization, and the exemplarization of further steps converts them

into exemplar representations of the self, including the grandest exemplarization of them all as the experience of what we are doing becomes an exemplar of ownership tying all our exemplarizations up, down, and together in our story.

The first task by way of understanding the move from simple ostensive exemplarization, generalizing from one conscious experience to ownership exemplarization, is to give an account of the phenomenology of the sensory exemplar in aesthetic experience. There are many ways to view a work of art. One way is to focus attention on what the sensory experience is like. I do not claim a genetic priority for aesthetic experience. On the contrary, focusing attention on the sensory character, on the phenomenology of the experience, is a sophisticated response for an adult viewer of an artwork as Fodor (1983) insisted. The aesthetic response is often described as a response to the immediate character of sensory experience, and I have described it that way above. I must add a caveat—the description of the experience as immediate can be misleading if it is taken as a historical starting point.

We often respond perceptually to sensory qualities without focusing attention on them. Sensory experience often triggers representation of the external world without attracting attention to itself. It acts as input of a perceptual module yielding representation of the external world as the output representation. In such cases, experience passes through the mind unnoticed to fulfill our practical needs of perceiving what the external world is like That mode of response contrasts with the aesthetic mode of attending to what the sensory character of the artwork is like, focusing attention in a different way.

We need an account of the special mode of experience that is the aesthetic mode directed toward the sensory character of the experience. A good example of the aesthetic mode is direction toward a simple quality of conscious experience, what in the literature of consciousness are called qualia. I shall start here, but with the caveat that the aesthetic mode is not always focused on simple qualities. Sometimes, as a gestalt shift exhibits, the phenomenology is figurative and blocks attention to simple sensory qualities. To clarify the direction of conscious experience, we need some account of how we know what conscious experience is like when our attention is drawn to it, in aesthetic experience, as an example.

AN ACCOUNT OF CONSCIOUS EXPERIENCE

I began this book with an account of conscious experience in the opening chapters, developing ideas from my earlier works (Lehrer, 1996, 1996a,

2006). I argued that direction of attention to some sensory exemplar of blue, as we view *Monochrome Blue* [**Web ASK 1**] by Klein, for example, is sufficient for us to know what the sensory exemplar is like. Reflect for a moment on the fact that we know what the exemplar, what the conscious experience is like, if we direct our attention to it. We know something more than simply that the painting is blue. That we could have known that by reading the title or reading about it in a text and not viewing the painting or even a reproduction of it at all. But when we direct our attention to the color, we know what the conscious sensory experience is like. We know, not just that it is blue, but what the particular blue sensation or experience of the painting is like. We come to know something beyond what could be known from any description of it. We know what the conscious experience is like in a way that is ineffable. The same thing is said of artworks. That there is something in the experience of artworks that is ineffable. You have to experience them to know what they are like. Why?

There is a puzzle coiled in the remark that conscious experience, of which aesthetic experience is a species, is both ineffable and also that we know what such experience is like. The puzzle is that knowing what it is like involves knowing that it is like other things, which takes us beyond the particular to some level of generality, at the same time that we deny that this knowledge can be conveyed by description. Moreover, knowledge of what it is like, contrary to what some philosophers have suggested, such as Lewis (1988), is more than knowing how to identify the experience. We know *that* it is like what it is. To know that something is the case, we must have some conception of what it is like. This is a conception of what is contained in the experience. A conception of what is contained in the experience is a conception of the content of the experience. Moreover, and finally, our conception of what it is like must be true of what it is like; the content conceived must be true of the experience and not an error, if we *know* what the experience is like.

I do not intend to beg deep philosophical issues about conception, content, and truth by the foregoing remarks. My contention is only that, describing the matter in a commonsense, natural, and perhaps naïve manner, it is natural to say that when we know what a conscious experience is like, we have some conception of what it is like, of what is contained in the experience, of the content of the experience, and of what is true of it. So we experience knowledge, conception, content, and truth in consciousness that is ineffable. There is, then, ineffable experience, knowledge, conception, content, and truth exhibited in conscious experience and aesthetic experience that cannot be described. I suggested in passing that if we have any conscious experience of intentionality, the foregoing remarks imply this would be something that could only be shown and not described.

However natural the foregoing reflection on knowing what conscious experience is like, the purpose of philosophy is not simply to describe or re-describe a phenomenon but to explain it. How can we explain why conscious aesthetic experience gives us knowledge, conception, content, and truth about the experience that cannot be described? The problem is that knowledge, conception, and truth seem to be exactly what description is suited to convey.

The solution to the problem, which I have been advancing for many years, and now in this book, is derived from Hume (1739), was developed by Reid (1785), later by Goodman (1968), and more recently by myself and others with various modifications. Hume (1739) raised the question of how, starting with particular sense impressions, we arrive at general conceptions, that is, of how the particular, which he held to be the starting point of all operations of the mind, could become general. His answer was simple and elegant. We can use the particular to stand for a plurality of particulars. Goodman (1968) used the notion of the particular as a sample or exemplar to refer to a property of objects. Combining and modifying the two, we may take the conscious sensory experience, a particular blue experience, for example, as an exemplar that we use to stand for and refer to a plurality of objects. I have called the activity or process of using the exemplar in this way, exemplarization earlier. That we use particulars as samples to represent a plurality of objects I take as beyond controversy, as any visit to a paint store shows you.

The question of how we exemplarize conscious experiences will take us beyond the jejune to theory and controversy. I repeat here a minimal version of the theory of exemplarization of consciousness and aesthetic experience contained in earlier chapters. As we move from experience to the exemplarization of it and obtain a conception of content, we add cognitive activity. Some, Kriegel (2004) most notably, have argued that some procedure like exemplarization of the experience is constitutive of conscious experience. One could choose to use "conscious" in such a way that made it true by definition that conscious states had this feature. My reason for not doing so is that my experience convinces me that I am conscious, upon just awaking, for example, before cognitive processing including exemplarization occurs. I then have conscious experience prior to conceiving of what the conscious state is like. Moreover, there seems to me to be severely brain damaged patients who are conscious but lack any understanding, any conception, and any knowledge of the conscious experiences—pain, for example—they are undergoing. Finally, as noted above, ordinary perception may involve responding to a sensory stimulus with a conception of some external object, as others (Dretske, 1981, Fodor, 1983) insist, without forming a conception of what the sensory experience itself is

like. It may suffice to say that there is some underlying state that is exemplarized in cognitive processing of consciousness. If the existence of the underlying state is acknowledged, the question of whether to call that state *conscious* prior to the cognitive processing may become verbal.

The question then arises as to what happens when a conscious state is exemplarized. There are two operations that are essential. The first, mentioned by Hume (1739), is generalization. There is generalization that may be in part automatic but may also have a contextual or autonomous aspect. The experience of a pain and other sensations that attract attention immediately leads to a generalization that is spontaneous and probably automatic. Generalizing reveals itself behaviorally in subsequent identification and reidentification. There is, however, another component to exemplarizing that is often implicitly included in the notion of generalizing, but it is useful to emphasize this component because of the special importance of it in conceptualization. It is the component of forming a distinction between the experience and what it is not. Spencer-Brown (1969) argues that conceptualization begins with marking a distinction between something and what it is not. It is natural to suppose that in generalizing, one distinguishes the objects in the plurality of the generalization from what is not in the plurality. But the conception of something not being in the plurality adds to the inferential role of the concept. It is one thing to respond to a group of objects, and it is a further conceptual step to distinguish that group of things from what they are not using the exemplar to mark the distinction. Marking the distinction with the exemplar in that way is essential to the inferential and, hence, fully conceptual role of the exemplar as a term in thought.

Once the distinction is marked by the exemplar, we have marked what is contained in the marked plurality from what is not so marked. So marking a distinction in terms of the exemplar that stands for the plurality in the marked space is an activity of using the exemplar to mark a distinction between those things that have the form of the exemplar and those that do not. The form of the exemplarized experience consists of the operation of exemplarization. The form of the distinction is the operation of exemplarizing the exemplar to mark a distinction. Spencer-Brown (1969) argued, we noted, that the laws of form based on marking a distinction, whether by exemplarization or in some other way, connect with principles of logic that generate the power of mathematics without paradox. Exemplarizing, I propose, is generalizing plus marking a distinction.

I should make it clear that the account that I am offering here does not depend on the account of laws of form proposed by Spencer-Brown. Some other formal and logical structure might be combined with exemplarization to obtain the same result. However, it is important to notice that exemplarization has the power of conceptualization, of distinguishing the content

of what is conceived, contained in the structure of it. Once that is acknowledged, it confirms the proposal of Goodman (1968) and Hume (1739) that using an exemplar to stand for or represent a property or plurality as the conceptual power of world making coiled at the center of it.

My proposal is that exemplarization explains how we know and how we conceive of what the content of these experiences is like in a way that cannot be described. Why must any linguistic description leave out something of what the experience is like and what is contained in it? Why is linguistic description incomplete? The simple answer is that the experience is part of a conception or representation of what the experience is like. Why cannot a verbal description give us the same conception? What role does the exemplarized exemplar play in conception and representation that explains why the knowledge of what the experience is like is in some way ineffable? The answer is ready in the role of the exemplar in exemplarized conception or representation. The exemplar represents what the experience is like by exhibiting what it is like. The word "blue" cannot exhibit to us what the experience of blue is like in the way that experience exhibits what the experience is like. The role of referring to an experience by exhibiting what the experience is like makes the experience part of the concept or representation that cannot be filled by a word. A word might refer to the same objects, but it cannot function in the same way referring to them by showing us what they are like.

Mary, in Jackson's (Jackson, 1982) example discussed earlier in this book, who has complete verbal knowledge of the world as one cares to imagine but lacks experience of color, illustrates the point. When she experiences color, new sensory experience represents what is contained in her experience. That way of conceiving or representing her experience is not available until she has the experience. She cannot exemplarize an experience she does not have. Note, however, that it is not simply having the experience that yields knowledge of what it is like. Were she to have a massive stroke that deprived her of the power of conception and representation, she might have the experience without knowing what it is like to have the experience. It is the power to exemplarize experience, to use experience to represent what it is like, that gives her knowledge of what it is like.

Once the role of the exemplar in representation and conception is manifest, we can explain how knowledge of what an experience is like can be conceptual, can be knowledge of the content of the experience, and can ensure the truth of what is conceived. The aesthetic role of the exemplar in conception is to serve as a sample, model, or prototype of a kind of experience. Aesthetic experience, unlike more practical perception, directs attention toward what the experience is like. We naturally generalize as we exemplarize, secreting general content from the experience by taking the

individual to stand for or represent a plurality or class of individuals. The experience becomes the term or vehicle of representation that may be predicated of a subject. It is exemplarized to become conceptual.

It is useful for the sake of clarity to recall from Chapter 1 how this view differs from the very similar view described by Goodman (1968) of exemplification, a more traditional notion. Goodman supposes that we start from the exemplar, which we take to refer to some word, the word "blue," for example, or the property named by it, which the particular exemplifies. This account of exemplification gives a central role to the predicate exemplified or to a property exemplified.

By contrast, I suggested that the reference to a predicate or, for that matter, to a property, is not essential to the conceptualization of the particular. The individual quality experienced, I proposed, becomes a vehicle of representation without reference to a predicate or even a property. The exemplar of experience becomes referential in ostensive exemplarization, and it refers to experiences. It is an experience that is exemplarized and, thus, used as an ostensive term referring to a plurality of experiences for which it stands. The exemplar becomes a term of reference used to mark a distinction between those experiences to which it refers and those to which it does not refer. Those experiences to which it refers become instances of the exemplarized experience. The exemplar refers to them as instances. The mode of reference may be one that is not imbedded in the conventions of language. Indeed, one primary function of art is to suggest exemplarizations of experience that reconfigure our conventional linguistic representations of the world experientially.

Thinking of the exemplar as a term of reference suggests an analogy to other terms, such as words in a language. Moreover, the exemplar may naturally connect with words we use to describe it, but that is an additional layer of conceptualization. Attention focused on what the sensory experience is like in aesthetic consciousness converts the exemplar into a vehicle of reference marking a distinction without linguistic intervention. The ostensive exemplarization of the exemplar has the result that it refers to itself. It is the use or function of the exemplar in marking the items referred to that ensures self-reference. The exemplar is used like a sample to show us what individuals it refers to, and it leads us to select the individuals by exhibiting what they are like. It refers to things like a word, but, unlike a word, it refers to the things represented by showing us what those things are like. Used as an exhibit to show us what it refers to, it thereby refers to itself.

The exemplar used as a term of reference is true of things to which it refers, as a predicate is true of the things to which it refers. Since it refers to itself in being used to show us what it refers to, it is true of itself. The loop of

reference of the exemplar back onto itself is at the same time a truth loop. That may explain how we *know* what the experience is like when we experience what it is like. We *know* what it is like by exemplarizing it. We use it to refer to a plurality of particulars as an exhibit of what they are like in distinction from others. As a referring exemplar, it has instances as a predicate does, and instantiates itself. Exemplarization yields conception and knowledge of what the exemplar is like in a loop of truth.

Some, Papineau (2002, 2007), and my earlier self (Lehrer, 1996) as well, following the lead of Sellars (1963), have proposed that the analogy of exemplarization to disquotation, which we noted in Chapter 2, explains the self-reference. I now think, following Ismael (2007) and Fürst (2010), that is an inadequate though suggestive explanation. The exemplar is used, not mentioned, to show us what it is like. A being incapable of understanding quotation, let alone disquotation, could know what the experience is like. The referential loop of the exemplar may suggest the analogy of disquotation, but that is not the only way in which something can exhibit what something is like. Consider a model of self-reference suggested by Reid (1785) to account for the evidence of a first principle. He remarked that light, as it reveals illuminated objects, reveals itself at the same time. It is a more naturalistic model and does not require the semantics of disquotation. The exemplar reveals what a plurality of experiences is like and, being at the same time one of those experiences, reveals itself.

EXEMPLARIZATION AND INTENTIONALITY

These remarks explain how an exemplarized aesthetic experience can show us what intentionality and the form of representation are like. The exemplar shows us what the instances of the plurality are like by serving as an exhibit of what they are like. Thus it shows us what the objects of intentionality or representation are like. It shows us what other possible experiences might be like, for they might be like the exemplar. The exemplar exhibits what they would be like. For example, if we were to close our eyes after we view *Monochrome Blue* in aesthetic experience, and we were to imagine in terms of the remembered exemplar what we would experience upon reopening them, the reference of the exemplar takes us beyond the actual, as Brentano (1874) noted, to what might not exist. Were the painting to be destroyed in the moment we closed our eyes, the remembered exemplar would refer to an expected experience that will not exist. The exemplar shows us what the intentional objects referred to by the experienced exemplar are like.

There is, however, a second thing that the exemplar shows us. As an exhibit of what the referred objects are like, it shows us what our conception

of those objects is like. For how do we conceive of those objects? We conceive of them in terms of the exemplar that exhibits what they are like. At the same time that the exemplar shows us what the objects referred to are like, it shows us how we conceive of those objects in terms of the exemplar. The operation of exemplarization looks in one direction, exhibiting what the exemplar refers to, and, at the same time, in the other direction, exhibiting how we conceive of what the exemplar refers to. The exemplar used in the operation of exemplarization is Janus-faced, looking in two directions, outward and inward.

The duality of the exemplar considered so far has been restricted to the ostensive conceptualization, representation, resulting from exemplarization from one sensory experience to a plurality. This restriction was introduced to explain how the most minimal generalization from a particular to mark a plurality could exhibit what intentionality is like. The exemplar exhibits what intentionality is like. Put in another way, it shows us the form of representation as an activity, when that form connects a representation with what it represents. In the simplest case, the exemplar exhibits the intentionality and form of representation by being used to represent itself as one of the things represented. It is both the representation and the thing represented as it loops back onto itself in the operation of exemplarization.

However, it is important to recognize that exemplarization retains the Janus-faced character when the sensory experience is exemplarized to refer to something beyond itself and, indeed, even beyond other sensory experiences. Let us return to the sensory exemplar of blue. The exemplar may represent the color of paint on a canvas. If the color of the paint is International Klein Blue, the paint Klein invented and patented, it may represent the color of paint in a container of International Klein Blue resting on an easel in the atelier of Klein as well. The sensory experience may be used to reveal paint visually present to the eye or paint in a container functioning as an exemplar exhibiting what the paint, visually present or concealed in a container, is like. The truth loop is, in these cases, at risk. The sensory experience of blue might not be the color of the paint on the canvas, for the appearance of blue may result from a distortion produced by the lighting, and, of course, the color of the paint in the container may differ from how the painting appears to us.

Nevertheless, we may exemplarize the experience to form our conception of the paint on the canvas or in the container. We may think of the paint in terms of the sensory exemplar. In so doing, we use the sensory experience to conceive of the paint. International Klein Blue paint is paint that looks like the sensory exemplar. The exemplar points in one direction toward a material object, the paint, and in other direction toward how we conceive of the material object. The exemplar exhibits how the paint appears

and at the same time how we conceive of the paint in terms of how it appears.

We are not constrained to using the exemplar to represent sensory experiences of paint. Our aesthetic response to the work of art may take us to a more personal and even metaphysical level of interpretation. We may think of the sensory experience as exhibiting how pretty blue can be. The blue is very pretty. We may go beyond that and think of the exemplar as showing us a special feeling, a feeling of how blue can be wonderful. Or further, we might find that it shows us how agreeable it can be to enter into a void, even a blue void, that takes us beyond the world of objects and cognition to a more peaceful and spiritual emptiness. The sensory exemplar can exemplarize cool emptiness. But those words do not show us what cool emptiness is like. The sensory exemplar can, in a moment of autonomous exemplarization, refer to that state as it shows us what it is like. That level of representation is autonomous choice. The choice exhibits the form of representation and shows us what autonomously chosen intentionality is like.

It was a mistake of phenomenalists to think that sensory experiences could only be used to refer to other sensory experiences. It would be the same mistake some philosophers make when they assume that words or text can only be used to refer to words or text. Reference is ontologically promiscuous, and sensory experiences, in this domain as in others, exploit that promiscuity for their own purposes. One of those purposes is to exemplarize the sensory experience to exhibit what the object we conceive is like, what the paint is like or what cool emptiness is like, in one direction, and to exhibit how we conceive of that, in the other. Exhibiting both what is conceived and how we conceive of it, the exemplar provides a Janus-faced view of what intentionality and the form of representation are like.

It will be noted that there is more to our conception of paint than the appearance of color shows us, and there is more to paint than the appearance of it. The claim that the exemplarized sample shows us what our conception of the object is like and at the same time shows what the object is like requires qualification. Ostensive exemplarization of an exemplar of experience to stand for other experiences that are like it may show us in some special cases all we know about what the exemplar is like. It may show us all we know about how we conceive of what it stands for, namely, experiences like it. But when the exemplar is exemplarized to show us what a material object is like, there is more to what we know about what it is like than the exemplar exhibits. For example, if the experience is exemplarized as the appearance of International Klein Blue paint, we know more about the paint than how it appears. We may know, for example, that it is solid pigment suspended in a solution and not dissolved. We may also know more about how we conceive of the paint than the exemplar shows us about

color—for example, that a commercial version, ultramarine blue, produces green when mixed with cadmium yellow but not with cadmium red.

However, the exemplar shows us something about how we conceive of the paint, how we conceive of the appearance of it, and something about the paint, how it looks, or how it ordinarily looks on white canvases. The exemplar becomes part of our conception of the paint as we focus our aesthetic attention to the sensory quality. We exemplarize the sensory quality. The exemplar becomes a term of reference, or, put another way, a fixed point of reference, to the paint and to our conception of the paint. It is a parcel of reference and, at the same time, something referred to by itself as it refers to something beyond itself. The exemplar is part of our conception of the paint, a constituent of the conception, with the role of showing us how the object appears and how we conceive of how it appears. The exemplar is used in aesthetic experience to refer to itself exhibiting what it is like in order to show us how the paint appears.

