

Title: Are Emotions rational?

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OU Identifier: B0239046
Current Course: D845: MA in Philosophy
Submission Date: September 2020

Total word count 12,069 words of 12,000

Authorship Statement

- I confirm I have that some ideas and sentences from course A845 submission of TMA01 'Can there be rational acrasia?' have been used also sentences and ideas from course D843 submission of TMA01 'Explain the turn to discourse'. No other part of the work has been previously submitted for a degree or other qualification of the Open University or any other university or institution.
- I have no other previously published work that is relevant to this dissertation.
- I have prepared this entire dissertation independently.

Abstract

This essay challenges evaluative claims that reflective emotional responses are generally cognitively rational, and that recalcitrant emotions are generally-cognitively irrational. Section 1 contains an introduction and summaries of the section headings.

Section 2. accepts Price's typology of emotions, beginning the initial emotional reaction, below the level of conscious control, followed by an extended emotional response under conscious control. Price's theory is based in evolutionary psychology moderated by social learning and experience.

However, Price's theory does not overcome inherent problems with the main philosophical models, namely conceptual reasoning by young children in the cognitive model or perceptual evaluation in the perceptual model.

This section proposes that the addition of psychological schema theory with its encapsulated pre-processing modules can resolve both of these problems. Like most psychological theories it does not exclude faulty or biased cognitions.

Section 3. challenges the claim that recalcitrant emotions are irrational because of incoherence between the initial emotional reaction and a holistic considered emotional response.

Instead, incoherence is explained by the modular nature of our cognitions, there are two separate emotional cognitions in our belief box. The initial emotional reaction is inconsistent with our all-things-considered judgement, but the holistic response is consistent with our identity and persona. The subject valorises the holistic response over the initial reaction, a psychological solution that is at least practically rational.

Section 4. evaluates attempts to reconcile the antimony between the initial emotional reaction and reflective responses, by equating psychological sincerity with philosophical authenticity. Sincerity entails our true beliefs which trump any transitory unconscious evaluations. This section introduces linguistic analysis which treats authenticity as a rhetorical device or resource, this discursive approach challenges the concept of rationality per se. Rationality no longer resides in the agent, instead it is performed extrinsically in discourse.

Section 5. continues the discursive theme with an explication of discourse analysis (DA) and an explanatory study of discursive psychology (DP) by Derek Edwards on how 'emotion words' are used rhetorically by clients in therapy sessions, how clients index rationality to warrant their emotional states. The study is critiqued by Gee who considers DA entails middle class assumptions and values. Subsequently, sample vignettes dealing with authenticity, rationality and recalcitrance are critiqued from a discursive standpoint to reveal any underlying assumptions or values their protagonists might perform on behalf of their authors.

In conclusion, any apparent irrationality of recalcitrant emotions can generally be discounted when the initial emotional reaction is relegated to residual belief or explicated by the psychological concept of modularity. Psychologically we privilege emotions that perform our identity and persona, emotions can be both cognitively and strategically rational.

Discursively, rationality does not ontologically exist, we perform our identity and persona strategically, indexing emotion words and rationality, paradoxically often warranted by reference to cognitive rationality.

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Title: Are emotions rational?

Section 1: Introduction

1. Abstract

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However, Price's theory does not overcome inherent problems with the main philosophical models, namely conceptual reasoning by young children in the cognitive model or perceptual evaluation in the perceptual model.

This section proposes that the addition of psychological schema theory with its encapsulated pre-processing modules can resolve both of these problems. Like most psychological theories it does not exclude faulty or biased cognitions.

Section 3. challenges the claim that recalcitrant emotions are irrational because of incoherence between the initial emotional reaction and a holistic considered emotional response.

Instead, incoherence is explained by the modular nature of our cognitions, there are two separate emotional cognitions in our belief box. The initial emotional reaction is inconsistent with our all-things-considered judgement, but the holistic response is consistent with our identity and persona. The subject valorises the holistic response over the initial reaction, a psychological solution that is at least practically rational.

Section 4. evaluates attempts to reconcile the antimony between the initial emotional reaction and reflective responses, by equating psychological sincerity with philosophical authenticity. Sincerity entails our true beliefs which trump any transitory unconscious evaluations. This section introduces linguistic analysis which treats authenticity as a rhetorical device or resource, this discursive approach challenges the concept of rationality per se. Rationality no longer resides in the agent, instead it is performed extrinsically in discourse.