An experience may influence conception without becoming an exemplar. That may, indeed, be the more common response. An experience may cause a reaction in us without calling attention to itself. *Priming*, exposure to a stimulus too brief for conscious awareness, may have some influence on re-identifying the stimulus. In such instances, which may be common ones, the experience is not exemplarized. Not even all conscious experiences are exemplarized into a loop of conceptual self-reference. Exemplarization occurs when attention is focused on the sensory character of the experience—in aesthetic experience, for example. However, there are other experiences, some experiences of pain, for example, that because of their natural salience and intensity call attention to themselves and are exemplarized. Other experiences may yield a conception of the external character of the object without attracting attention to themselves and, moreover, without our exemplarization of them. Many people do not know what the sensation of hardness is like, as we have noted, even though they perceive the hardness of objects. They have never considered the sensation. Some experiences are exemplarized, some not, and the distinction is the result of whether the experience attracts attention to itself in such a way that we use it to refer to experiences like it.

Discussion of what an experience is like and, especially, attention to what it is like naturally raises the question of whether attending to what the experience is like consists of some recognition of the similarity of the experience to others. Here further distinctions are in order. It seems to me that generalizing from an experience to others need not involve conceiving of the experience as similar to others. Generalizing from one experience to another in a way that indicates association does not require conceiving of similarity. We do not need a conception of a relation to respond to it. We

respond to relations of size, for example, without having any conception of the relations, as do lower animals, and the relation of similarity is no exception. Generalization, whether of sensory exemplars or other things, gives rise to general conceptions of things being of the same kind, and such conceptions are the basis of our conceptions of similarity. To conceive of things as similar is usually to conceive of them as similar in some respect, that is, as similar things of a kind. So our conception of similarity is, I suggest, following Reid (1785), based on our conception of general kinds, and is not, as Hume (1739) suggested, the more basic conception.

With these qualifications, I conclude that the exemplarization of sensory experience in aesthetic experience suffices to show us what intentionality and the form of representation are like. It does not show us everything about what conception is like, even our conception of observables, any more than it shows us everything about what the objects of conception are like. The exemplars show us something about the object, how it appears, at the same time they show us something about how we conceive of those, in terms of how they appear. Exemplarization shows us how we conceive of physical objects as well as appearances of them.

Put another way, appearances of physical objects, when exemplarized, become terms of reference to physical objects. How they appear is part of what the objects are like at the same time as how they appear is part of our conceptions of them. I propose, moreover, that the same thing is true of theoretical objects. As we view representations of them—the digitalized images of instruments responding to them, for example—the appearances of the representations are exemplarized and become part of our conception of the theoretical entities. Exemplarization of sensory experience provides the experiential constituent of our conception of matter, observable and theoretical. Aesthetics thus solves the problem of our connection with the world of theory and perception. It shows us what cannot be said, how we conceive of our world. Pay aesthetic attention, and you build experience into theory to solve the problem of our conception of the external world of science as well as our everyday world.

Art confronts us with exemplars that challenge us autonomously to exemplarize them—to think of the world in a different way. How we think of the opposite sex may be the result of the exemplarization of images of paintings of the opposite sex. An artist, a feminist artist, or simply an artist interested in undermining the conventional take, like Manet in portraying Olympia [**Web ASK 10**] as a confrontational courtesan, provides us with sensory exemplars that we use in exemplar representations to mark distinctions in new ways, creating new form and content, about women, war, and nature. Using the exemplar to exhibit what the content is like, we confront our autonomous choice of the exemplar representation and what it means.

There are automatic levels of response, to be sure, but beyond those there are exemplar representations we choose. We choose the mode of representation and the content of it. The content autonomously chosen becomes part of the content of our world.

We may seek the world of art thinking that however we interpret the artworks, whatever content arises from the way we use the exemplar to mark a distinction in exemplar representation, we do so in the world of fiction, as Walton (1990) insists, using the artworks as props of make-believe. So we can enjoy the license of make-believe. We can identify with the exemplarized content of good or evil, of heroes or villains, of admirable or nasty, with a comfort. It is only make-believe. Some have argued, Devereaux (2004) most notably, that the need to identify with an evil character, a pedophile, for example, undermines the value, the value of the artwork as art. There is something very controversial in this claim. The controversy arises from the simple fact that intentionality, the thought of an object, lacks the magic to make it exist. It is not part of the world but merely a part of make-believe. On the other hand, at least in my own case, I find there is something uncomfortable about the identification with Humbert lusting after Lolita in Nabokov's novel *Lolita* (1955) no matter how greatly I admire the prose, the convincing portrayal of the character and the insight into personality it offers. The point is that you are involved in the world of make-believe you construct out of the images of the work. How you exemplarize *Lot and His Daughters*, by Joachim Antonisz Wtewael [**Web ASK 28**], in the great painting of them at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, is, past the initial take, up to you. How you exemplarize the sensory material is up to you after the initial experience of the painting.

My point here is that a bit of reflection shows you that you are using the sensory materials to represent the make-believe world in the way you choose. That shows you, with just another step of reflection, something about what you are like and, perhaps, what you are not like as well. However, many of us think of the world of make-believe as a domain protected from the story of what we are and what we are like. We enter the world of make-believe to go on vacation from both the story of reality and the story of ourselves. We noted in Chapter 5 that we choose what activities in our life to own, to exemplarize and make part of our lives, and what activities to drop in the box of trivial disregards. That activity of choosing is itself your activity and subject to the ownership choice of what you are like.

Moreover, as we exemplarize sensory experience to form the content of exemplar representation of the world of make-believe, we confront the further issue of how much of that exemplar representation to transfer, to drag from the fictional screen of make-believe unto the outside world of reality. As we confront that issue and resolve it, we note the most

fundamental role of art in provoking us with aesthetic attention to exemplar representation of the artwork. It is to offer us, challenge us, to decide how to change, how to transform, how to reconfigure the world of reality in terms of the exemplar representations of fiction. Once you enter the world of art, you find yourself confronted with yourself as a person choosing how to interpret the world outside of art in terms of the exemplar representations of the artworks. You might attempt a global choice to never transfer the content of exemplar representations of art to the world outside of art. You probably would not succeed as some content of art would surreptitiously creep into the world outside of art. But choice is yours.

The choice of whether to transfer content from the artwork to the world beyond it reveals a deep form of our autonomy, our autonomy concerning how to conceive of the content of our world. Moreover, and finally, as we make that choice, we are aware of our own autonomous choice and our activity of choice. Once your attention is directed toward your choices of how to think of your world, those choices, being the focus of attention, are exemplarized. We have an exemplar representation of the choices. So art draws us into the exemplarization of our choices as world makers. "You do choose," art says to us, offering us the salience of autonomous choice, of how to conceive of your world, of how to make your world, out of the exemplar representations of the content, the novel content, that art offers us. Art is that part of experience that changes the content of our experience, and, moreover, reveals us to ourselves as the autonomous agents of change in the exemplarized choice of the content of our world. Art shows us, exhibits to us, that our making of our world out of the content of experience reflects back on us in our story of our life. Art reveals us to ourselves as the makers of our world, worlds we complete with the story of our lives as world makers.

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CHAPTER 8

Theories of Art, and Art as Theory of the World

"What is it about writers and artists that they are held in such high regard? It is precisely because of the mirror they hold up. And when they do their job exceptionally well, we are going to feel perplexed. Such is the purpose of art. To edify us. To educate us. To really draw us in so that we can understand life better."

– Ruth Simmons, President, Brown University (2010)

The account of exemplar representation in response to aesthetic attention is now before us. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the relationship between this theory of how art leads to the reconfiguration of experience by exemplarizing conscious experience to arrive at novel content and some traditional theories in aesthetics. Traditional aesthetics, at least most of it, focused on the question of how artworks are to be distinguished from other objects in the attempt to offer a definition, or at least a characterization, of what art is. I think that this way of approaching art rests on a mistake. I have argued that art is that part of experience that changes the content of experience, that is, that part of experience that changes how we experience and conceive of what we experience. In this argument I find myself in agreement with Derrida's (1987) remarks about art circling back onto itself in a way that encircles itself.

We experience ourselves and our world, of course, and art changes how we experience and conceive of ourselves and our world. However, our experience of art is a part of our experience of ourselves and our world and art itself. Hence, art on this account is not a platonic essence but rather a dynamic of change. If Plato had been right in thinking that reality was an

unchanging world of eternal permanent forms, he would also have been right in dismissing the importance of art. But—forgive my dogmatic metaphysical intrusion—reality is change, however much underlying order may be discovered, not eternal permanence. The experience of eternity, if there is one, is the experience of finding eternity in the moment.

DEFINING ART

So, do not expect a definition of art based on what we now call *art*. If I gave one, the artist in me would set out to create something as art that did not fit the definition. Art is dynamic, or it fails to do what art does. Might we define art in terms of what art does? Beardsley took a step in that direction, suggesting a definition of art in terms of the capacity for aesthetic response as follows:

> DB: An artwork is something produced with the intention of giving it the capacity to satisfy the aesthetic interest (in Wartenberg, 2007, 232).

Moreover, he says things about aesthetic experience that have some accord with what the ideas I have advanced. He says of the aesthetic experience, "It takes on a sense of freedom from concern about matters outside the thing received, an intense affect that is nevertheless detached from practical ends, the exhilarating sense of exercising powers of discovery, integration of the self and its experiences," (Beardsley, in Wartenberg, 2007, 232).

The account of exemplar representation, exemplarization, constructing new form and content, including the content of feeling and emotion, transferred to reconfigure ourselves and our world offered above has something in common with Beardsley's account of the aesthetic character of experience. Differences could be articulated, but that would involve an excursion into the interpretation of Beardsley that I shall not undertake here. I mention Beardsley because of his attempt to define art in terms of the intention of the artist to produce something with the capacity to satisfy aesthetic interest.

Suppose, following Beardsley, and incorporating the notion of eliciting exemplar representation that has intrinsic value, I were to attempt to define art in terms of what I have said it does. What might I say? I might try the following:

> DL: Something is an artwork just in case it is created or chosen with the intention to elicit exemplar representation of the receiver with new form and content reconfiguring experience in a way that has intrinsic value.

This suggestion of a definition would capture some of the dynamic component of what art does. It would, however, bring in the issue of the intention of the artist. So it raises the issue of the role of the intention of the artist in art, in the interpretation of art, and the exemplar representation of content and form. It is very difficult to say what the intention of a person is, and, in my opinion, asking the person is not a very good way of answering the question. People do not, cognitive studies keep revealing, know why they do what they do. Moreover, artists have not heard of exemplar representation, which does not mean they do not understand the process. Moreover, the notions of intrinsic value, form, and content are philosophically and aesthetically contentious. Some artists will, if asked about their art, say they reject ideas of form and content. Their act of creation might, nevertheless, reveal the intention described in the definition even though the artist does not acknowledge the intention. As an analogy, consider that an action of a person may reveal an intention to anger another even though the intention is not acknowledged. However, the ascription of an unacknowledged or denied intention remains problematic, and the definition requires amendment to avoid such ascription.

A better attempt would leave out the intention of artist, defining art as follows:

> DL*: Something is an artwork just in case it is created or chosen with the result that it elicits exemplar representation from aesthetic attention of the receiver with new form and content that reconfigures experience in a way that has intrinsic value.

This definition gets the intention of the artist out of the definition, which is desirable, but seems to leave us with the receiver's exemplarization as the source of the form, content, and value of the artwork. On this account, what the artist provokes in the receiver, and, of course, the artist is one of the receivers, is the central ingredient in the definition. Some can be expected to demure. They will wish to claim that there is something intrinsic to the artwork that embodies the form and content of the work.

I note, however, that the definition does not deny that it is the character of the artwork that leads to the exemplarization. We could add that and obtain the definition of art incorporating it below:

> DL**: Something is an artwork when it is created or chosen to elicit exemplar representation from aesthetic attention of the receiver responding to what the features of the work are like as new form and content reconfiguring experience in a way that has intrinsic value.

Whatever the remaining defects of the definition, which I hope merit exploration and even refutation, it captures the central ideas I have been advancing. It leaves out the richness of elaboration, which might convey the value of the theory better than a definition, but I offer it as a word bite for the pleasure of mastication.

Notice, however, that the definition retains, however concealed, the circle of reference as exemplarization of art experience creates new form and content of art. It is a trajectory of the theory of exemplarization rather than a summary definition of art attempting to tie together the history and theory of art and aesthetics with a ribbon of finality. Even if I do define art in a tentative way, confronting both Weitz (1956) and Derrida (1987) who both deny art is definable, perhaps joining analytic and continental philosophy in disapproval, I do want to say something about traditional aesthetics. I wish to show where I approve of what has been said, and why, and to show where I do not approve, applying the work that I have laid out before us.

TRADITIONAL AESTHETICS

Traditional aesthetics has often focused on the intention or choice of the artist as definitive. The artist clearly makes choices in what she does, and she has some intentions as well, that have been the focus of theories of aesthetics, like that of Croce (1922) and Collingwood (1938), defining the work of art in terms of what the artist expresses, or Tolstoy (1995), defining art in terms of what feeling the artist attempts to communicate. There is no doubt that artists often intend to express some feeling or intuition in their artworks, at least at the beginning of the process. My own experience, both in creating art and talking with artists, is that the intentional part of the process of creating art is like the top of a free-floating iceberg. Once the artist begins, as we noted in the quote from Guston in Chapter 5, he rather disappears in the process of making and remaking something.

Artists are, however, as individual as the rest of us and work in different ways. I knew one artist, a realistic painter, who looked at a model of what she wanted to paint, started painting in the lower left corner filling in the detail as she painted, until she had methodically covered the canvas with her realism. Her painting did not lack feeling. I think she had an extraordinary ability to know what the whole painting would be like before she began. Other artists marveled at her unusual method of painting. The others painted initially, painted over, added layers, sometimes removed paint, and struggled with the process of creation not knowing until they were done, not until they had decided to stop, what they were going to do. There is no one way to paint, there is no one way to create. Some paint from order,

others in chaos. A typical experience of creation is that in the process one is attempting to create something that is just out of reach, always out of reach, until you decide you are finished, either from satisfaction or frustration. Results ended with dissatisfaction often have as much value as the ones ended with satisfaction.

Some artists may start some of the time with some intuition or feeling, even if rather inchoate, that they express and render articulate in their work. But that is not all that art is or does. Turning expression and communication of intuitions, feelings, or emotions into the whole of what art is or does is inadequate for an understanding of art. It is an artificial limitation on our conception of what art does in our life. Art is that part of life that changes how we think and feel about life, and so the expression and communication of feeling and emotion is going to be something art sometimes does. But feeling and emotion, though a more important part of the content of our experience than those enamored with the life of reason will be inclined to acknowledge, is not all there is to how we think and conceive of ourselves and our lives. The expression of feeling and emotion in the art object seems not well clarified in expressionist and communication theories of art, however, even if the examples of such expression and communication are enticing. The artwork, when attended to aesthetically, presents us with a sensory experience.

A clear and satisfactory account of how the expression of feeling and emotion is received by the observer from the sensory experience is lacking, though what I wrote earlier here may erase the lack. Collingwood (1922) noted something that Tolstoy (1995) failed to note, namely, that the emotions expressed in a work of art, whether visual, musical, or literary, need not be evoked in the receiver. Some people like to listen to sad music to cheer themselves up, as I have noted. You can recognize the feeling or emotion in the work of art, in the sensory experience exemplarized, without experiencing the feeling or the emotion. The theory of exemplar representation explains this as soon as we note that sensory experiences of objects other than art, most especially, the faces and bodies of others, refer to emotions. A face is sad when the lips are turned down and the eyes slightly closed, the movements of body are sad when the body moves slowly, slumped over, face toward the ground. Notice that the person behind the face or body may be acting, he may be clowning, and make us laugh. The person is not sad, we are not sad, but we are amused by the expression of sadness in the appearance. When the appearance, our conscious experience, becomes an exemplar representation, when it becomes part of the content of the representation, then the sadness of the appearance becomes part of the content represented. Exemplar representation gives us an account of the feelings and emotions in the content of art, as I explained earlier, without supposing that they are felt by the artist or evoked in the

receiver. They are part of the content because they are in the sensory experience that is preserved in the exemplar exemplarized to yield the content of the work of art.

Does this just push back the question of how feelings and emotions can be the content of the artwork to the question of how they can be in sensory materials? We dealt with this question in the earlier chapters, but it is worth an additional reformulation. Sensory materials, the appearances of faces and bodies, for example, are, as Reid (1785) noted in the eighteenth century, signs of the mental life of the other, dissolving the problem of our knowledge of other minds. How do they become signs? Our original faculties, our innate principles of response, provide part of the answer. Anyone who has grimaced at a young baby and watched the automatic crying response of the baby with unkind amusement, knows that the sensory experience of the baby contained a message of anger in the face of the adult. I grimace at my classes to show them that the meaning of the sensory experience is not fully extinguished. They do not like the expression, even if they laugh. Of course, nature gets connected with custom, innateness with association, and the connection between sensory experiences of the face and body and emotions signified becomes more elaborate. Simply put, sensory experience carries content. Some of it is innate, some of it is the result of custom, and some of it is our autonomous creation. The point I am making, and it is a consequence of the theory of exemplarization of conscious experiences, is that artworks can and do express feelings and emotions that are, in some cases, not experienced by either the artist, even an artist intending to express them, nor by the receiver, even one sensitive to expressions of feelings and emotions. The feelings and emotions are signified in the exemplars that we use to represent the content of the artwork and are, thereby, part of the content carried by the exemplar.

I now want to say something about the intentions of the artist and role of thereof. As Beardsley (2007) noted, one may deny that the intentions of the artist are the last court of appeal on the interpretation of the artwork, and, at the same time, bring in the intentions of the artist to define what makes something a work of art. Let me separate the two issues. It is a maxim of postmodernism, or, at least a theme, as Barthes (1977) taught us, that the cost of empowering the viewer as an interpreter of the work, and, therefore, as receiver of the content of the work, is to disregard the intentions of the artist. The life of the receiver is at the cost of the death of the artist.

Some artists are very good at committing suicide as interpreters of their work. Matisse once remarked of his patroness Sarah Stein, "She knows more about my art than I do" (Collection, 1970). Of course, an artist can tell you things that may interest you, and fairly so, about what she did, even, though memory is disputable in such matters. She may tell you what she

thought and felt when she created, or what she thinks and feels now that she views it. But you must return to the artwork, to your experience of the artwork, to decide for yourself the relevance or irrelevance of the discourse to how you interpret the work, which means, how you exemplarize your conscious awareness into form and content.

There is, of course, a problem once you have listened to the artist. It may influence your conscious experience. As you look at a painting, for example, you cannot see it all at once. You are, in fact, active in your viewing of the painting, for that is essential to constructing content out of experience. When you are active, you choose and select where and how you direct your attention. In fact, the remarks of the artist may dominate your representation of the artwork, your exemplarization of the form and content of it, by leading you to ignore parts of the painting, even sections of the painting, that you should notice. I was once displeased by a painting I did of a nude model, a young woman presenting herself as strongly sexual, because the painting of the head was odd and did not fit with the body. A friend, Candace Smith, who is my counterpart to Sarah Stein, explained my painting to me, as her finger traced from the head to the crotch of the model and said, "I do not want to go there." I realized that the conflict between head and body in the painting captured my doubt about the sexual expression of the model. My initial remarks about the painting would have been misleading and might have led a viewer to regard the painting of the head as just some kind of failure. As I viewed the painting after the Candace commentary, the content of the painting, my exemplar representation of the content, was different. Moreover, I decided that it was one of my most successful paintings. The viewer, in this case Candace, viewing the painting without my reflections, understood it better than I did, conveying her sensitive exemplar representation of content.

My art historian friends must forgive me for the next offhand remarks. When I go to art museums and listen to some quite knowledgeable curator pouring out the history of the artwork, I think, "Oh please let them just look at the painting." They need to decide first what content their conscious experience reveals to them in aesthetic attention. They need to see what content they can find in the painting to add to the content of the painting and to their lives. That is what matters, and, yes, that is what art is about that matters to me. Take a favorite artwork of mine, *Bed*, by Rauschenberg [**Web ASK 29**]. It is a bed, with paint applied in a way that is not very elegant, dripping and messy. Now some art historian might remark on the relationship of the object to abstract expressionism, to drippy Pollock and others who let paint drip as well. I do not dispute the historical accuracy of such interpretations. But all that information, however historically interesting, may lead you to miss a way of exemplarizing your conscious experience aes-

thetically that, I contend, makes *Bed* an artwork that does something special. It provokes the representation of content from the exemplar, taking you beyond art-talk, beyond the isolation of the artwork in a museum, and even the artworld in total, to the world outside of art. The messiness of *Bed* takes me to an exemplarization of the object as representing that beds are the messy places of life. Sex, fears, and dreams occur there. Looking at the object changes the content of the artwork and the content of beds. It took me beyond that to the further reflection that we find beds safe places. Maybe the safe places are messy. Maybe that is something we all feel.

I know the art historians are laughing. Now the rest of you go see *Bed*. A salient test of the interpretation of art is not the history of the artist, not art history, but what you find as you direct your aesthetic attention toward the object. It depends how you take sensory experience, on how you use the sensory exemplar to construct form and content. And ultimately, it depends on whether the value of the content constructed carries over into your experience outside of art. Direct your attention to the immediacy of your experience. Unblock quotidian representation. Allow yourself the autonomy to construct content by exemplar representation of your experience and reconfigure the experience of your life. Then you know what art can do.

One other traditional theory is formalism. I have mentioned the theory of significant form of Bell (1910) and Fry (1920) previously. They claim that the content of the artwork is irrelevant to art, and only the form, the configuration of color and lines, matters to what makes an object art. Moreover, the form is significant, they aver, only if it elicits a special emotion, the aesthetic emotion. There is a virtue and a fault in the theory. The virtue is the emphasis on the immediate sensory qualities. The fault lies in claiming that all there is to art is a special emotion that it elicits. Why, having directed our attention to the form of an art object, which is an important first step, should we not find any content in the aesthetic awareness of the experience of form in art?

It has often been objected that the theory of significant form is arbitrary in rejecting all figurative and narrative content as relevant to the character of an object as art. I have another objection. When we attend to our conscious awareness of the exemplar, we create both form and content. How are we to attend to color without noticing what it is like? When we notice what the color and line is like in the exemplar of experience, we distinguish it from other experiences or colors and lines. As we mark the distinction in our exemplar representation, we become aware of form and content. In marking the distinction, we distinguish the colors and lines, letting them represent others, and dividing the space into those colors and lines that are like what we experience from those that are not. In short, awareness of

form involves exemplar representation and the construction of content. There is no awareness of form of an exemplar of experience without awareness of what it is like, and the awareness of what it is like carries the exemplar representation of it. Exemplar representation constructs the content of the representation. Awareness of form without content is impossible even if the content does not extend beyond the content of what colors and lines are like.

It might, of course, be objected that the content of the form of color and line is different from figurative content and that my objection is verbal. The formalist view could be reformulated as a theory that art consists of formal content alone, excluding all figurative content, and only the formal content matters to the artwork. This reply contains an implicit devaluation of nonformal content. Once, however, it is conceded that there is no awareness of art without content, without minimally marking a distinction with the conscious awareness of what it is like and what it is not like, the insistence that only one way of marking the distinction in art, of what it is like and what it is not like, makes the object art, seems to amount to little more than the insistence that only it has value, at the least the value of aesthetic experience. But why? The formalists are right, as I shall myself insist, about the importance of attending to what they think of as formal features of what the experience is like. There is, I concede, a point in insisting on putting aside the quotidian and practical representation of content in order to attend to what the conscious exemplar is like. However, once attention to the formal content of the exemplar of experience is achieved, where is the argument that the use of the exemplar to represent new content beyond that of just line and color is irrelevant to the experience of art? The exemplar is a term of representation in even formal representation. We can take that exquisite term of experience and whatever emotions it produces as a further term of further exemplar representation that enriches the value of the object and our lives beyond the artworld. The stipulation that the enriched content of exemplar representation is not part of art is itself verbal. We appreciate art as art for the way it adds content and value to our experience in the exemplar representation of it.

ART AND THE ARTWORLD

Let me turn from expressionist and formalist theories of art to a philosopher and art critic who recognizes the importance of content to the nature of art. Arthur Danto (1994), one of the most brilliant contemporary art critics and a distinguished philosopher I am happy to count as a friend, has argued that the content of an artwork is determined by the artworld, by the

history and theory of art. He has a remarkable ability to bring not only art history and art theory but also philosophy, and not just philosophy of art, into his interpretations of artworks. He says he philosophizes art. He describes the artwork, as I mentioned above, as embodied meaning. There is a great deal I appreciate in this account. I would put his last point differently by saying the artwork is a mentalized physical object because it uses present experiences for exemplarization and the construction of form and content by marking distinctions in conceptual space.

There is a point, however, of disagreement. I have argued that exemplarized content is more personal, at least at the first step, less dependent on sophistication. Danto, as I read him, neglects the first step of responding in a personal way with aesthetic attention to the artwork with the personal exemplar representation of your conscious experience. The first step of exemplarization of your experience to your aesthetic attention may be innocent of art history and art theory, and what Danto calls the artworld, that surrounds the work with a social art content and aura. That first personal step, I propose, may be the most important. There is a richness to artworks, and the richness is a richness of meaning or content. Meaning is something we supply, however, and it will depend on who we are and what we are like.

I do not deny, and I will argue later, that the individual mind is also a social mind, that the personal and interpersonal aspects of mentality join. My caveat is that you do not have to be an art sophisticate, or even art-culture informed, to engage in aesthetic attention to art to obtain a representation of the form and content of art and transfer that content to your life in a way that will change and enrich it. There is a great deal that art can and does do to reveal the content of art to you that does not depend on art history, art theory, or the artworld. You have to look, think, and feel, but you do not have to look, think, and feel about art the way the artworld does. Moreover, though I understand Danto's love of the artworld, you do not even have to have absorbed the lessons of the artworld to pick up the content the most sophisticated critics and curators discover.

Two examples—very personal, forgive me—illustrate. I took two little girls, one five and one seven, my granddaughters, Clara and Elsa, to MOMA in San Francisco to see a light show. Being there, I decided I would take them to the permanent collection of modern art. I was rather amazed at how amused and attentive they were. It later occurred to me that they, unlike adults influenced by the artworld, did not have any expectations of what they would experience and were quite merry running around looking at all these surprising things. The seven–year-old, Clara, paused for a long time in front of a very large abstract, purple, black, and white oil by Clyfford Still [**Web ASK 30**]. I got curious and asked her what she thought about the

painting. She replied, "It feels like the sea on rainy day." I looked at the painting, and thought, "That is the way it feels," thinking my agreement might be based as much on the pleasure of her response as perception. Last year I went to Paris and visited a Monet show, which was enhanced by the curator placing some pieces he thought were influenced by paintings of Monet. Next to the water lilies was—guess what?—a Clyfford Still oil painting. It was not the one from MOMA, but it was a very similar smaller version, perhaps a study for the larger piece.

The seven-year-old girl did not need to know art history and art theory or be a member of the artworld to understand the content of the Still painting from her conscious experience of it. An artworld curator, in a moment of personal insight, apparently discovered the same content that the girl did without the artworld. I admire the innocence of his exemplarization. The first step into art experience may be the most important, and it just may be the most insightful.

I will mention the second episode with the girls because it involves a painting I have mentioned before, *Monochrome Blue*. The two girls were fascinated by this blue rectangle. When I asked them what they thought, Elsa replied, "The blue is so pretty." I noted in some remarks of Klein, that, when asked why he painted it, he said he liked the blue, which was actually an invention of his, one he patented, International Klein Blue. You do not need to know the artworld to exemplarize your experience to reveal the content of a painting as the feeling of rainy day or the prettiness of a color. Such revelation may be the source of the value of the work, for all who appreciate it; little girls and influential curators appreciating the content and value of the artwork.

I must, of course, concede, that background knowledge influences how we represent our experience, including the exemplar representation of it. That means, I concede to Danto (1994), that how you exemplarize art may be influenced by art history and art theory in a way that adds value. There are layers of meaning, layers of content, to be taken from the ambiguous exemplars of conscious experience. But it is important, as Reid (1785) proposed, to consider theories of the meaning of artworks based on the original untutored signification of experience. Reid argued that there were certain signs that we understand by our nature without conventions, agreements, and the artifices of tutelage. He says of these signs, which he calls natural signs of our natural language: "The elements of this natural language of mankind, or the signs that are naturally expressive of our thoughts may, I think, be reduced to these three kinds: modulations of the voice, gestures and features" (Reid, 1785, 118). He means the gestures of the body and the features of the face. This natural language is replaced, "rooted out," Reid says, by the learning of artificial and conventional language, which, with all

its advantages for the improvements of knowledge, results in a loss. For the natural language is the more expressive one, the one with more force and energy.

> Artificial signs signify, but they do not express; they speak to the understanding, . . . but the passions, the affections, and the will, hear them not: these continue dormant and inactive, till we speak to them in language of nature, at which they are all attention and obedience.
>
> It were easy to show, that the fine arts of the musician, the painter, the actor, and the orator, so far as they are expressive—although the knowledge of them requires in us a delicate taste, a nice judgment, and much study and practice—yet they are nothing else but the language of nature, which we have brought into the world with us, have unlearned by disuse, and so find the greatest difficulty in recovering it.
>
> Abolish the use of articulate sounds and writing among mankind for a century, and every man would be a painter, an actor, and an orator . . . . he that understands perfectly the use of natural signs, must be the best judge in all the expressive arts (Reid, 1785, 118).

This is not the place to enter into an account of Reid's aesthetics, though his view have received attention, most recently by Pouivet (2005), who expounds brilliantly Reid's views on the role of natural signs in the arts. What Reid says is consistent with subsequent knowledge, and explains the importance of the first step into art and the content of art. It reaches deeper into our nature and our affective life. It allows that the untutored respond to experience of art and exemplarize the form and content of it without sophistication, and surely, without the history and theory of the artworld. This connects with the first step into aesthetic attention in which, as far as possible, the conventions of discourse, including the conventions of responding to art, are laid aside. What is left to guide our use of the exemplars of consciousness? Perhaps, as Reid suggests, the language of nature, that expressive form of representation, we have by our nature. The presence of such representations in us, however overlaid with the conventions of artificial language and other conventions of representation, enables us, in the moment of immediate focus of aesthetic attention, to exemplarize our conscious experience, using it as the vehicle of the content it carries, retaining the expressive force, energy, and meaning of it.

So far, I have only discussed the first step, the step into art and the content thereof that results from attention to what the experience is like in itself. The experience used as a representation carrying content allows us to accommodate the positive side of Danto (1994) in his interpretation of the content of the artwork. For we can, starting with ostensive exemplarization directed toward immediate conscious experience, toggle over as

Brand (1998) suggests, to other layers of representation and content. Here the art historian, the art theorist, and the philosopher, can lead us beyond ostensive exemplarization of the exemplar to more inferentially, theoretically, and contextually based forms of exemplar representation of the artwork.

Consider, for example, looking at a painting of Malevich that he considered his masterpiece, the *Black Square* [**Web ASK 12**]. The move from the exemplar representation of black, to one of a black square floating on white, and to one of feelings of the supreme, reveals how we toggle beyond immediacy in the process of exemplarization. The first step of exemplarization of *Black Square* is the focus of attention on the conscious experience of it. You may exemplarize the consciousness at the first step, toggling into immediacy, as what you experience. You will wonder why it is considered an important work, listed on Google as one of the one hundred most important works of the twentieth century. You might, without any help from art history, find yourself engulfed in the black floating on the white edge. You might feel something more, something in the black blocking of representation, some feeling of energy that says there is something beyond the world of objects you can discover in the black. You might find that energy of feeling on your own. Or you might start to think about art history, overriding the natural force of black floating on a white void, and categorize it as minimalist art. "How minimal can you get?" you might ask. You find a level of exemplar representation, taking the exemplar to mark a distinction between minimal art and other art, a model of what it is like.

Then you might read Danto (1994), or Malevich himself, and exemplarize in a different way. From art history, we learn that Malevich was a suprematist painter, seeking to reveal supreme reality of feeling in his painting. That bit of art history might override the minimalist interpretation, and perhaps take you back to your early response innocent of art history to the black as taking you to some feeling beyond the world of objects. That was my first experience. I got that before I went into the artworld finding minimalism as mode of exemplar representation, when I was, with some uncertainty, thinking of something beyond the quotidian in that black energy of feeling. As a philosopher, I thought of Hegel. It felt like aesthetic experience reversed the direction of Hegel (1977) in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Begin by thinking of being. But just thinking of being is like thinking of nothing. Being takes you to nothing and leads you along the path of becoming, according to Hegel. The *Black Square* takes you into black energy floating on the white void of the edge. It expresses the feeling of force and energy, leads you to feeling and the Being of Spirit, the Absolute. Take Hegel into the *Black Square* and you exemplarize into his philosophy of the Absolute. This is not an argument. It is an experience

and an exemplarization thereof. It showed me what could not be said, though Hegel wrote hard enough.

ART PHILOSOPHIZING

The first step of aesthetic attention, the attention to what the conscious experience is like, converts the experience into an exemplar of what a kind of consciousness is like. There is a distinction marked in conceptual space, and what is contained in the space is the initial or ostensive content of the work. At this point, the response may return to the primitive and original level of representation or signification Reid (1785) insisted arises from original powers, capacities of our nature that unfold and reveal themselves as we mature. I do not claim, though Reid did, that these are our initial responses in life, nor do I deny it, for the response to immediacy may be a sophisticated toggle in our later take on the artwork. The use of these powers in the immediacy of aesthetic attention may require, as Reid also suggests, an artistic direction of attention to what experience can represent at an expressive and original level.

The effect of this immediacy and the exemplar representation of it in some original way blocks, as does the *Black Square*, the usual representation of objects. From that immediacy and initial blocking of quotidian representation, we find ourselves confronted with autonomy of interpretation. We seek to interpret the experience, to mark a distinction with it, creating form and content out of immediacy. We often notice, then, some uncertainty giving expression to our autonomy of interpretation. Reflecting on what the exemplar shows us, we note that it shows us what is represented, the content that the exemplar exhibits. It also shows us how we represent the content, in terms of the exemplar. The exemplar exhibits the connection between form and content, between representation and what is represented, as we know what the exemplar is like in exemplarization that exhibits both the term of representation, the exemplar itself, and what that term refers to, again, the exemplar itself. Aesthetic attention and the response based upon it show us how the form of representation, our marking a distinction, connects the representation with the content it represents in ostensive exemplarization of experience onto experience.

So the experience of art engages us philosophically. It does more. It shows us the answer to philosophical inquiry into what the form of representation and intentionality are like. Danto (1994) set out to philosophize art. The reason he succeeds is that art philosophizes. Art is embodied experience of philosophy. Art engages in *artosophy*, art philosophizing. How it does this is readily experienced. Art shows us what things are like in a way

that goes beyond what can be described. Artosophy shows us how thought is connected to experience, how to obtain content from experience, some truth about experience, and, finally, how to use experience in exemplar representation to show us we can represent and refer to the world beyond our immediate experience. It shows us how experience can refer to the world of things and theory by exhibiting to us what they are like in terms of our experience. We ask in philosophy how experience, thought, and feeling can represent our world and ourselves. Philosophy leaves out what it is like to use experience as representation in this way. Artosophy shows us what philosophy cannot, namely, what it is like to use experience as an exemplar vehicle of representation.

We have the examples of feminist art before us showing us how to chat on the edge of experience in art about the role and nature of woman. We have the *Black Square* taking us into metaphysics about feeling and objectivity. There are other examples. Starting with a Rothko painting [**Web ASK 7**], you may enter into the layers of color and feeling in color leading you away from the world of ordinary objects into a meditative experience of reality. Or consider Magritte [**Web ASK 31**] exploring philosophy in his very realistic painting of a pipe, with the line on the painting, "ceci n'est pas une pipe" (this is not a pipe), telling us that the representational exemplar we experience is not a pipe. The sensory exemplar, like the surface of the painting of which the exemplar is the phenomenology, though representing a pipe, is not a pipe. The experience of the painting reveals to us that, though the appearance represents a pipe as we exemplarize it, the representation is not what it represents. Exemplar representation can break out of the self-referential loop of ostensive exemplarization to reach beyond experience. Magritte exhibits the lesson of Brentano that the exemplar representation of an object is the representation of an intentional object, the object in the painting, which need not exist for it to be the content of the painting. The representation may have been based on a pipe used as a model, something that does exist, but the exemplar representation, which also exists, is not the model. The model may be part of the cause of how the representation comes into existence, but the content of the painting is not the model on which it was based. The model was small, the representation is large. The model and the content do not have the same properties and cannot be identical.

Now we reach a basic issue about the content of representation, an issue about whether the content of representation is derived from the external objects represented or from the internal way in which we represent them. Content, as I am using the term, is what is contained in the space marked to separate what is contained, the content, from what is unmarked and not so contained. But that does not answer the question of the etiology yet. Is it the external object that leads us to mark the distinction we do, filling the

marked space with content? Or is it we who mark the distinction as we will, constructing the content of the marked space? It is a false dichotomy, a false dilemma, a false division. We are influenced by the external world, of course, even in the ostensive exemplarization of a sharp pain forcing itself upon our attention to mark a distinction, but it is we who respond. It is we who mark the distinction, automatically or autonomously.

Representation is not a standard relation, for we may represent things that do not exist. Artistic representation forces this truth upon us. It shows us the object represented need not exist to have a role in art. Yet, even in art, the artist may seek to copy a model, and the model plays a causal role, however imperfectly. In fact, all representation beyond ostensive exemplarization is imperfect, for the vehicle or carrier of representation will differ from what it represents. Only in the case of ostensive exemplarization will the content represented be identical with the thing represented and perfect the relation of truth and reference in a loop. However, when we engage in exemplar representation to represent the world of fact or fiction in terms of the exemplar referring to something beyond our experience, we retain a tie, though incomplete with experience, in the term of representation itself, the experienced exemplar.

In exemplar representation that employs the exemplar to reach beyond what we experience, we must not assume that content is transferred from the external thing to the content of the representation. On the contrary, and art shows us this, we often start with representation of form and content that leaves the question of external relationship unanswered. Beginning with the content of exemplar representation in art, we confront the question of whether to transfer that exemplarized content to the world outside of art. When we drag the content from the screen of the artwork to the world outside of art, we experience ourselves as autonomous world makers. The content of our world is, in part, our autonomous choice. The other part of the experience of the artwork seems to conflict with this. The immediacy of the art experience, what it is like in itself, leads us only as far as the ostensive generalization of the exemplar of experience to other experiences it represents. My claim is that the focus on immediacy, on what the artwork is like at the level of ostensive generalization, is what gives us the autonomy to construct or reconstruct content, to use the exemplar to represent what we choose. We confront our autonomy as we choose whether to transfer that content to our world and ourselves. When we do, we discover the most fundamental truth of artosophy, of art becoming philosophy, namely, the truth of what it is like to choose the story of ourselves and our world.

This philosophy is exhibited in the artosophy of Piero Manzoni, in sculptures that compose some of his art. In one, a nude model stands on a pedestal in the pose of a classical statue, *Sculpture Vivante* [**Web ASK 32**], being

signed by the artist. If art can represent life, then life can represent art, and the two, art and philosophy, are tied together in a loop of reference. I tried this connection with Karen Ivy dancing to a lecture with the content of this chapter [**Web ASK 33**] in front of an image of sculpture. More deeply, *Socle du Monde* (Base of the World) [**Web ASK 34**], an inverted base or pedestal resting upside down, as the letters of the title on the sculpture show, exhibits the world as art. It shows you your world as art as you choose the world beneath the inverted base as the artwork. Your world becomes art and art your world as you exemplarize your experience of the world of art and the world beyond art on a common base. You may not be convinced that we choose the story of ourselves and our world. Your response to the *Socle du Monde* shows you choosing your world, and, of course, yourself standing there in your exemplar representation of your experience of what is beneath the base. You are amused to find the story of your life in the exemplarization of art.