Section 5. continues the discursive theme with an explication of discourse analysis (DA) and an explanatory study of discursive psychology (DP) by Derek Edwards on how 'emotion words' are used rhetorically by clients in therapy sessions, how clients index rationality to warrant their emotional states. The study is critiqued by Gee who considers DA entails middle class assumptions and values. Subsequently, sample vignettes dealing with authenticity, rationality and recalcitrance are critiqued from a

discursive standpoint to reveal any underlying assumptions or values their protagonists might perform on behalf of their authors.

In conclusion, any apparent irrationality of recalcitrant emotions can generally be discounted when the initial emotional reaction is relegated to residual belief or explicated by the psychological concept of modularity. Psychologically we privilege emotions that perform our identity and persona, emotions can be both cognitively and strategically rational.

Discursively, rationality does not ontologically exist, we perform our identity and persona strategically, indexing emotion words and rationality, paradoxically often warranted by reference to cognitive rationality.

2. Background and Rationale

Carolyn Price, (2015) in the introduction to her book 'Emotions', sets out a typology of personal emotional responses, starting with the initial emotional reaction, which can trigger emotional episodes and extended emotional episodes that may over time generalise into emotional attitudes and dispositions. Price's typology and examples of personal emotional responses will be used to examine rationality, authenticity and recalcitrance of emotional states.

Price makes use of teleosemantic theory moderated by social constructionism to explain the content and structure emotional responses. Teleosemantics posits evolutionary biological mechanisms as supervening on emotional responses which Price posits, may be hijacked or moderated by socio-cultural constructs from learning and experience.

This essay does not critique Price's approach, rather it proposes the addition of schema theory with its posited encapsulated processing modules. Schemas can resolve the conceptual problem for judgemental models and problem of perceptual evaluations for perceptual models.

This essay also proposes the use of discourse analysis theory as an arbiter of practical rationality, particularly when interpreting the protagonists of philosophical vignettes and by extension their authors.

3. Description of main sections

Section 2: Theories of emotion

This section introduces the main philosophical and psychological theories of emotion, including Price's typology of emotional responses.

Price¹ posits teleosemantic theory to explain broad-brush function and structure of emotional responses, when moderated by social constructionism it can explain fine-grained socio-cultural emotional responses.

Psychological theories of emotional responses are reviewed, including the attention capturing function of initial emotional reactions, and the possibility of faulty cognitions.

Of particular importance in Price's typology of personal emotional responses is the initial emotional reaction which may not necessarily cohere with the agent's overall beliefs and judgements. This is explicated in vignettes.

Schema theory and social constructionism are introduced.

Schema theory is proposed as a useful adjunct to Price's approach. Particularly in respect of problematic issues for philosophical models, namely, propositional attitudes and perceptual evaluations. Schema theory is proposed as supplying the necessary additional explanatory power for both judgemental and perceptual models

Section 3: Is recalcitrant emotion rational?

This section deals with the rationality of emotions.

This section evaluates how Recalcitrant Emotion (RE) can be resolved in cognitive and perceptual models, and in Price's own model of teleosemantics.

RE is generally considered irrational. However, theories of emotion need to explain RE and acrasia if they are to be complete and practical. RE is a theoretical space where rationality is contested by recalcitrance and acrasia. RE has much in common with acrasia, although for brevity this is not argued here.

Prima facie arguments that posit contradiction between the initial emotional reaction and the overall emotional response are evaluated. This contradiction can arguably be resolved in favour of the agent's overall identity and persona. RE is may also be explained by modularity, faulty cognitions and by the evaluative component of perception.

Psychological theories that posit modularity are evaluated, modularity can arguably remove cognitive conflict, between beliefs and perceptions and between initial

¹Price, (2015, pp.107,8).

emotional reactions and reflective emotions. Schema theory underpins these solutions.

The canonical philosophical view that emotions are cognitively rational is challenged in favour of strategic rationality, as are interpretations of vignettes which dutifully attest to how their protagonists ought to behave.

Section 4: Strategic rationality.

This section argues for strategic rationality, based in true belief and authenticity, also for strategic rationality based in rhetoric and discursive practices.

It cites Salmela who seeks to resolve the prima facie incoherence between initial emotional reactions and reflective responses, by equating psychological sincerity with philosophical authenticity. How we feel deep inside rather than how we should feel.