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CHAPTER 9

Self-Trust, Disagreement, and Reasonable Acceptance

I ended the previous chapter insisting on the role of art in the creation of new content out of exemplar representation. Then, in a moment of what might have seemed extravagant for a long-sitting epistemologist, I proposed that the creation of content to interpret art is something that we may autonomously transfer to the world outside of art. I add two caveats on content. The first is that not all content of exemplar representation, even ostensive exemplarization of experience back onto experience, is chosen. Some is an automatic or conventional response. Moreover, among what is chosen, not all is autonomously chosen. When we focus attention on what our experience is like, especially in aesthetic attention directed to the immediacy of experience, we exemplarize experience into representation in terms of the experience itself, obtaining form and content. As I have insisted repeatedly, exemplar representation offers us the security of an experiential basis of our conception since the experiential exemplar that is the vehicle of content loops back onto itself referentially even as it extends beyond itself to other experiences, other things, and other worlds.

However, the exemplar representation of form and content confronts us and reaches beyond the world of art, presenting itself for transfer to the external world and to the story of ourselves in that world. Again a caveat on content is needed. Sometimes we transfer content thoughtlessly, and the transfer passes through the mind and body of the subject to the world and itself as unnoticed as the sleight of hand of the magician. Art and the content thereof then change the content of our experience without our bidding and become part of the fixation of belief. In the purest case, some unreflective

exemplar representation of the content of a work of art shapes and colors the content of perception of objects outside of art. The simplest case must be the actor who plays the same kind of role in movie after movie whom we represent in terms of our experience of those movies. We know what the character in the film is like, what form and content the experiential exemplars carry for us. Now, to notice the transfer of content, consider how you think of the actor when you see him on the street. You expect him to act like characters in the films. Of course, you may correct for this quickly as you reflect on the fact that a role in a film is fiction and the actor acting the role is different. I am here only referring to your first take. It is like seeing some illusion, the water ahead on the highway that will vanish as you approach it, the bend in the stick in water that will vanish as we remove it from the water. Transfers of content from art to life may not fix themselves into lasting conviction but vanish with the exposure of the illusion, or, the impression may remain fixed and convert into belief. You have some voice in the matter, but sometimes you fail to shout down the impression that the transfer of content effects. This may be more common in the influence of the content of painting on the content of perception. A haystack may look like one in a Monet painting [**Web ASK 23**] either because Monet is so good at capturing the image of a haystack or because he so good at leading you to transfer the content of his paintings of haystacks to haystacks. The etiology of content is bidirectional. Sometimes the object perceived outside of art leads to the content of it in the artwork, and sometimes the content of an object in the artwork leads to the content of object perceived.

The transfer of content does not always begin, historically considered, from perception. Sometimes scientific revolution changes how we think about the world in a way that challenges artists to find a sensory expression in art of the conceptual revolution. The relationship between projective geometry and the use of perspective in renaissance art to represent space is obvious. The influence of theories of the mind, especially Reid (1785), affirming that primary qualities of objects were perceived as a result of the response systems of the mind, encouraged impressionists—for example, Monet, who studied Reid—to express realism with patches of color instead of details of linear configuration. Equally obvious was the influence of the psychology of Freud and the philosophy of Nietzsche on artists who sought to reveal the unconscious from dreams as well as automatic behavior uncensored by the ego in the art of surrealism, from Dali [**Web ASK 35**] to Redon [**Web ASK 36**], and beyond them to the art of automatism. Moreover, the influence of such theories of mind as those like Bergson (1912) and Croce (1922), for example, who insisted that intuition revealed the nature of reality, which encouraged the work of abstract artists who rejected the world of ordinary objects as the fundamental reality. Even the

influence of physics is notable, particularly relativity theory and the acceptance of non-Euclidean geometry on cubism and other movements of artists who sought to combine various perspectives in a single work without the constraints of the ordinary features of three-dimensional space. The variations in the background of scientific theories influenced artists seeking to create sensory exemplars that would serve the purposes of exemplar representations exhibiting a reality beyond ordinary perception. They sought to show us what unconscious states, intuitions, and, finally, unperceived spaces were like. We were told what they were like by theoreticians. Artists attempted to show us the unconscious and unseen, to exhibit to us what the content of theory was like. Confronting the exemplars of artistic expression of unconscious and unseen reality, we find a sensory representation of what a reality beyond experience is like. Beyond physics and science we confront the work of Malevich and Rothko, and through them we experience an exhibit of what feeling and the void are like. As we attend to the exemplars the artist exhibits, appreciating his or her showing us his or her exhibit of what the supreme or supersensible is like, the question arises of when we are justified in transferring the content of the work of art to the world outside of art. As we confront the issue of transferring the content of the artwork to our world outside of art, we confront ourselves as forming the content of a world, of our world, and the question of whether we are justified in accepting the content of the artwork as the content of our world.

JUSTIFICATION OF TRANSFER: ACCEPTANCE AND TESTIMONY

The exemplar representation of the artwork raises the issue of the truth of the representation and the justification of accepting the representation as we direct aesthetic attention to the artwork. The exemplar representation taken as a representation of the form and content of the artwork already raises these issues when we pass from our personal interpretation to the question of the correctness of it as an interpretation. Is the figure on the left of the Yeats painting, *The Gay Moon* [**Web ASK 15**], expressing sadness? Is the figure a man? Is he grieving? Is the man on the right of the painting seen from the back looking at the figure on the left? The questions multiply. The answers arise from the exemplarization of the phenomenology of the surface of the painting. Does the Serrano photograph *Piss Christ* [**Web ASK 37**] express contempt for the crucifix it portrays submerged in a container of the artist's urine as the medium? Does it instead use piss religiously to remind us of the incarnation of the divine? Is the piss a metaphor for anger, our anger at the act, or for something else? Questions

are answered by aesthetic attention and exemplarization of what we experience.

So far the discussion is restricted to the interpretation of the artwork. But there remains the question of the transfer of the content of the painting. Are the figures in the painting images of Yeats and his brother who died? That is a question about a rather specific transfer of the content of a painting to the story of the life of the artist. But any transfer—for example, the transfer of the image of Madame de Pompadour from a Boucher painting [**Web ASK 5**] to the historical figure—raises the question of justification and truth. How can we account for when there is justification for accepting the content of painting of Pompadour by Boucher as representing what she was really like? How can we accept the self-portraits of Rembrandt [**Web ASK 38**] and Van Gogh [**Web ASK 39**] as representing the content of what they were like and what their inner lives were like? Of course, Rembrandt and Van Gogh are not in the painting any more than the pipe was in the Magritte painting [**Web ASK 31**], but the content of the painting might, nevertheless, provide us with the content of what they were like externally and even emotionally within themselves. The acceptance that they were the way the content of the painting represents them, that the content of the painting and the content of earlier perception of the artists matches, even up to the limits of artistic representation, requires justification. But how are we to obtain the justification?

We require a theory of justification to solve such problems concerning what we are justified in accepting about the interpretation, even the exemplar representation, of the artwork. A theory of justification must, however, account for the fact that justification depends on the epistemic competence, or as I suggested (Lehrer, 1997, 2000), on the trustworthiness of the subject in evaluating the relationship of the evidence, including the evidence of testimony of art critics and historians, to what is accepted.

TRUSTWORTHINESS AND CONFLICT

The reference to the trustworthiness of the accepting subject becomes salient when one considers cases of disagreement between subjects who consider the other as trustworthy as themselves in the evaluation of evidence. This will often be the case in the interpretation of art. The issue is also raised in a metaphysical dispute where one might suppose reason could resolve the issue. Consider an example, from Van Inwagen (1996) then, of two philosophers arguing about compatiblism in the free will controversy. They look at the same evidence, the same arguments, and they exhaust philosophical discourse. Let us say that they have reached a point of

dialectical equilibrium where each member to the dispute agrees that further discourse will not add any evidence. This may be rare in metaphysics, but more common in aesthetics. After a certain point in critical discourse about interpretation, dispute seems pointless.

One believes that *p*, that the painting is about grief, and the other the denial of *p*, that it is not. Now suppose that each party to the dispute recognizes that the other is as trustworthy philosophically, aesthetically, and epistemically as the other. This is a *condition of parity*. Can either party to the dispute be justified in continuing to believe what he did while recognizing the condition of parity? Can either party even be reasonable to continue to believe what he did before the discussion?

There are important issues here about trustworthiness, justification, and reasonableness. Let us consider the issue of reasonableness first and then turn to the issue of justification. There are distinctions to be drawn before we are going to be in a position to answer the questions arising from the situations of parity that are germane to theories of reasonableness. The first distinction is one between acceptance and belief, which I raised earlier (Lehrer, 1997). A person may on reflection refuse to accept what he believes. Belief is like desire and arises without our deciding to believe. Belief may also remain, when on reflection, we would prefer not to believe. In short, though the will may have some influence on belief, we may find ourselves believing things we have never decided to believe and continuing to believe things we would prefer not to believe about both art and life.

The independence of belief is, if sometimes regretted, an important constraint on cognitive processing. Thus, a person may find that he continues to believe that *p*, though he recognizes the condition of parity. Even if he reflects that, given parity, it would be more reasonable to suspend belief concerning *p*, he may well find that he continues to believe that *p*. This is not to be regarded as irrelevant to questions of reasonableness and justification. Doxastic resilience or fixation has some force in ratiocination and the reasonableness of it. As Reid (1785) noted in reply to arguments of Hume (1739), the irresistibility of perceptual belief in the external world confronted by speculative philosophical arguments for skepticism may be the basis for an argument that those perceptual beliefs are justified.

However, confronted with the belief that *p*, though recognizing the condition of parity, a person may reflect on whether he should accept what he believes. Acceptance and belief may separate. Separation is not uncommon. For example, a person may continue believing that a friend is faithful, but reflect that the evidence is to the contrary and accept that the friend is not. In such a case there are conflicting propositional attitudes toward *p*, the belief that the friend is faithful, which is the result of resilience, and the acceptance that the person is not faithful, which is the result

of the evidence. A person may believe that *Piss Christ* [**Web ASK 37**], the photograph by Serrano, mentioned earlier, of a container with a crucifix submerged in urine to portray Christ on the cross is sacrilegious. After hearing a Kierkegaardian (1941) interpretation, that the genuine Christian must accept the incarnation of the godhead, which means Christ was made of blood and piss as well as skin and bone, she might come to accept the evidence that the photograph is religious in the way suggested. But still, thinking of the crucifix submerged, she continues to believe it is sacrilegious to present the crucifix in piss. She is offended.

The offended person may consider her own belief in the sacrilege unreasonable as she accepts the denial of it based on reasons offered to her, for example, the reference to the existential fundamentalism of Kierkegaard (1941). We may think of belief as a state that arises without our bidding and that may remain against our will. By contrast, allowing some linguistic innovation in the use of the word, we may describe acceptance as an attitude of positive evaluation based on the evidence and reasons. So the first distinction is between belief, which may not be responsive to ratiocination or evaluation, on the one side, and acceptance, which is the positive attitude resulting from rational evaluation, on the other. The evaluation of acceptance may involve conscious reflection and ratiocination, or it may result from a principle of evaluation serving the ends of reflection and ratiocination, acting as a rule of thumb or an evaluation surrogate of the latter. Some perceptual beliefs and memory beliefs have the evidence of sense and memory to warrant the acceptance of them without reflection. Other beliefs are accompanied by evidence for them, many memory beliefs, for example, in terms of the feelings of clarity and certainty.

REASONABLENESS AND JUSTIFICATION

The next distinction concerns the relation of reasonableness to evidence. There is an immediate distinction between strong and weak evidential restrictions on reasonableness. Consider the two following definitions:

> SR. It is reasonable for *S* to accept that *p* only if the evidence *S* possesses more strongly supports *p* than the denial of *p*.
> WR. It is reasonable for *S* to accept that *p* only if it is not the case that the evidence *S* possesses more strongly supports the denial of *p* than *p*.

The second definition is latitudinarian and allows for the reasonableness of accepting anything whose denial is not supported or favored. However, *WR* is probably something that might be better be rejected in favor of:

UR. It is not unreasonable for *S* to accept that *p* only if it is not the case that the evidence *S* possesses more strongly supports the denial of *p* than *p*.

SR and *UR* allow for the possibility that there may be things that it is not reasonable to accept but also not unreasonable to accept. Let us take *SR* and *UR* together as *R*. It is clear that *R* is relevant to the parity issue concerning acceptance and the interpretation of art. In the case of parity, it might not be reasonable for a person *S* to accept that *p* in the parity condition by *R*, but neither would it be unreasonable for the person *S* to accept *p* in the parity situation by *R*.

We might say the same thing about a weak notion of being justified in accepting that *p* meaning something like that *S has some justification for accepting that p* and of being unjustified in accepting that *p* meaning that *S has some justification for rejecting that p.* Consider the following two conditions:

J. *S* is justified in accepting that *p* only if the evidence *S* possesses more strongly supports *p* than the denial of *p*.

U. *S* is not unjustified in accepting that *p* only if it is not the case that the evidence *S* possesses more strongly supports the denial of *p* than *p*.

This pair of definitions allows that a person might not be justified in accepting that *p* on the evidence she possesses but, at the same time, not be unjustified in accepting that *p* on the evidence she possesses. Indeed, in the parity condition, this would be so. It must be acknowledged that this account of justification does not have as much plausibility as the account of reasonableness and unreasonableness offered in *R*. For it is natural to so use the notion of *justification* so that one is unjustified in accepting something that is not positively supported by the evidence. That is, it is natural to say that if a person is not justified in accepting something, then he or she is unjustified in accepting it, while it is not equally obligatory to say that if a person is not reasonable in accepting something, then he or she is unreasonable to accept it.

The explanation for *R* is that there is a theory of reasonableness that allows that it is not unreasonable to accept something that the evidence permits you to accept even though it does not mandate this. For a discussion of such a theory see Lehrer, Roelofs, and Swain (1967). Reason may permit the acceptance of something it does not require. We shall continue discussing reasonableness but the remarks apply to the weak notion of justification articulated above. A stronger notion of justification is required for the conversion of justified acceptance of a truth to knowledge, one that requires evidence to meet objections to what is accepted without resting on error. I have articulated such a theory in detail earlier (Lehrer, 2000), but here I am

concerned with a weaker notion of justification as an account of what it is reasonable for a person to accept. Reasonable acceptance is not the same as knowledge. It is a first step on the path.

EVALUATION AND EVIDENCE: THE ACCEPTANCE SOLUTION

The implications of this account of reasonableness formulated in *R* for the parity condition allow acceptance as not unreasonable. Suppose, moreover, that I accept that *p* in the parity condition to put the matter in the first person. The question that now arises is whether my reflective evaluation and acceptance of *p* could in any way add to the evidence I possess, including an exemplar representation of experience. Suppose that upon considering the parity condition concerning *p*, I evaluate acceptance of *p* positively in terms of the exemplar representation of experience and accept *p*, nonetheless. Should my reflective evaluation of the exemplar representation itself count as evidence in support of *p*? Notice that if my evaluation of the representation and my acceptance can offer any positive support for *p*, no matter how little, then my evidence from experience might support *p* more strongly than the denial of *p*. On this account, my mere acceptance of *p* after the recognition of parity might upset the parity. The result is that my evidence, including that acceptance of the exemplar representation, supports *p* more strongly than the denial of *p*. So condition *SR* allows for the reasonableness of accepting *p* after recognizing the parity condition. Acceptance trumps parity. The result would be the solution of the problem by providing evidential weight of acceptance of exemplar representation.

There is an oddity to the solution but also to the rejection of it. The oddity might be put this way: It is strange to suppose that merely accepting something can add to the evidence for accepting it. The evidence for accepting something, a critic of the present position might contend, has to be independent of the state of accepting it. Put another way, the mere fact that you accept something cannot be a reason for accepting it. The reasons for accepting something must be something other than accepting it, even accepting an exemplar representation, that supports it. Call the view that accepting cannot provide evidence for itself the *independence constraint*. Accepting cannot support, provide evidence, or supply a reason itself. The constraint contravenes supposing that accepting something offers any support for accepting it.

The denial of the constraint might be called the *self-support condition*. Some have thought that the self-support condition is a feature of a foundation theory of reasonableness. I suppose that Firth (1949) held this view, and perhaps C. I. Lewis (1946) held it as well. However, the

self-support condition may equally be a component in a coherence theory of reasonableness. The reason is that coherence theories of reasonableness may hold that the reasonableness of acceptance is internal to a system of acceptances, and therefore, indirectly to itself as I have argued (Lehrer, 1997, 2000). One might, of course, apply the independence constraint to reasonableness within a system. Once one notes that the reasonableness of acceptance on a coherence theory of reasonableness depends on a relation to a system, however, it is hard to see why one should exclude the possibility that acceptances acquire some positive evidential support from being members of the system that includes them.

Let us return with these reflections before us to the distinction between acceptance and belief. Acceptance is positive evaluation in terms of the evidence. Belief may not have the backing of reflection and ratiocination. But in the parity example, acceptance, which involves positive evaluation in the face of the evidential parity, is most plausibly construed as the result of reflection and ratiocination that brings one to the recognition of parity. My positive acceptance is my judgment in favor of *p* upon recognizing parity in the evidence. One might protest that the judgment is unreasonable and should be given no weight. However, if *R* is taken as the condition of what is unreasonable, my judgment cannot be condemned as unreasonable, even if not praised as reasonable either. It should, moreover, be allowed the courtesy of not being considered unreasonable. There is a kind of existential moment of decision, to accept or not to accept. To decide, I must rely, at this point, on my own judgment. I must decide what to accept about the content of my world.

Suppose my judgment after recognizing parity favors *p*. In the existential moment, I accept that *p*. Can I supply any argument for the reasonableness of accepting that *p*? Moreover, can I do this in a way that respects the judgment of the other? Here is my reflection. To arrive at the condition of parity, I had to use my judgment and reach a verdict on all the evidence. I had to accept that the other argued cogently. I had, finally, to accept that his evidence and his arguments were the equal in plausibility to my own. Unless I accept these things, the problem of parity does not arise. Moreover, it must be reasonable for me to accept these things, for if it is not reasonable, my acceptance of them is no evidence. But what has made my acceptance of all the conditions that lead to parity reasonable? Part of what made them reasonable may be the merits internal to the evidence and reasonings themselves. But that is not the whole story.

I must, after all, judge and reach a verdict on these matters. So I must place my confidence in my judgment and, moreover, my judgment must be worthy of my confidence. If I lacked confidence in my judgment, I would not have accepted the claims that produce the parity condition. If I had

confidence but were not worthy of my confidence, then my acceptance of the claims would not convert them to the evidence that creates the evidential parity for me. Parity does not drop from nowhere. It results from judgment and from the reasonableness of it. Where does the reasonableness of that come from? Where does the reasonableness of accepting the exemplarized content of experience come from? Where does the reasonableness of transferring the content of art to the content of my world come from? Where does the reasonableness of my world making come from?

TRUSTWORTHINESS AND REASONABLENESS

I have argued before that my reasonableness of judgment and acceptance come from my trustworthiness (Lehrer, 1997). I drew the following argument, and now it draws me:

1. I am worthy of my trust in accepting what I do.
2. I am trustworthy in accepting what I do.
3. I am trustworthy in accepting in what I do in order to be reasonable in what I accept.
4. I am reasonable in accepting what I do.
5. I am reasonable in accepting what I do concerning the transfer of exemplarized content to the world even under the condition of parity.

I do not claim that each of these steps follows deductively from the preceding, though some do. The argument from 1 to 2 seems deductive based on the verbal reformulation. The argument from 2 to 3 seems to be cogent, but it is an instance of defeasible reasoning rather than deductive. Step 2 describes a general capacity to be trustworthy, and step 3 describes a general application of the capacity in order to be reasonable. The argument from 3 to 4 is again defeasible because the inference from the capacity to be trustworthy in order to be reasonable to the capacity to be reasonable is defeasible. It is, nevertheless, cogent because being trustworthy in order to be reasonable in what one accepts generally results in being reasonable in what one accepts. The argument from 4 to 5 is defeasible because it is consistent, though incoherent, to deny that the transfer of exemplarized content to the world is reasonable. The argument is defeasible for the simple reason that 4 describes a general capacity of being reasonable while 5 describes a more specific application of the capacity to the transfer of content under the condition of parity. Parity will not always arise in the transfer of exemplarized content, of course. The argument is important for the reasonableness of the transfer of content under reasonable disagreement. The

reasonableness of world building must acknowledge such disagreement, which may be robust, but the reasonableness of transferring exemplarized content to the world is consistent with agreement. The reasonableness of disagreement respects the diversity of disagreement, and diversity, we shall find, protects us from error.

My reasonableness of accepting the condition of parity is explained by my reasonableness of judging and accepting. Someone unconvinced by the formulation of the argument must confront the need to explain why it is reasonable for me to accept the condition of parity in the first place. That is explained by my capacity to be reasonable in how I evaluate the claims of the other, and, therefore, in what I accept. Put the matter another way. Unless I suppose that I am reasonable in what I accept, I cannot suppose that I am reasonable to accept the parity condition. If it is not reasonable for me to accept the parity condition, then the problem about the parity of evidence cannot arise. The reasonableness of acceptance takes precedence over disagreement as we transfer the content of exemplar representation from art to the world.

THE REASONABLENESS OF ACCEPTANCE AND PARITY

It might seem that the reasonableness of accepting parity in some way entails that I should accept neither *p*, the transfer of content, nor the denial of *p*. But suppose I accept *R* and consider it not unreasonable to accept the transfer of content. I must decide for myself, because the evidence is balanced. However, my verdict on behalf of accepting the transfer tilts the balance. The reasonableness of my accepting what I do is what explains my reasonableness in accepting parity. The conclusion is this. If I proceed to accept that p in pursuit of the objectives of reason in accepting that *p*, then I am committed to accepting that the evidence supports *p* more strongly than the denial of *p*, *the reasonableness of accepting parity not withstanding*. I am committed to the reasonableness of accepting what I do, including, most saliently, the acceptance of *p*.

Can I square accepting that the evidence does not support accepting *p* more strongly than denial of *p*, while at the same time accepting *p*? The answer is, "No!" I may decide not to accept that *p* or the denial of *p*, as the parity condition is created to suggest, and suspend judgment. But it is up to me. I may, acknowledging initially the parity condition, subsequently judge that I would be making a mistake to suspend judgment and refuse to accept my exemplar representation. Suppose in the pursuit of the objectives of reason I judge that *p*. That is where reason, my reason, leads me as I confront my exemplarization of experience. My judgment of the exemplariza-

tion tips the scale of evidence. I at first accept parity; I then accept that *p* in pursuit of the goals of evidence, nevertheless. The balance is tilted and parity is lost. I accept that *p*.

I am, by the argument above, reasonable in what I accept, so I am reasonable to accept that *p*. By the condition *R*, if it is reasonable to accept that *p*, then the evidence supports *p* more strongly than the denial of *p*. How did that come about if I initially accepted the parity condition? My acceptance of *p*, my evaluation of the exemplar representation, is part of the evidence. Parity is undone by acceptance. I cannot consistently maintain parity when I accept that *p*. Parity itself becomes a kind of illusion. In a moment of epistemic absentmindedness, I forget to notice that my judgment of my representation of my world is itself a source of evidence about that world. I look at the situation as though my judgment did not weigh anything on the scale of evidence. But it must. One may be inclined to think of evidence as being something independent of judgment and representation. That is to forget the role of judgment and representation in the creation of evidence. I receive information and engage in ratiocination from and about something. Then, however, I confront the decision of what I am to make of all of it, of my exemplar representation of the world and of the arguments of others about such representation. I cannot escape the decision and the responsibility of deciding where my representation and ratiocination lead me.

The relevance of this reflection to the use of art in world making is obvious. In the interpretation of art in terms of the content of the exemplars of aesthetic attention as well as the transfer of the content to the world outside of art, one confronts disagreement. Imagine a courtier, Sir Positive, studying a Boucher painting of Madame de Pompadour [**Web ASK 5**] and remarking to another, Sir Negative, that the content of the painting captures what Pompadour is like. A dispute might occur. Sir Negative might remark that even Pompadour did not think Boucher had captured her likeness, and Positive might acknowledge that she noted that but add that the posture, the attitude, the books, scrolls, and globe show us what she is like. Negative might reply that the face is everything in capturing what a person is like, especially the eyes, and the eyes of the woman in the painting are those of a pleasure-giving mistress indifferent to the objects of state in the painting. Both might consider the arguments of the other, and, after careful viewing and conversation, they might disagree about the content of the painting, about what the experience of the painting shows us about the content of what Pompadour is like in the painting.

Imagine they agree that they have said all there is to say to each other about the matter of the painting. Moreover, imagine that each of them sees and thinks of Pompadour in terms of his own exemplar representation of

the content of Pompadour in the painting. In the world making of Positive, the exemplar of experience, the phenomenology of the surface of the painting by Boucher, becomes part of the content of Pompadour in court, as a powerful figure. He sees her and thinks of her in terms of that exemplar and the content it exhibits and represents. Negative sees and thinks of her differently, as simply a pretty mistress of the king, as he exemplarized her in his experience of the painting.

The exemplar representations of Positive and Negative contain a different content for Pompadour in the painting. For Positive, she is a political figure in the painting, but for Negative just a pretty mistress. If Negative and Positive have great respect for each other and each considers the other his critical and epistemic equal when it comes to art, a condition of parity is accepted by both. Each may, after all of the discussion is considered, accept opposing claims about the content of the painting of Pompadour, the same ones each did before the dispute. Negative accepts that she is portrayed as just a pretty mistress indifferent to politics, while Positive accepts that this is not the case and that she is portrayed as a political figure instead. Can they each be reasonable to accept what they do? Each must decide for himself, use his own judgment, and if, in the end, having fairly considered all the evidence, they disagree, is there anything unreasonable in each considering himself worthy of his own trust in accepting what he does? Cannot they each be reasonable accepting what they do about the content of the painting on the evidence?

Suppose further that each transfers the exemplar representation to Pompadour herself as she stands in the court of King Louis XV. Imagine they each have accepted what they do after a full discussion of what Pompadour is actually like, again reaching dialectical equilibrium. Exemplar representation is embedded in wider representation, and the content of Pompadour in the worlds of Positive and Negative is in opposition. Can they each be reasonable in accepting what they do? Each has to decide for himself, the existential moment cannot be avoided. They might have suspended judgment about what Pompadour was like. But must they suspend to be reasonable? Whatever each does, he must consider himself worthy of his own trust in doing what he does. They might reasonably disagree in the end. Parity is upset by judgment lending each the evidence of his own judgment to accepting what he does. Either our decision to accept what we do counts for nothing in the court of evidence, and we must all practice the silence of skepticism, or judgment weighs on the scale of evidence and tips it in favor of the reasonableness of what we accept and in what worlds we make even when we disagree as equals.

The existential moment makes or breaks parity for the reasonable person. Being reasonable destroys the paradox of accepting the condition of parity

and accepting that *p*. A reasonable person accepting that *p* relinquishes the acceptance of parity. The verdict of judgment of the reasonable person is at the same time and in the same decision an acceptance of *p* and acceptance that the evidence supports p more strongly than not *p*. A further question arises. In the case of parity, does my acceptance of *p* make it true that my evidence more strongly supports *p* than its denial? The answer is that acceptance of *p* explains why my evidence more strongly supports *p* than the denial of *p*. Judgment is not all there is to support of evidence, for judgment may err in any application, but, at the same time, the support of evidence is, in part, a matter of judgment. The reasonableness of a person is, as I have argued (Lehrer, 1997, 2000), a keystone in the arch of evidence of the person. The keystone is supported by the other stones of evidence supporting the arch, but it supports the arch itself. Judgment holds the arch of evidence together.

The precise account of the metaphor of the keystone arch I have often defended is as follows. The principle of reasonableness of a person in accepting what he does, like the principle of trustworthiness, has the virtue of explaining why a person is reasonable in accepting the principle itself. If I am reasonable in what I accept, for example, and I accept that I am reasonable in accepting that I am reasonable in what I accept, then my reasonableness in accepting that I am reasonable in this way is explained by my reasonableness itself. There is an explanatory loop here. It is important to note that both the truth of the principle and the acceptance of the principle are components of a wider explanation. Indeed, it is neither the acceptance of the principle nor the truth of the principle alone that is explanatory. The explanation is the loop. I called this *Loop Theory* (Lehrer, 2008) and will offer my explanation and defense in Chapter 11.

CHAPTER 10

Social Reason, Aggregation, and Collective Wisdom

We have argued in the previous chapter that self-trust outweighs parity in disagreement in the life of reason of an individual and, therefore, supports the reasonableness of acceptance. However, we must still confront the criticism of social consensus, something beyond disagreement among a pair of peers, against the reasonableness of individual representation, acceptance, and preference. Moreover, there are obvious cases in which social consensus articulates a correction and, therefore, a legitimate constraint on individual representation. The best efforts of an individual to interpret an artwork may lead the individual to accept an interpretation that *we* consider unreasonable just as the best efforts of an individual may lead the individual to accept an interpretation of scientific exemplars that *we* consider unreasonable. We may be willing to allow a good deal of individual latitude in exemplar representation and the acceptance of it. Even allowing for the importance of self-trust, *we* may reject some representation and the acceptance of it by an individual as unreasonable and incorrect. An individual who judges that the painting *In Every Hamlet*, by Dang Duc Sinh [**Web ASK 25**], represents happy women celebrating would be offering an interpretation of the painting *we* would judge to be unreasonable and incorrect. Are we just opposing personal judgment against our consensus and rejecting his views because he stands in social opposition to the rest of us? Or can we find in our opposition to his idiosyncratic interpretation a justification for rejecting his view as being incorrect?

Suppose social consensus arises from the diversity of cognitive skills fully exploited by the self-trust of individuals. Does self-trust in how a

person represents a problem and what he accepts, when this conflicts with social consensus, abrogate the benefits of diversity? The problem has not been far from consideration in the case of the interpretation of art. We may applaud autonomy of the individual in the interpretation of art in opposition to authority. However, some will contend that the reasonableness of the authority of experts in the artworld should trump the reasonableness of individual self-trust in the interpretation of the form and content of artworks and even in the transfer of that content in making our world.

How should we reply? Should we defend the reasonableness of self-trust in representation, at least of the subjective experience in exemplar representation, when self-trust conflicts with social consensus about the content of the artwork and the transfer thereof? Individualistic theories of representation and acceptance seem to ignore the social constraint of intersubjective sources of information. How can this be reasonable? My first reply is that the individual, as a condition of being trustworthy, has to evaluate the claims of others and change what he accepts in the light of such evaluation. The evaluation is, of course, the task of the individual that must incorporate the condition of self-trust. Appeal to the social constraint does not enable one to escape the individual burden, privilege, and responsibility of evaluating the reports of others. If you accept what another accepts or the mode of representation of others, that brings with it your acceptance of your trustworthiness in your evaluation of them. There is no escape from the loop of self-trust in what one accepts in the social constraint of appeal to what others accept.

There is, however, a method for tying together the individual and the interpersonal, the social constraint, when you see the individual aggregating the views of others. The social aggregation becomes part of the individual. Here is my way of tying the individual and social together when it is conceded that the evaluation of others is a condition of the trustworthiness of the individual. The evaluation of others is equivalent to deciding what weights to give to what they accept or prefer, what authority to delegate to others, in the particular case and circumstances. I assume, idealizing the matter mathematically, that the set of weights, including the weight one assigns to oneself, are nonnegative and sum to unity. The simplest model of the role of such weights is obtained by turning from qualitative acceptance to degrees of acceptance, assuming the idealization of these degrees as probabilities. This is an admitted idealization. Entering into the idealization of individuals assigning weights to others, I offered, with Carl Wagner (Lehrer and Wagner, 1981), a theory of aggregation of the weights to find consensus. We introduced the further idealization of the aggregation of probabilities in terms of the weights individuals assign to each other.

If we imagine that individuals average the probabilities of others starting with an initial state applying the weights that they assign, and iterate such averaging while holding weights constant, the process will converge, provided that the members of the group are connected by a vector of positive weights assigned. The transition to state $x+1$ probability, $\mathbf{p}_m^{x+1}$, for member m from state x for m, $\mathbf{p}_i^x$, aggregating with the weights, $\mathbf{w}_{mi}$, m assigns to each member i is the following summation:

$$\mathbf{p}_m^{x+1} = \sum_{n}^{1-n} \mathbf{w}_{mi} \mathbf{p}_i^x$$

The process of iteration converges for the various members aggregating toward a consensual probability, $\mathbf{p}_c$, as x goes to infinity.

It suffices for the convergence that members assign positive weight to themselves and that there is a sequence of all members of the group such that each member in the sequence assigns a positive weight to the next member in the sequence. This connectedness could result from each member in the sequence giving positive weight to only one other member, the next one in the sequence. It can also result from one member of the group, the central figure, assigning positive weight to everyone else, who in turn gives positive weight to that figure.

The fiction of iterated aggregation is suggestive of the way in which radical shifts occur in the history of art and science—paradigm shifts, for example—resulting from the members of a group of outsiders becoming connected with the insiders by a member of the group of outsiders, a central figure. If that central member of the outsiders is given positive weight by a member of the insider group, a central figure of that group to whom he gives positive weight in turn, connection between the two groups results. The two central figures of the two groups giving positive weight to each other connect the two groups into a unified group. The result of unification is convergence toward a consensus for the larger group.

However, convergence toward consensus overrides the contrast between individual autonomy and self-trust, on the one hand, and social conformity and intersubjectivity on the other. As the process converges, the individual assignments of probability, of acceptance, converge toward the consensual assignments. Individual self-trust and social intersubjectivity fit together by the mathematics. The individual incorporates the results of social factors and information articulated in the weights assigned by individuals to other individuals, and, indeed, the weights that they indirectly assign to the weights that individuals assign to other individuals including themselves. Similarly, the social consensus incorporates the results of individual self-trust and evaluation. Evaluation indirectly includes evaluation of the

evaluations of others. The result is a unification of the individual and society in the mathematical aggregate.

A FIXED POINT OF CONSENSUS

It is, however, important to reflect on the degree of idealization of the iterated averaging and to notice that it is a fiction. Once the fiction of iterated averaging is considered for the explanatory suggestiveness of social processes, it may be replaced with a mathematically equivalent representation that puts aside the iterated averaging. Instead, we may think of the initial situation as one in which individuals assign diverse vectors of weights to other individuals. This leaves us with the problem of finding the consensual weights, $\mathbf{w}_{cm}$, to assign to each member in the group based on the diverse weights initially assigned to find a consensual probability or utility assignment. The response is to summarize what the information contained in the diverse weights initially assigned tells us about what weight is socially appropriate on the basis of the total information contained in the social group. We need an answer to the question of what is the appropriate weight to assign to members of the group.

Fortunately, there is an answer that is both natural and mathematically cogent. Suppose we could find an original vector of weights to employ to average the diverse weights assigned to a given individual that would yield back the weights in the original vector. Averaging by the original vector yields back the original vector in equilibrium. Letting, $\mathbf{w}_{cm}$, represent the consensual weight assigned to *m*, it is computed from the original weights members *i* assigned to *m* in the initial state *0*, $\mathbf{w}_{im}^{0}$, from the vector of consensual weights, $\mathbf{w}_{ci}$, by the summation:

$$\mathbf{w}_{cm} = \sum_{n}^{1-n} \mathbf{w}_{ci} \mathbf{w}_{im}^{0}$$

The vector of consensual weights is a fixed-point vector with a unique value given connectedness. It is a kind of explanatory loop by which a vector of weights yields itself back as a result. For $\mathbf{w}_{cm}$, computed on the left, must be the weight used to find the product, $\mathbf{w}_{cm}\mathbf{w}_{mm}^{0}$, in the summation. The mathematics of the matter is that the fixed-point vector used to average probabilities and utilities of members of the group in the initial state yields the same result as convergence of iterated weighted averaging of those probabilities and utilities described in the original fiction.

A remaining problem, having noted the convergence of the individual and social resulting from iteration or application of the fixed-point vector, is to offer some argument that the consensual assignment is successful in

reaching the goals of truth and value. One convinced of the merits of the argument as providing a reasonable or trustworthy probability assignment needs some further argument for the conclusion that such assignments are successful in reaching external goals. An analogous problem arises concerning assignments of consensual assignments of preference for values. The problem remains to provide some argument that aggregation of the efforts of individuals to reach truth or value is effective. Initially, the problem seemed to me to lack a solution. I remained satisfied with noting that the fixed-point vector aggregated the total information that members of the group had about other members of the group and, therefore, constituted a rational summary of such information. Applying the fixed-point vector to find consensual probabilities of truth or utilities of value was justified by the principle of rationality that one should use total information to determine what to accept as true or prefer as value.

PERSONALISM AND TRUTH

The justification above may argue for the adequacy of using weighted averaging because it is formally equivalent to Bayesian methodology of using priors to average in a way that sustains coherence (Lehrer, 1983). However, the desire remains to offer some argument that goes beyond normative constraints of coherence and rationality to assigning probabilities that are successful estimates of actual frequencies. There is a liberal tradition that defends self-trust and individualism in the quest for truth stemming from Mill (1869) as we noted. But one is left with the desire to find some argument other than political liberalism for thinking that individuals following the path of self-trust in what they accept will lead to social success in attaining truth, in short, that social consensus will probably trump individual error whatever the vicissitudes of the path.

DIVERSITY, SELF-TRUST, AND TRUTH

Recent work by Page (2007) contains an argument that may be expanded to create the needed connection between self-trust and social success in reaching truth. The argument Page has advanced is a mathematical proof that social diversity of representation and cognitive method has a lower error rate than individual expertise. To put the matter in the simplest terms, aggregating a smart diverse social group (diverse in terms of how they represent a problem and the methods they use to solve it) will yield a lower frequency of error than appeal to a single expert. The implication is that

smart diverse individuals trusting themselves to articulate and solve a problem will have a higher success rate in the group aggregate than a single expert in reaching truth, that is, a correct answer to a problem. Note that this is not an empirical conjecture. It is a mathematical truth (Hong and Page, 2001, Hong and Page, 2004, Page, 2007).

The Page argument for social success is based on aggregation that gives equal weight to each person's solution of the problem. Acceptance is here construed qualitatively as personal acceptance of a claim or hypothesis, and it supplies a social warrant for personal acceptance. Another application of the Page theorem would be the averaging of degrees of acceptance in terms of differential aggregation weights considered above to aggregate diversity.

AGGREGATION AND DIVERSITY

This way of articulating the problem of aggregating diversity raises the question of whether averaging undoes the benefits of diversity. The alternative to averaging, even in the quantitative case of degrees of probability, is to count the votes and choose the winning degree of probability instead of averaging. The advantage of the winner-takes-all strategy is that it represents the work accomplished by diversity. The disadvantage is that it ignores all the information contained in the losing group. Which is more effective for avoiding error?

Here is a further complication of the issue. Suppose that members of the group evaluate other members of the group with respect to their chances of success by distributing a unit vote among all the members of the group, including themselves. Now the set of vectors can be aggregated, that is, averaged as the fixed-point theorem tells us above, to yield a set of weights for averaging that summarizes the information that individuals have about other individuals. The resulting fixed-point vector summarizes the diversity of ways of representing skills of others and cognitive tools used to evaluate those skills. Thus, the benefits of diversity are summarized by the fixed-point vector. Again, one could use the fixed-point vector as a winner-takes-all choice mechanism or as a means of aggregating the first-level probabilities or degrees of acceptance. The advantage of averaging is that the winner-takes-all strategy ignores the diversity of information of other individuals or groups of individuals that are not the winners.

The question remains, however, as to whether averaging by weights in the fixed-point vector to obtain a consensual or collective probability has a greater success rate than a randomly selected individual. To put the matter in another way, we need to answer the question of when consensual probability constitutes collective wisdom about truth. We have some results that

bear on the problem from Page and his collaborators (Hong and Lamberson, in manuscript). First of all, there is the result that consensual weights are better than simple averaging if and only if the weights reflect the accuracy rates of individuals and those rates differ among individuals. Secondly, the consensual weights must reflect the accuracy rates of individuals as opposed to their charisma. Thirdly, and most importantly, the accuracy of collective wisdom is determined by individual trustworthiness combined with diversity. Individual trustworthiness is a function of the method of representation and the models of prediction, that is, the cognitive models of individuals.

The details of this work are worth the reflection of philosophers, but the results are what concern us here in considering the role of consensual weights in collective wisdom. Collective wisdom outperforms individual expertise on the average. What about diverse weights used for averaging? We can say this much. Combining individual self-trust and social diversity in cognitive methods, collective wisdom resulting from averaging with diverse weights that represent diverse success rates among individuals will outperform simple averaging.

CONSENSUAL WEIGHTS AND DIVERSITY

The question that faces us now, given some encouraging results, is whether the consensual weights may be used as a measure of diverse accuracy. We move toward a positive answer by restricting the initial assignment of weights by individuals to those assignments that are based on the normalization of meta-frequencies, $\mathbf{m}_i(T/S)$, being the estimated frequency of the attribute of truth T in the first-level estimates of subject S by individual *i*. These **m** estimates, like the original **f** estimates, may often not be the result of statistical sampling. The projection of estimates should, after all, embrace information about the accuracy of a subject and the cognitive models used by the subject. It is tempting to require that a subject use the same cognitive model to estimate the **m** function as to estimate the **f** function for the sake of uniformity. But such a requirement appears unrealistic. One might use different models to make predictions about the success of physicists than one would use to predict the correctness of physical hypotheses. Nevertheless, averaging by using weights that estimate the accuracy of subjects yields the same results in the aggregate as using weights to estimate first-level frequencies. So, the results concerning the collective wisdom outperforming individual estimates should transfer to the metalevel. Reichenbach (1949) proved a long time ago that higher order aggregation could, under specified conditions, reduce to first-level

results. We can see something comparable occurring here as meta-frequencies are used as estimates of accuracy of individuals in their estimates of first-level results. So the proposal here is that meta-frequencies, though estimates of accuracy, will, when models are sophisticated and diverse, give us estimates of accuracy that may be used to conclude that collective wisdom, construed as consensual probability, will do better on the average than simple averaging.

One way to look at the estimates of accuracy, one that reaches back toward the original result of combined wisdom outperforming individual expertise, is that simple averaging is analogous to individual expertise. It is one way of estimating among many. If the many are sophisticated and diverse, and the fixed-point theorem represents that sophisticated diversity, then the diverse estimates of accuracy should outperform the individual one. This may explain why we appeal to consensual aggregation to explain why something we accept is true and why something we prefer has value.

EXPLANATORY CIRCULARITY, EXEMPLARIZATION, AND A TRUTH LOOP

There is an appearance of circularity in the argument. Higher order estimation and evaluation is used to estimate truth at the first level, and truth at the first level could be represented without appeal to the collective wisdom grounded on it. In the final result, the performance of the collective, of the method of aggregation whether simple or weighted, has to be justified by the success of the method in attaining truth. So one might ask whether it is the underlying truth or the collective wisdom that explains the greater rate of success of the collective procedure. The answer is that there is no explanation without a loop connecting the underlying truth with the collective wisdom. If you ask whether it is the aggregation of individual expertise combined with social diversity that is explanatory or the truth it finds, the answer has to be that the question is like the question: what comes first the chicken or the egg? As to the question of whether it is the underlying truth that explains why collective wisdom and social diversity prevails over the individual, or whether, on the other hand, collective wisdom and social diversity explain why the truth is found, one must answer that explanation here, as elsewhere, is to be found in the loop connecting the method of diversity with truth (Lehrer, 2007) which will be discussed in the next chapter. Without truth to be found, diversity explains nothing. Without diversity, truth is not as likely to be found. It is, however, crucial to notice that it is the connection between diversity of cognitive models and the attainment of truth that is explanatory. Moreover,

the role of individual expertise, if outperformed by collective wisdom, is, together with diversity, essential to the performance of the collective. Self-trust, collective wisdom, and social truth are tied together in an explanatory loop.

This loop may explain social value, a generic form of value, discussed earlier, as well as social truth. The connection between preference and enjoyment is obvious. Enjoyment is a powerful influence on individual preference. Individual preferences differ as widely as individual enjoyments. The assignment of weights to the preferences of ourselves and others may, in the aggregate, reveal social value in the consensual preference. We cannot identify social consensus of preference with value, any more than we can identify social consensus of acceptances with truth. Arguing from analogy, admitting it to be no more than that, we may conjecture that the collective wisdom of the consensual aggregate of diversity trumps individual preference concerning value as it does individual acceptance concerning truth. We need, however, the social humility to remember that this collective wisdom is only an indication of frequency of success. Moreover, the output of collective wisdom depends on the individual input of the trustworthiness of individuals and what they accept in the aggregate.

I want to return to exemplarization to find a connection between representation and experience. A one-to-one mapping of the exemplar onto itself combined with more general representation resulting from aesthetic attention strengthens the truth loop. Both science and art leave us with questions concerning acceptance and preference. Consider looking at an electron photograph in science [**Web ASK 41**] or a painting in art. There is an initial response to a sensory exemplar. The character of the exemplar becomes representational of what the experience is like. Each observer receives a sensory exemplar in his or her experience and the exemplar becomes representational by *exemplarization*.

As noted above, the sensory exemplar is generalized and marked off from what it is not. Exemplarization represents at the same time what the conscious experiences is like, an experience of a color, a smell, or a sensation, for example, enabling one to identify other experiences that are like the exemplar represented and distinguishing them from what they are not. Exemplarization is a kind of representation that provides some security from error concerning what the experience is like as the result of self-representation included in it. The exemplar is part and vehicle of what it represents. It is part of what it represents being one of the items represented at the same time that it is a vehicle representing things of the kind it exhibits. As a result, the exemplar represents itself because it is used as an exhibit of what the experiences are like. At the level of exemplarization, there is an

initial security from error in self-representation as there is a one-to-one mapping of the exemplar onto itself.

LIMITS TO SECURITY FROM ERROR

Security from error achieved by exemplarization does not extend beyond the exemplar, however. The exemplar represents a class by exhibiting what members of the class are like, and, in the role of the exhibit of what is represented, represents itself. There is safety in self-representation. Page (2007) notes that representation by symbols that consist of a one-to-one mapping of symbols to objects, though it contains security, fails to give us the cognitive advantages of representation that involves generalizing to a wider class of things represented by the symbol. Exemplarization gives us a model of a cognitive process that achieves the security of a one-to-one mapping, the exemplar represents itself in a way that is constitutive of the process, while going beyond self-representation to generalized representation of a class of objects. At the level of generalization, as Page notes, social diversity makes its appearance. There are some innate and social influences on how the individual generalizes, but there is also individual diversity. At the level of generalizing, representational systems reveal cognitive differences that insulate the social consensus from error.

The security from error in exemplarization brings with it the costs and advantages of idiosyncrasy and diversity, respectively. The exemplar as symbol is like the use of a word in an idiolect. There may be common factors influencing how we generalize, some of them may even be innate dispositions, but there are differences. Moreover, those differences become magnified in two ways. First of all, the generalization goes beyond employing a personal experience to stand for personal experiences of the same kind to standing for interpersonally perceived external objects. A great deal of discussion in philosophy has concentrated on whether the content of representation is internal or external, that is, on whether sensory exemplars represent something external, red objects, for example, or just internal experiences, red sensations. The dichotomy is, of course, a false one. Sometimes an exemplar, especially of some new experience, some new feeling or sensation, may leave one puzzled, indeed, even clueless as to the external sources. We know something about what the experience of it is like in itself and may be able to identify experiences like it because of our memory of the original exemplar. However, we take exemplar representation beyond the experience to the external world as we noted in earlier chapters. The exemplar becomes an exhibit of what something in the external world is like for us.

EXTERNALISM OF VERBAL CONTENT

Exemplar representation quickly becomes connected with verbal representation as we seek to describe external objects. The process of representation moving from exemplarization to description is not simple addition of content. The exemplar representational content of the exemplar may not be something that can be simply added to the content of a word. There may be a conflict in how the word would be applied and how the exemplar would be applied. The classification of a new item may be different when you ask whether the word applies to the new item than when you think of the exemplar and ask yourself whether the new item is like the exemplar. However, the connection of exemplarized content with the verbal content carries the former into a network of verbal and inferential connections. Inferential connections may also be added to the process of generalization of the exemplar using it as a mark of distinction before the verbal connections are made. One may think of the exemplar as exhibiting what red objects are like—apples and blood, for example—before describing with words what the exemplar represents, but the verbal connection is inferentially robust. Modification of the verbal content may result from the exemplarized content as well as the other way around. Inferential connections may be added, cut, or reconfigured as we combine sensory conception with verbal conception. Scientific interpretation of data and critical interpretation of works of art depend on the reconceptualization of experience in language and the reconceptualization of language in experiences.

In the case of smell, if it is a distinctive smell of an object, the sensation of smell may represent both what the sensation is like and, at the same time, represent the object giving rise to the smell—a rose, to use a polite example. Exemplars may be Janus-faced symbols, as we have noted, looping backward onto themselves to exhibit how we conceive of external objects and forward toward external objects represented. Conflict between internal and external accounts of content rests on a false supposition that a sensory state must either represent something internal rather than something external or vice versa. That conflict is a relic of the failure to recognize the robust ambiguity of representation pulled toward giving us an account of the relation between our internal life and the external world in the exhibit of a sensory exemplar.

It might be thought, and externalists have thought this, that the move from internal states to public language takes us from individuality to conventionality in one fell swoop. Having swooped, they think we can then brush all the privacy and idiosyncrasy of conception into the trash folder and enjoy the pleasures of external representation. That is a semantics that ignores individual psychology, including psychology of language.

Individuals differ in how they use words. We may suppose that there is a correct way to use words and that the reference of the words of the language is determined by that correct use, and with that the truth conditions, no matter what anyone thinks. Putnam (1973) took us in that direction, and others, having found the path, ran down it to the coal pit of skepticism for a person concerning what his words mean. We must acknowledge diversity in how people apply words and the verbal connections between them. What we have noted above, however, is that cognitive diversity, that includes diverse ways of representing the world, is an advantage, not a disadvantage in avoiding error.

COMMUNAL LANGUAGE AS LOGICAL FICTION

What are we to say, however, about the character of the communal language, the communal system of conception, if all that exists is the idiolects and the idiosyncrasies of exemplars in the individuals? The answer is clear enough (Lehrer, 1984; Lehrer and Lehrer, 1995). The communal language is like the average person, in this case, a weighted average of consensus we have characterized above. It is a mathematical fiction, but it is factually grounded in idiolects and weights that individuals assign to each other, directly or indirectly, to find the fixed point of aggregation. Moreover, as individuals interact, as they modify usage in terms of the weights they give to each other, the communal consensus of sign and concept is approached by the individuals who converge toward it as they aggregate with others. What we have learned from Page (2007) and his colleagues is that the diversity resulting from self-trust is an advantage rather than a disadvantage in obtaining truth and avoiding error. Part of the reason is that self-trust contains a truth loop of exemplarization and the application thereof. That security of truth does not take us far into the external world of the interpretation of science and art, but, starting from an internal truth loop and self-trust in what we accept as we represent things in the external world, we may expect our cognitive differences to be an asset in avoiding error. The truth loop of self-trust expands beyond the egocentric to the cognitive diversity of enlightened inquiry as it loops back onto and into itself.

An overly simplified formulation of the diversity result is this: enlightened inquiry requires diversity of representation to reduce risk of error. Descriptive language, though it allows for the innovation of metaphor, achieves the purpose it serves by shared convention. It provides a shared and common system of representation. What takes us beyond the homogeneity of linguistic modes of representation is experience and the exemplarization of diversity. Exemplarization is the mother of diversity in the aesthetic

response in the appreciation of art. The mathematical account of consensus offered above shows how to think about the social constraints of consensus in meaning and content in science and art. The consensus is logical fiction grounded in the reality of the diversity of individual exemplar representation, evaluation, and judgment. Self-trust generates the acceptance of diverse exemplar representations. It leads by the transfer of the content to the world to the diversity of world making.

We can now understand how the parity paradox is related to this diversity of world making. Our self-trust leads us to give greater weight to what we accept about the world of art and the world outside of art in weighted aggregation. We may begin by assigning equal probability to our view and to the conflicting view of our epistemic opponent. But self-trust leads us to assign greater weight to our own views as we confront epistemic choice, which preserves the diversity. The diversity of world making results from exemplar representation provoked by aesthetic attention and appreciation of art backed by the weight of self-trust. Art becomes the source of diversity of exemplar representation. Diversity gives birth to collective wisdom, and self-trust becomes the happy mother of veracity.

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CHAPTER 11

Knowledge, Autonomy, and Art in Loop Theory

I ended the previous chapter promising to show how evidence, acceptance, justification, and truth could be tied together in an explanatory loop without paradox. As I reflect on what I have said in this book and elsewhere about knowledge, autonomy, consciousness, and art, I find that my theories and arguments are theoretically connected in an explanatory loop. I did not set out to construct a philosophical system, but I find that there is system in what I have done. The system is a theory. I call it *loop theory*. So I shall attempt to tie together the various threads of this book concerning consciousness, representation, autonomy, knowledge, and art with a more general theory. It is my intention to explain in this way the role of art in telling the story of the self and the world, self in the world, and world in the self. Though you may have already noticed an explanatory loop on the edge of the stage of the play of this book, this loop is the principal character of my story, my theory, my system, and I seek here to exhibit it center stage.

EXPLANATION AND LOOP THEORY

Loop theory results from a philosophical objective that motivates me. The objective is to maximize explanation. This objective implies an interest in truth, of course, because false explanations are not genuine. So explanatory truth is the objective. The maximization of such explanation ties us into a loop. A comprehensive theory that maximizes explanation must contain

an explanatory truth loop. Why? We must explain why the theory itself is true, or it leaves something unexplained. If we leave something unexplained, we have not maximized explanation. It is not enough that the theory explain the truth of everything else, even if we were successful enough to obtain such a general explanation. We must explain the truth of our explanation. To that end, we need a subtheory, a part of the comprehensive theory that explains our success in accepting an explanatory theory that is true on our evidence. I will call this subtheory the *truth theory*. The explanatory theory must loop back onto itself and explain why it is true on our evidence in order to maximize explanation. Loop theory maximizes explanation. An explanation maximizing theory must explain the truth of itself on our evidence.

Preceding claims about representation and especially exemplar representation of art call for the presentation of a loop theory containing a truth theory that applies to the system of representation itself. When we exemplarize our experience of the art object, creating, thereby, form and content out of the exemplar of experience, the question of the truth of the exemplar representation of the content of the artwork confronts us. The exemplar of experience that becomes the exemplar representation may be generalized to other experiences ensuring that, since the exemplar is one of things represented, the representation is true of itself. But as the exemplar reaches further representationally, the simple truth loop of the exemplar back onto itself in ostensive generalization is lost, and with it the truth security of the representation. This loss of security occurs at the level of the interpretation of the artwork, at the level of applying the extended exemplar representation into the content of the work. We may confront perplexity, and, as a result, our freedom and autonomy as we exemplarize content while reflecting upon the work of art. Even here, however, passing beyond the truth loop of ostensive exemplarization to interpret the work from the exemplar, the need for a truth theory is apparent. How are we to decide on the basis of our evidence whether our exemplarized extended interpretation is correct? We may feel the need of a theory of the truth of interpretation simply to understand what it means to say that one interpretation is correct and another is not. So, even before we consider the transfer of exemplar representation to the interpretation of the world outside of art, we confront the need of a theory of evidence to tell us what is true on the basis of that evidence.

However, a special importance of art takes exemplar content beyond the work. Exemplar representation of novel form and content in aesthetic appreciation and attention offers us a new conception of our world and ourselves. Should we transfer the content of exemplar representation to the world outside the artwork? Is such transfer reasonable? Is the world outside of art enough like the world inside the artwork to justify transfer? The

transfer of the content of exemplar representation, when it is reflective, is the acceptance of the representation as containing some truth about the world. When we transfer content, we construct a world out of that content. It may be the content of nature in a landscape painting [**Web ASK 23**] by Monet that shapes how we perceive and, therefore, what we accept about some natural landscape. It may be the content of feminist performance art by Orlan [**Web ASK 20**] showing us how the beauty of women is stereotyped and leads us to reject it. It may be content of the *Socle du Monde* [**Web ASK 34**] by Manzoni using our experience to reconfigure how we think and feel about our world. All of this may lead to the autonomous transfer of exemplarized content and change what we think is true of the world outside of art as well as of the world of the artwork. In this way, the content of the experience of the artwork changes the content of how we represent the world and our story of our lives. As we change the content of how we think, we change what we accept about our world and what it is like. We are, in the activity of change and transfer, reconfiguring our world, remaking it, and becoming aware of our making of our world in the systematic conception of it.

The making and remaking of our world is the confrontation of the immediacy of experience, which we exemplarize, with the background system of thought that we carry and modify. Once we notice the role of a background system, once we notice that experience does not dictate how we exemplarize it into form and content, we confront the question of whether our systematic view of our world is true, or, more cautiously, of what the evidence of experience tells us about the truth of what we accept. To answer that question, however, we must return to the system of thought and experience for guidance. The truth theory is a part of the system. We cannot exit from our system of thought and experience to find a theory about truth from the evidence of experience. Instead, we must turn to the system itself for a theory of truth, even concerning the truth of the system itself. A theory of truth must explain why the theory itself is true or leave us with an incomplete theory of explanation.

Many have noticed that the theory of evidence, our guide to truth, must be part of our complete theory. In the last century, it was Quine who noted in "Epistemology Naturalized" that a theory of evidence, a theory of what confirms a scientific theory, is a part of the theory, not something outside of it. Noting the circularity of the loop, Quine (1969, 74) remarked,

> However, such scruples have little point once we have stopped dreaming of deducing science from observation. If we are out to understand the link between observation and science, we are well advised to use any available information, included that provided by the very science whose link with observation we are seeking to understand.

Maximizing understanding requires a loop. Quine once remarked to me that when he gave a lecture at Oxford in the last century as a young man, an elderly philosopher came up to him and remarked, "That was excellent Hegel," and left without further comment. The remark appeared enigmatic to Quine, but the connection is clear enough. Hegel (1949) noted the thesis of idea, the idea of nature, on one hand, and the antithesis of the object of the idea, nature itself, on the other. The unifying synthesis is spirit, Hegel claimed, which he says is "the grandest conception of all." So the point noted by the elderly idealist was that for Quine, as for Hegel, a theory about the relationship between theory and nature, a theory about the relationship between conception and the object of conception, is itself part of the system. The grandest conception of all, as Hegel (1949, 86) says, "is self-contained and self-complete, in itself and for itself at once." Spirit in Hegel, like science in Quine, contains the grand loop of truth on our evidence within itself.

I differ from Hegel in Hegel's ambition to close the explanatory loop by identifying truth with the grand conception itself, spirit. That was Hegel's mistake. It is part of our general conception that we can be mistaken in our conceptions, that we are fallible in even our general conceptions, and so the identification of truth with general conception is internally inconsistent with our general conception itself. But the motivation, though erroneous, was not foolish. Hegel noted that explanation without truth was defective. To remedy the defect, he identified theory or conception with truth, at least at the grandest level. One might be tempted to think that unless one follows Hegel in this identification, the attainment of truth will be unexplained by theory and a matter of luck. That thought is an error. It is a seductive fundamental mistake made by Hegel and those who follow him, as well as many who oppose him, up to the present day. A theory of truth can explain why what we accept is true on our evidence, including, of course, the theory itself. If the theory provides a true explanation of why it leads us to truth, then our success is explained and not just luck. We may be involved in world making as we represent our world within the system we contrive. We may, as part of the system, construct a truth theory of when the representations we accept are true on the evidence. We may apply the acceptance of the truth theory to itself to explain why it is true on our evidence. Remember, however, that the explanatory theory, whether of truth or something else, must itself be true or the explanation it provides is not genuine. False explanation is no explanation at all.

A complete explanatory theory contains an explanation of why the theory is true on the evidence. The explanatory loop ties truth and theory together in the loop without identifying one with the other. The theory, when true, contains an explanation of why it is true on the evidence.

The result is that the attainment of truth is explained and not a matter of luck. It is not luck from the internal perspective because it is explained by the theory internally accepted. It is not luck from the external perspective because it is explained by the truth of the theory externally considered. There is an important conclusion to be drawn from these reflections that might have pleased Hegel, though we disagree with his identification of theory and truth. The conclusion is that the loop itself is the explanation. You might think it is just the theory that is explanatory. But the truth of theory is required or you have explained nothing. On the other hand, it is not just truth apart from our conception of it that explains either. You have explained nothing without a conception of it. The explanation is in the loop, and it is the loop that is explanatory.

Quine, following Neurath (1931), noted in his early work that one must rebuild the ship of science, the ship of theory, in the sea of inquiry without being anchored by truth conditions of observation sentences. He seems to me to have become more apprehensive about the free-floating character of theory construction and jumped overboard to find a secure tie to experience. More literally, he sought to exit from the explanatory loop to secure truth conditions from experience. This was unnecessary. Experience can be tied into the explanatory loop in a way that yields the security of a truth connection within the explanatory loop. The tie is the process I have called *exemplarization*, which has been the focal point of the response to consciousness and aesthetic awareness. Exemplarization is an explanatory truth loop that ties together experience and representation.

Here are the advantages of embracing *loop theory*. The internal and the external is explained by a looping theory that we have about the relationship between the internal and the external, as well as between the subjective and the objective, the mental and the physical. The advantage of the explanatory loop is not that it guarantees truth. It is something else. The explanation is the loop. The advantage of the loop is that when a theory is true, the theory explains why it is true because it contains a truth theory concerning itself. The truth of the theory is explained, and correctly so, by its own truth theory. That is the power of the loop.

JUSTIFICATION AND KNOWLEDGE

Take my favorite example of an explanatory loop, a theory of justification. If you seek a complete theory of justification, it must answer every why-question concerning justification. In terms of explanation, a complete theory of justification must explain why you are justified in accepting everything that you are justified in accepting it. But now consider a theory of

justification TJ. A philosopher advancing TJ will claim to be justified in accepting TJ. Why accept a theory you are not justified in accepting? So, if TJ is a complete theory of justification, it must explain why you are justified in accepting TJ itself. A complete theory of justification must loop back onto itself. The loop is a condition of adequacy. It is the loop that ties the theory together in completeness.

A loop is not a sufficient condition for complete explanation, however. There are many loops that are not explanatory. There are many loops of claims that are not true. The difference between a vicious circle and a virtuous loop is that the latter is both explanatory and true, while the former is not both. The theory of the virtuous loop in epistemology is of crucial importance. Moreover, even the brilliant foundationalist philosopher, Reid (1785), an advocate of first principles in epistemology, recognized the importance of the loop long before Hegel. Indeed, he articulated the principle of the loop as one of his first principles. I am much indebted to Reid. When I wrote the book *Thomas Reid* (Lehrer, 1989), I found a mentor in my study of Reid. Reid would not have subscribed to the principle of explanatory maximization as a guiding principle, and explicitly rejects it, but the explanatory loop is apparent in his first principles nonetheless.

One of his first principles, principle 7, which I call the First First Principle and the Metaprinciple (Lehrer, 1988) is "[t]hat the natural faculties, by which we distinguish truth from error, are not fallacious." (Reid, 1785, 447). Reid goes on to say:

> If any man should demand a proof of this, it is impossible to satisfy him. For suppose it should be mathematically demonstrated, this would signify nothing in this case: because, to judge of a demonstration, a man must trust his faculties, and take for granted the very thing in question (Reid, 1785, 447).

When he considers the evidence we have for the principle, we arrive at the fundamental loop of evidence and truth.

> "How then come we to be assured of this fundamental truth on which all others rest? Perhaps evidence, as in many other respects it resembles light, so in this also—that, as light, which is the discoverer of all visible objects, discovers itself at the same time, so evidence, which is the voucher for all truth, vouches for itself at the same time." He adds, "No man ever thinks of this principle, unless when he considers the grounds of skepticism; yet it invariably governs his opinions" (Reid, 1785, 448).

These lines in Reid are profound. I develop them in my own way and have applied them in the previous chapter. The First First Principle is a principle of evidence, a principle of trustworthiness, and a principle of truth.

I (Lehrer, 1990, 1997, 2000) transform Reid's principle from a principle about our faculties to a principle about us, about our acceptances, preferences, and reasonings. I am not here concerned to argue that my formulation of the principle is the proper interpretation of Reid. However, his noting that the principle is a principle of evidence and veracity that vouches for itself as it vouches for other first principles of our faculties is an insight, which, whatever the importance within his system, is the keystone in my own (Lehrer, 1997).

The insight requires further elaboration, however, and this takes me beyond what Reid embraced and back to the principle of maximizing explanation. The principle I embraced was a principle of the trustworthiness of what a person accepts with respect to the special objective of accepting something in case it is true and not otherwise. I do not think that belief always aligns with this objective of veracity, as I noticed in the previous chapter, and I distinguished, therefore, between acceptance and belief. I would also reformulate the objective of acceptance at this point to bring what is worth trusting into the characterization of acceptance. The kind of acceptance that constitutes a condition of knowledge is one that aims at accepting *p* if and only if it is worthy of the trust of the person seeking a truth objective, namely, to accept that *p* just in case *p* is true.

Moreover, seeking to draw a distinction where one may be drawn, I distinguish between what is worthy of trust and what is true. If we are invincibly deceived, then the new evil demon argument, which appeared first in an article Stewart Cohen and I published (Cohen and Lehrer, 1983) requires distinguishing between justification and truth. The argument should be known as the Cohen Argument for it was completely his invention. It contends that if we are invincibly deceived, say by an evil demon or a more technological brain manipulator, we still distinguish between the person guided by evidence and reason in a judicious way that justifies them in accepting what they do, in contrast to those who ignore evidence and accept what pleases them in an intellectually reprobate manner. Some have replied to the Cohen Argument by biting the bullet and denying that there is any difference in justification to be found between the two, but biting bullets ruins the teeth for finer philosophical refinement. Some support the rejection of the Cohen Argument by contending that the term "justification" is a technical term in philosophy. Philosophers do and should convert the terms that play a central role in their theories to terms of art. But the basic insight remains even if the notion of justification were laid aside. The judicious person is worthy of his or her own trust in what he or she accepts, and the reprobate is not worthy of even his own trust. What is needed for knowledge is acceptance that is worthy of the trust of the subject.

Trustworthiness does not guarantee truth, however, so we must add that the trustworthiness is successfully truth connected. My updating of Reid's position is that a person who obtains knowledge from what he accepts must be trustworthy in what he accepts, by which I mean that he must be worthy of his own trust in what he accepts, and his trustworthiness must be successfully truth connected. Of course, a person does not, as Reid noted, make his trustworthiness or the truth connectedness of it an object of thought until these are skeptically challenged. Nevertheless, the principle plays a role in the trust that a person places in what he accepts. He thinks he is worthy of his own trust and that this trust will lead him to truth and not to error even if he is not loquacious enough to say so. Moreover, and most critically, the principle, for short, the T principle, is required for the justification of itself as well as for other things that a person accepts. But exactly how does the principle vouch for or support itself?

There is an argument for the acceptance of the T principle from the principle itself, as we noted in the previous chapter. Assume that the T principle is correct. Then I am trustworthy in what I accept, and my trustworthiness is successfully truth connected. Now I accept the T principle as I accept other things. So the conclusion from the T principle is that I am trustworthy in accepting the T principle, and since my trustworthiness is successfully truth connected, the T principle is true. But what is the good of an argument of this sort? First, the answer makes explicit the implicit role of the T principle in what we accept. It backs all that we accept, however unnoticed the backing may be. Self-trust supports what we accept. The assumption of the trustworthiness and the truth connectedness of self-trust are necessary for the conversion of acceptance to knowledge.

A second answer to the question above is more important and more fundamental, however. The argument above—though not allowable as a proof to show that a skeptic is wrong, for it begs the question—is, nevertheless, an explanation of how we can be justified in accepting that we are worthy of our trust in what we accept and how proceeding in this way leads to truth. It is our very trustworthiness that explains why we are trustworthy in accepting what we do, including, in this case, our trustworthiness itself. The explanatory loop is obvious. The second answer explains how the content of exemplar representation transferred from art to the world beyond art in our world making can be justified and lead to knowledge. There is no magic in the transfer. The exemplarization of the form and content of art offers us a new conception of our world and ourselves. The justification for accepting the new conception as a representation of truth depends on the explanatory loop of self-trust in acceptance being worthy of our trust and successfully truth connected.

The loop of explanation widens. The truth connectedness of acceptance has been confirmed by my experience, including exemplarization of experience learned from aesthetic attention to immediacy and the truth security thereof. Other things that I accept, the exemplar representations of my experience, support my acceptance of the T principle even if my acceptance of these things depends on my acceptance of the T principle. The role of the T principle is that of a keystone in the arch of acceptance. The other stones of acceptance are necessary for the support of the keystone. But the keystone holds those stones together. I avoid the metaphor of bootstrapping and advocate the keystone. The advantage of the keystone is that it offers us a model of mutual support.

Moreover, the arch of acceptance alters over time. Where I have erred, I have attempted to correct my errors in a trustworthy way. So my present trustworthiness has a diachronic feature that extends, not only to the past, as Reid noted, but to the future as he did not. Part of what makes me worthy of my trust is my disposition to change what I accept, as well as the ways in which I accept what I do, to enhance the truth connection. We have noted the role of art using experience to change the content of experience in the exemplar representation exhibiting what experience is like in a new way. That diachronic feature loops back onto itself. It ties me into the future as well as the past. Where I have failed I have learned, and so I am more worthy of my trust than I have been, and, perhaps a bit paradoxically, I am worthy of my trust now because of my disposition to improve on the way I place my trust. I must attend to what my experience is like to obtain the improvement my senses supply. Art experience teaches that attention and the importance of ongoing reconfiguration of experience in terms of exemplar representation of content.

Knowledge and justification contain a loop that ties me to the higher level as it loops back down to the first level to tie it all up, down, and together in a loop. The philosophical point of the loop for a program of maximizing explanation in philosophical inquiry is that there are principles that contribute to explanation and the maximization of it even though they do not provide any proof for themselves against the challenge of a skeptic. These principles and the truth of them is what convert accepting what is true to knowledge. I have called the conversion condition justification, but nothing depends on the label. The loop cannot prove the skeptic is wrong in denying me knowledge, for it begs the question against the skeptic. Nevertheless, the loop allows me to know that the skeptic is wrong, and, moreover, to know that I know this. I leave the skeptic to his own devices. I can explain why obtaining truth is knowledge, not luck, without proving him wrong.

AUTONOMY

Now I want to pass beyond this, I am afraid to a too oft-told tale, to explain what makes us worthy of our trust. That will take us to autonomy and representation, so often mentioned in this book. Autonomy in conception and reasoning is what leads us to the worthiness of self-trust. Recent research has convinced us that our more automatic and, perhaps, innate strategies of belief often lead us into error. However, what is remarkable is that these authors, and we with them, are able to note the errors of our natural ways somewhat in the same way that we note the illusions of sense. To note them is, of course, not to ensure that we shall never again be misled. Nature is constant and reason is intermittent. But it is clear that, though we may err, we are not without remedy. For if we reason badly in ways that experiments reveal, we can discern those errors, and amelioration of what we trust is within reach. We have metamental ascent and the loop of trustworthiness to the exemplar representation of experience to lead us into a more successful truth connection.

Moreover, I want to insist on a special point, namely, the role of evidence in the causal order. Evidence forces our assent. Reason not only responds to evidence but also produces it as the proof of a theorem makes it evident to us. We do not need to reduce evidence to something natural to ensure the role of it in the causal order. We produce evidence, and evidence produces assent. To think of the evidence as not being part of the natural order is not only erroneous, it is contrary to the evidence. The same is true of value, which I have discussed. We experience value, whether it is value of reasoning, the value of aesthetics, or the value of evidence. It is tempting to argue that the value of evidence supervenes on something else, on some other features of experience. Whether this is right depends on the theory of supervenience to which one subscribes. But if metaphysical necessity of dependence is brought in as an explanation, that is a mistake. We experience evidence and value, no doubt, but experience and how we experience what we do is part of the contingent causal nexus of the world. It is not impossible that the causal order should have been different in a way that would have changed our experience of evidence and value.

Now let us turn to a theory of rational autonomy (Lehrer, 2003). The problem of rational autonomy is to explain how autonomous preference, choice, and action can result from reasons we have. For, if we are autonomous, then our preference, choice, or action must be in our control, in our power, up to us. But if preference, choice, and action result from our reasons, how can our preference, choice, or action be in our power and up to us? What reasons we have, our desires or beliefs, for example, are often not in our control, not in our power, not up to us. So, if the preferences, choices,

and actions are caused by our having the reasons we have, then how can they be in our control or up to us? They are in the power of the reasons and up to the reasons. I can feel this in a special way in the creation and reception of art. If I am overwhelmed by reasons to make art in a certain way, or overwhelmed by reasons to respond to art in a certain way, my sense of my autonomy of creative choice in creation of an artwork, or response to one, is lost in the life of reason.

If I am autonomous in what I choose, in choosing the creation or interpretation of artistic content, for example, then I must be the cause of the choice. The choice must be mine. But how can I be the cause of the choice, how can the choice be mine, if the reasons cause it? If, on the other hand, reasons are not causally effective, then it appears that the idea that I act rationally in response to reasons, is just rationalization. They do not cause the choice. So the problem is that if my preferences, choices, and actions are not caused by reasons, then they do not appear to be rational; if they are, then I do not appear to be autonomous.

The solution is metamental ascent and an explanatory loop. Let me focus on preference conceived as something that will convert to choice and action in the right circumstances. Frankfurt (1971) had an important insight that freedom was explained by higher order preferences. However, preferences among preferences appear subject to similar problems. If they are caused by reasons I have for them, then I appear controlled at higher levels by those reasons. Suppose my reasons consist of beliefs and desires I have. Having preferences for the satisfaction of my desires in line with my beliefs is compatible with the processes being manipulated psychologically or neurologically by another. Moreover, moving from one level of preference to the next does not seem sufficient to solve the problem, contrary to what I once claimed, because the whole sequence of levels of preferences, even if in accord with each other, leaves open the problem that the whole sequence might be caused by reasons in a way that is not up to me. The sequence may even be manipulated by another unknown to me.

Here is why we need the loop. I have proposed earlier (Lehrer, 2004) that there must be a power preference concerning a choice to do A. The power preference is a preference for having just the preferences in the structure of preferences pertaining to the choice to do A that I do have. That preference will loop back onto itself, because it is a preference in the structure pertaining to the choice to do A. Looping back onto itself prevents regression. It remains possible that this power preference is itself manipulated, perhaps by someone who had neurological control of my brain and, directly or indirectly, of my preferences, and, therefore, choices and actions. So we must add the further condition that I have the power preference because I prefer to have it. That is the feeling I suggest of artistic creation.

I have the creative power of preference, and my choice of creation, or sensitive reception, both guided by aesthetic attention, is a choice, a preference, that I have because I prefer to have it. Of course, there may be a chain of causes, but the power preference must be the primacy explanation. Guston enters his atelier with a group of painters and critics, as he said, and one by one they leave. Even he leaves. There is nothing left but choice and preference. When his preference is autonomous, the power preference must be the primary or direct explanation of preference.

This leads us back to the consideration of reasons. Sometimes my reasons for preferring what I do or create lead me to the task. I set out, for example, to paint a self-portrait, entitled *MetaMe*, in the style of Matisse. Having made that choice, I have reasons for painting one way rather than another, for having some asymmetry between one side of the face and the other in feeling, color, and expression. My reason for preferring painting that way may be the reasons concerning the style of Matisse I have for that preference. That does not rule out autonomy in how I paint, provided that my power preference for preferring what I do for that reason is itself a preference that I have because I prefer to have it. More generally, we may think of the general preference that we have to prefer, choose, and act according to certain reasons as one that we have because of a power preference for it. So I have, in addition to my other preferences, an ultrapreference for forming preferences in one way rather than another in accord with reasons. If I have the ultrapreference because of a power preference for having the ultrapreference, the problem about reasons and autonomy is dissolved. My preferences may be caused by the reasons I have for them, but that is because I prefer to form my preferences for those reasons. In the example, I prefer to paint with the colors of Matisse, but that is because I prefer to have my preference to paint after Matisse in constructing my self-portrait. My power preferences empower me, whatever the other causes of my preferences, provided they are the primary causes of my preferences.

The possibility of explaining how an ultrapreference for following a system of reasons, which may be only a chain of practical reasons suited to an objective as in the case of the self-portrait, should not be taken to imply that all autonomous preference is preference guided by reasons. That view is common enough, one that identifies autonomy with acting for reasons, but that is not a view I advocate. Some autonomous choices are not guided by reasons. Indeed, in the realm of the creation of art, even when choice is clear and unambiguous, the artist may have no reason for doing what he did, for the choice of color—a spot of red in the painting, for example—except that it felt like that color was needed there. I may prefer to put that color there without reservation about what I am choosing and doing. In the rush of creative activity and response, I have a power preference for the

preference that empowers my activity and makes me the agent of it. Creative choice without any reason for choosing the way one does may not be as common as it feels, but it occurs in my experience, sometimes spontaneously, sometimes contrived to allow responses to unknown parts and states of the self. It becomes my choice as it occurs because of my power preference for the choice, the preference to prefer what the choice expresses just because I prefer to have that preference. That empowers me and makes the creative act, choice, and preference mine in the power preference for it.

So power preferences loop back onto themselves as preferences for themselves, including preferences for being influenced by reasons, or not, at the same time that they are preferences for other preferences. The power preferences are like the principle of trustworthiness. In both cases, explanation involves a principle applying to itself as it applies to other things. Moreover, the loop is explanatory in the case of autonomy as well. It explains the difference between causes that leave me in bondage and causes that make me free. I may prefer to respond automatically in constructing an artwork, exploring the fruits of automaticity in art, but I prefer to let myself respond in that way, and the structure of the preference for itself is what enables autonomy and automaticity to combine in artistic creation and reception.

However impassioned the preferences and choices involved with art, I am free when the causes of my creation are effective because I prefer them to be effective. I am in bondage, by contrast, when the causes of my choice are effective regardless of my preferences. Moreover, the primacy of the power preference explains how I can be the cause of my preferences and choices. I am the cause of them, not in some mysterious way, but because of a power preference. I have those preferences because I prefer to have them. That is why I am the cause of them, why they are in my power, why they are up to me, and, artistically viewed, why they are my creation. More needs to be said in subjunctive conditionals to complete the account, but the power preference and the primacy of it is what maximizes explanation in a loop.

I note here a connection between trustworthiness and autonomy. It seems that part of what makes me worthy of my trust in what I accept, or for that matter, in what I prefer, is that I am autonomous in what I accept and prefer. Notice that I am not autonomous in what I desire and believe. Autonomy enters at a higher level. I prefer to satisfy a desire because I have that preference. There is a power preference for having the preferences that I do in the matter. Similarly, I have a preference for accepting something that I believe because there is a power preference for having that preference. Again, just as I may prefer what I do for the reasons that I do because of an ultrapreference and a power preference for it, so I may accept what I do for the reasons I do because of a preference for accepting what I do in that way

and a power preference for it. We are autonomous in the way we rebuild the ship at sea, including the rebuilding of the truth loop. We often gain that autonomy by special attention to a work of art that confronts and perplexes us as we direct our attention to the exemplars of experience we convert into the terms of exemplar representation of content. The perplexity opens an aesthetic question about the interpretation of the artwork in terms of the experience of it. We are empowered to answer the question by an exercise of self-trust and autonomy. As we move to the next step, to the transfer of our autonomous exemplarization of the content of the painting to the content of the world beyond art, we are enmeshed in the loop of self-trust, justification, and autonomy in the quest for truth.

There is no reason to fear getting lost in the explanatory loop. The loop ties things together in self-trust. The point about self-trust is that it yields reasons for what we prefer and accept within the loop. Sartre noted that, though we are free to choose, we are not free not to choose. He thought, as a result, that ultimately choice was without justification and without excuse. But that is not a consequence consistently drawn. On the contrary, choice brings with it a nexus of reasons, as Sartre (1956) noted. And choice is inevitable as he also averred. Those reasons will contain justification for what we have chosen, for the choice in the existential question. Within the loop of choice, reasons arise for what we accept and prefer.

It might appear now that the loop is only a loop of consciousness, or, at least of a loop of mentality that fails to connect the internal and external and leaves us looping within, lacking an external connection. That is, of course, the mistake of idealism. We discussed it in Chapter 7, but it is worth reconsidering here. The explanatory loop connects the internal and the external at the level of extended exemplar representation. The exemplar of internal experience exhibits what the external objects it represents are like at the same time that it exhibits how we represent them. It shows us the form of representation within the loop. The loop exhibits the truth connection within the loop. Consider the principle of trustworthiness to the effect that I am worthy of my trust and my trustworthiness is successfully truth connected, principle T. It is a principle of internal trustworthiness and external truth. The truth of the principle loops back onto acceptance of itself to explain why I am worthy of my trust in accepting it and why it is successfully truth connected. More simply, principle T says of the acceptance of itself that it is successfully truth connected, and the truth connectedness of it is part of what explains why that is true.

Moreover, my general trustworthiness in acceptance and the truth connectedness of it explains why I am worthy of my trust and successfully truth connected in the particular case. It is important to note that the explanation is not deductive. I am, fallible though trustworthy. My trustworthiness is only

fallibly truth connected. In one of my first articles, written with John Canfield (Canfield and Lehrer, 1961), we argued for the fallibility of explanation, and that has remained. However, explanation, though fallible, can be cogent and correct. You do not have to be infallible to be trustworthy and correct any more than you have to be perfect to be successfully truth connected. It is important to appreciate the powers and virtues we have, fallible and imperfect as they may be.

Acceptance and preference, like belief and desire, may concern external objects. If what we accept is true and what we prefer obtains, there is therein a connection between the internal and the external. Forgive me for insisting on something so obvious. I once remarked, in defense of the coherence theory, that there is no exit from the circle of beliefs in personal justification. Philosophers took me to be implying that justification was entirely an internal matter. But beliefs may be about external things, most of them are, and the truth of them is, therefore, an external matter. It is systematic truth that protects justification from defeat and converts the acceptance of truth into knowledge.

ART AND CONSCIOUSNESS

We require however a connection with experience, a truth connection concerning experience, to complete our explanatory theory or system. We do not need to jump ship to find the connection. There is an explanatory theory available about the relationship between conception and the object of conception that yields a truth connection. This explanation takes us back to where we began, to the exemplarization of experience. There is a kind of conception and representation that incorporates the experience of the object as a functional part yielding a truth connection. That truth connection results from exemplar representation of experience back onto experiences. Exemplarization at the most ostensive, experiential level, constructs form and content out of experience. It does so by marking a distinction with the exemplar in conceptual space between the experiences represented by the exemplar exhibiting what they are like and what is not in that space.

To solve the problem of the truth connection to experience, I return to a consideration of art and consciousness with which we began. This will enable me to tie together the internal and the external, the subjective and the objective, and the mental and physical in an explanatory loop. It will be an appropriate place to end where I began with John Dewey (1934) who argued that the aesthetic experience of art unifies the subjective and the objective. What fascinates me as an artist is the autonomy one experiences, not only in the freedom of choice about what to create, but also in the

reconfiguration of experience through art. To know what the content of an artwork is, you must experience what the artwork is like. To know what the content of a conscious state is, you must experience what the state is like. My account of knowing the content of art and the content of consciousness formulated in the early chapters was the conversion of the experience of what the artwork or state is like into content. This process of using the sensory exemplar to form content is what I have in this volume and earlier called *exemplarization* (Lehrer, 2004, 2006). The exemplar is both sign and thing signified. It is part of the content, part of the functional role of the content, at the same time that it is the sign that represents the content. The exemplar exhibits what the content is like at the same time that it is part of the content. It is both the vehicle of representation of content and part of the content represented.

Chisholm (1966), expressing Carneades, says that sensory states are self-presenting. Langer (1957) said that artworks are presentational symbols. Kierkegaard (1944) had remarked that there is a kind of subjective truth and knowledge of experience that is missed by objective truth and knowledge. You have to experience certain states, be in those states, to know them. We can make sense of all of this in terms of exemplarization. The exemplarized state represents content. It is an inseparable part of the content as well as being the vehicle of content, for it exhibits the content to the subject. The content is, in part, a functional state with features unknown to subject, but it is also, in part, an experience of the subject that shows him what the content is like. The exemplarized experience, the exemplar, is also one of the things it represents. The exemplar loops back onto itself. It is at the same time sign and thing signified, both vehicle of representation and exhibit of what is represented. It is part and parcel of the content.

MIND-BODY PROBLEM DISSOLVED

It is clear that there is a close connection between exemplarization and the view that Dewey (1934) advanced in *Art as Experience*. He claimed that aesthetic experience unifies the subjective and the objective. I propose that exemplarization explains how this is possible. The object, a painting, for example, acquires content when it is experienced in a way that results in the exemplarization of the sensory exemplar. The physical object is mentalized as the content of it incorporates the subjective experience of the exemplar. The exemplarized experience acquires intentionality by becoming representational, and it retains, at the same time, the qualitative or phenomenological character of subjective experience. When the content of the artwork, a painting, for example, is incorporated into our exemplar repre-

sentation of the physical object, it is represented and experienced as having intentionality and phenomenology, the two features of mentality. The artwork becomes, in this way, a mentalized physical object. This dissolves the mind-body problem, as Dewey suggested.

To understand the point that Dewey suggested, let us examine the argument one more time to ensure that poignancy is not missed. There are two questions about how exemplar representation can mentalize a physical object. The first question is how to characterize the exemplar. The second is how to explain the function of the exemplar in representation. The exemplar is the phenomenology of the physical surface, of a painting, for example. It is not simply qualia, though it may include them. The reason is that there are gestalt phenomena that go beyond the qualia. So the phenomenology begins a unification of the mental and physical when the phenomenology of the surface of a material object becomes the exemplar. The phenomenology refers to the physical surface. Moreover, the phenomenology is part of the experienced content or meaning of the painting. We may consider the painting to be embodied meaning, as Danto (1994) put it, sensuous content, as Hegel (1946) put it, or, as I prefer, a mentalized physical object. The phenomenology of the surface exhibits the representational content of the exemplar.

Moreover, as I remarked above, the phenomenology exhibits to us what the content of the painting is like. You have to experience it to know it. There is a reason for this, and the reason contains an explanatory loop. The experienced exemplar is part of the content, indeed, that part of the content that exhibits what the content is like in the process of forming content out of the particular by exemplarization. The exemplar becomes an inseparable part of the content that enables one to identify other experiences to which one generalizes at the most ostensive level of exemplarization. There is generalization in ostensive exemplarization, as the particular exemplar becomes the focus of attention and becomes referentially general, as Hume (1739) suggested. There is, however, more to exemplarization than generalization. It is the marking off of other things as not being members of the generalized class. The exemplar is one of the experiences referred to by the content, and there is the referential truth loop in ostensive exemplarization. The exemplar signifies itself as well as other experiences that are included in the reference of the content as a result of the generalizing involved in exemplarization.

Dewey insisted that the experience of works of art was not separate from the experience of things outside the world of art but connected with them. I propose that the connection is one we have noticed. The content of the painting may become the content of objects outside the painting. Consider again the examples of Madame de Pompadour [**Web ASK 5**] by Boucher

or *MetaMe* [**Web ASK 40**] painted by me. The content of the painting may become the content of the person. Once an artwork acquires meaning or content through exemplarization, the sensuous or exemplarized content may be extended beyond the art object to other objects. Here then is a loop of content from art to the world outside of art and back. I paint me, creating an artistic content of me. You experience that content and it becomes part of the content of me for you. Art is that part of the world that changes the content of the world. It shows us our plasticity as content is created and changed in an exemplarized loop of content.

Moreover, the exemplarized loop of content plays as an essential role in the content of science as well as art. Let us consider an example from science to illustrate the use of exemplarization in the content of scientific conceptions of the world. There was a great deal known about cells before anyone knew what the surface of a cell was like. Indeed, most of knowledge, what was accepted about the cell, though influenced by observation through light microscopes, was about internal character of the cytoplasm or the nucleus. Then a scientist, Palade (1955), used the electron microscope to show us what the surface was like. Consider a photo of the surface of a cell [**Web ASK 41**]. The photo is a configuration of digital data and as such is a creative configuration, broadly considered, then, a work of art. You will see ribs consisting of dots as you view the photo, the scientific artwork constructed from the data of electron microscopy. The question is how to exemplarize the image, the sensory exemplar, to use it as an exhibit of scientific form and content. The dots you see were interpreted by Palade as granules and have come to be called ribosomes. Palade thought the granules were RNA packets. That is how he interpreted the image, the sensory phenomenology of the photo, after microscopic investigation led to the artwork of the photo. If you want to know what the surface of the cell is like, the sensory experience, the exemplar exhibiting the phenomenology of the photo shows you. All this is striking enough scientifically, but the philosophical task is to explain it.

Here is my take, influenced by Otávio Bueno (2004, 2010). There is an initial stage of observation in which the image produced by the artwork of the photo is seen by Palade. He looks again and sees it again. Looking again, the image is re-identified and distinguished from others. He uses the image to mark a distinction. Even if Palade were to remain agnostic about what he is seeing, he nevertheless forms, as you do, a rudimentary conception of the image adequate for re-identification and distinction from other images. The original image plays a role in re-identification and distinction. The conception remains ostensive exemplarization at this stage.

I know that some of you will doubt that there is such a stage. I do not claim temporal priority for this stage. Nor do I claim that it is a natural or

innocent kind of perception. Nevertheless, attending to what the image is like in itself, the immediate phenomenology, is important in science and art. What one sees in this way may, of course, be an artifact of the process. Ultimately one must ask what the object seen is and whether the immediate phenomenology is an artifact of instrumentation or some other defect of artistic representation. To even raise this question is to appeal to a level, perhaps a sophisticated one, of attending to what the experience is like in itself, to what is immediately observed. It is part of the training of both the scientist and artist to learn to notice what one observes immediately, for a moment putting aside questions of what the observed features mean beyond the ostensive level of sensory experience. The first stage is generalization from the exemplar to a plurality of other observable images and distinction from still others. This is an example of *ostensive exemplarization*.

The next stage in the process of converting an exemplar to a concept that extends reference beyond the exemplar is to conceptualize the exemplar inferentially as an exhibit of what the surface of a cell is like. One might not have any further background theory about what the surface of a cell is like. The image, the sensory exemplar, exhibits our exemplar conception of what the surface of the cell is like. We might add other vectors of inference, for example, that the granules are packets of RNA after further microscopic observation and experimental analysis. The sensory exemplar continues to exhibit to us something about what the granules are like, however, that cannot be known in another way. It also exhibits to us how we conceive of them. It shows us the exemplarized content of our scientific conception. The scientific conception is tied to experience by the exemplarization of the content of it.

Palade, like the art receiver, conceptualizes the exemplar ostensively connecting it with inferential meaning. I do not claim that the process has to break down into the initial ostensive generalization and the subsequent inferential conception, for the brain secretes meaning as sensory information is received. There are deep lessons in these experiences, however. The first is that even ostensive generalization, how we generalize, depends on our cognitive structure, innate or learned. The second, more interesting lesson, is that there is semantic security at the ostensive stage. Schlick (1959) claimed that there was a kind of meaning of some expressions such that the meaning of the expression guaranteed the truth of the expression. He may have overstated the semantic security of the guarantee. However, at the level of ostension, where the exemplar stands for or represents a class of instances, the exemplar is one of the instances which it represents. So the exemplar, used to generalize to a class of instances loops back onto itself referentially. It refers to itself as it refers to instances of the class it is used to identify. This is not a logical guarantee, because the referential looping is a

psychological process that can fail to succeed. Successful exemplarization yields content of an ostensive variety exhibited by the exemplar, however. The exemplar is an instance of the exemplarized content of reference and, therefore, is true of itself. Once the exemplarization becomes inferential and extends beyond the exhibit of the exemplar, the truth guarantee is compromised, but remains at the initial level of ostensive exemplarization.

Consensus effects the transition from personal observation to scientific result and intersubjectivity. Consider Palade. He makes an observation. There is a consensus about how to test the result for the possibility of errors, including most saliently the introduction of artifacts. He compared the results using oxides and formaldehyde to check whether the granules were introduced by the stabilizing substance. Notice, however, that the inferential exemplarization of the sensory exemplar gives it a functional role in an inferential network, for example, one that leads to inferences about the character of the granules. Inference leads to the conclusion that what is perceived are granules observed in the surface of the cell. Indeed, the primary inferential networking of the exemplar is simply connecting it with the surface of a cell so that the exemplar represents it. The experimental setup may seem to guarantee that, but there are no guarantees in microscopy. This is not the place to survey the role of microscopes or their reliability. See Otávio Bueno (by searching online) for a useful analysis.

What replaces a guarantee? Consensus supplements the role of experience in conception, as Neurath (1931) insisted. We examined in the previous chapter the way in which consensus arises from the weights individuals give to the expertise of each other and the way in which consensus, collective wisdom, trumps individual expertise in reducing the risk of error. Exemplarized content consensually accepted becomes the collective wisdom of scientific conception.

Exemplarized content is the sort of content that empiricists have sought, a kind of meaning that incorporates experience as an inseparable part of meaning. It is tied together with both autonomy and knowledge. First of all, we have some autonomy in the how we interpret or exemplarize, given our plasticity. One purpose of art, emphasized by the postmoderns, is to call our attention to our autonomy in forming and understanding of the content or meaning of the artwork. For they lay emphasis on what the receiver or spectator finds in the work rather than in the content intended by the artist. Autonomous content is a contribution of the artwork to the world of the observer, which, of course, includes the artist herself. I do not claim that how we experience a work of art is wholly autonomous. There are components of our response that are highly automated functionally within us. But the exemplarized content of the work of art contains our mark as we tunnel through and around the functional output to the more complete

content that expresses, reveals, and articulates our autonomy in how we conceive of our world and our place in it.

MIND AND BODY

I have said the dissolution of the mind-body problem results from exemplarized content of the work of art. An explanation of how exemplar representation leads to the conception of the artwork as having intentionality and phenomenology dissolves the mind-body problem. The features of mentality are the features of an external material body, the artwork. Exemplarization of the experience of our conscious states explains our knowledge of what they are like and what they are about. Similarly, exemplarization of the experience of works of art explains our knowledge of what they are like and what they are about. Exemplarization depends on the activity of the brain for the exemplarization of both consciousness and art. The conclusion, however, is that our knowledge of the features of consciousness and our knowledge of the features of works of art reveal the same features by the same kind of processes. Consequently, those features and our knowledge of them show that such knowledge and such features—intentionality and phenomenology are examples—cannot be the basis of a mind-body problem. In short, for all our knowledge of conscious states tells us about these features, they may be states of the brain exemplarized by the activity of the brain. The same is true of the artwork. So the idea that physical objects cannot be like anything in the way that conscious states are what they are like or be about anything in the way that mental states are about what they are like is refuted by the artwork. The artwork is a mentalized physical object, and a conscious state is a materialized mental object. The loop tying the mental and the physical together is a form of representation. Exemplarization is the form. Wittgenstein (1922) remarked that the form of representation can be shown but not said. The exemplar shows what cannot be said as it exhibits the form of representation.

There is a connection of exemplarization with trustworthiness and the truth connection. We form content incorporating the exemplar. The exemplar becomes a sign, symbol, or representation, but it signifies, symbolizes, or represents itself as well as other experiences. As I trust myself in the process of autonomous exemplarization, accepting the content because of a preference and power preference for doing so, I realize that I must rely on self-trust. I place my trust in how I understand the object. However, the reward for self-trust is that my exemplarization yields knowledge of what the exemplar is like in terms of the exemplarized content. The exemplar, when the process succeeds, signifies itself as it does other things. The exemplar is part of content in a way that yields truth. The exemplar is true

of itself because it represents itself. Notice, before celebrating the success of the truth connection, that the process of exemplarization arising out of self-trust must be worthy of it. For it is possible to fail to form content, possible to fail to form a functional form of representation. The process succeeds, however, with the success of the truth connection as a contingent result. That is why I can know immediately what my experience is like up to the limits of exemplarized content.

The small tight loop of ostensive exemplarization connects with the larger explanatory loop and explains how the subjective and the objective, the internal and the external, the mental and the physical are tied together in an explanatory loop. The mental is embodied in the physical as the result of a process of the exemplarization of it. Is there no objectivity? Of course, the distinction between the subjective and the objective is a component of a complete theory which explains the relationship between them. I mention exemplarization as an illustration of the way in which the subjective and objective, internal and external, mental and physical can be tied together in an explanatory loop as the exemplar becomes conceptual and loops back onto itself. As we noted earlier, the exemplar of experience is Janus-faced. It exhibits what it represents, in one direction, how we use it to represent, in the other, and, therefore, what intentionality and representation are like. We may not be able to describe it all, but exemplar representation shows what it is like.

I do not mean to propose that all content is exemplarized content. Moreover, such content is not a foundation either as the empiricists hoped. It is an important part of the keystone of trustworthiness, however, and the truth connection of it. It is an inseparable part of the content of thought and action, acceptance and preference, that ties autonomy and automaticity, knowledge and conjecture, subjectivity and objectivity up, down, and together in a loop. There is, of course, the further constraint and contribution of the relationship between the personal and the communal. There, I have argued (Lehrer, 2001), is another loop tying together the individual and society in a communal identity of the self and an individualized identity of society. There is a fixed point of aggregation and amalgamation that loops back onto itself. Anyone who has had his opinions influenced by the weight that he gives to another and has felt his influence upon them by the weight that they give to him has experienced the phenomenology of mathematical aggregation tying us together in a loop.

I conclude noting that autonomy, trustworthiness, aggregation, and exemplarization loop back on to the self. We are part of the world we autonomously create in aggregating with others in mutual self-trust. You will be asking which component—autonomy, trustworthiness, exemplarization, aggregation—is the most basic for our conception of ourselves. It is not the

components that are basic. It is the loop that maximizes explanation. You need a system to raise explanation to philosophy, and you need a loop to complete explanation. You need art to show you how the loop ties the subjective and the objective, the internal and external, the mind and body together in experience and to show you what the connection between them is like. It can only be shown. Art shows us what cannot be said.

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