Both emotions are occurrent in our belief-box, however, we have personal agency to valorise the emotion that represents our identity and persona. This is the sincerely held emotion, the authentic emotion. We can know our emotions are authentic through introspection, they should be consistent with our long-term goals and beliefs.

This section also reviews counterfeit and managed emotions. When performed they can feel like the real thing, a smile can initiate feelings happiness and contentment in both subject and observer. Only the subject can tell by introspection if they are authentic.

This section introduces language analytic arguments by Kreamer, where authenticity is merely a rhetorical device, used to warrant the agents discursive position

Section 5: Discursive rationality

Cognitive rationality is generally assumed in the explanatory vignettes cited in this essay, with the exception Döring and Arpaly.

Discourse analysis is explained, and an example of the methodology is presented in a study of 'emotion words' by Derek Edwards, with a critique by J.P. Gee.

Like Kreamer in the previous section, DA does not commit to fundamental epistemic values, 'that truth and falsity really exist', instead rationality and authenticity are rhetorical objects, discursively performed.

This chapter critiques value judgements expressed in some of the vignettes, and asks if they are ecologically valid, or does the canonical premise of cognitive rationality get in the way of real-world explications?

Section 2. Theories of emotion

Introduction.

The first aim of this section is to introduce the two main philosophical models of emotion and introduce Price's typology of emotional responses. Her particular focus of interest is the initial emotional reaction which occurs below the level of conscious awareness. It precedes more comprehensive emotional responses which are the product of conscious reflection.

Initial emotional reactions are transient but have a key role in argumentation around rationality, authenticity and recalcitrance, discussed in later chapters

Price's theory explains emotional responses by reference to teleosemantic theory moderated by social constructionism, which Price describes as a 'kind of teleosemantic theory' which is useful in explaining the structure and function of emotional responses. As an approach this combination is both psychologically and sociologically reductive.

The second aim of this section is to introduce schema theory and social constructionism, together with arguments for their explanatory power. The complementary nature of these theories is noted, underlying dispositions much like schemas preserve scarce cognitive resources.

This section happily concedes teleosemantic explanations but proposes the fruitful addition of schema theory. In support of schema theory, this section argues that schema theory overcomes the conceptual problem of judgemental models and perceptual evaluations of perceptual models.

1. Main philosophical models of emotion

Cognitive philosophical models of emotion generally epitomise rational judgements and normative behaviours. Judgements are propositional attitudes², which the agent holds accurate or inaccurate, e.g. lions are mammals and lions are dangerous. Holding these propositions to be true or false means the agent is willing to act and reason on the basis of these propositions and infer certain other concepts, e.g. that lions give birth to live young that need to suckle from the mother, and should generally be avoided.

Perceptual models of emotions are generally based on the conjecture that perception as arational, we simply see the sunset and smell the jasmine. However perceptual models are currently considered potentially more fruitful, specifically because they avoid the conceptual problem, namely, that animals and young children are incapable of conceptual reasoning and more generally they do not rely on cognitive evaluations.

² Example from adapted from Price 1.1.1

However, if perceptual models are not to default into judgemental models, then perception needs to entail evaluation.

Psychologically, perception itself may be considered a cognitively active process rather than passive. Perceptions are matched and moderated by cognitive schemas containing representational and experiential information. Cognitive schemas operate below the level of conscious awareness or any conscious volition of the subject, **Eysenk, M.W. & Keane, M. T. (2000, pp.252,7; 497,8)**

2. Classifying emotional responses.

Price, (2015, pp.2-6), eschews definitions of emotions per se. Instead she posits a toolkit, of examples, for recognising and classifying emotional responses, which consists of the initial emotional reaction, emotional episodes, extended emotional episodes and emotional attitudes and dispositions, each with its own associated structure and function.

Initial emotional reactions.

In the introduction to her book **Price** gives a typology of emotional responses, starting with the briefest of all, the 'initial emotional reaction'.

In her explicatory vignette, Zack allows the library door to slam shut, so breaking Alice's concentration. Alice's focus of attention switches, autonomic and behavioural changes occur (increased heart rate, muscles clench, she frowns), she evaluates Zack's behaviour as offensive and experiences feelings of anger directed at Zack.

The initial emotional reaction is immediate, consistent with the inherent attention directing response to a sudden noise or movement, see **Brady, (2013, ch.1.2)** and with teleosemantic theory which privileges evolutionary biological mechanisms and functions. Arguably this species of initial emotional reaction may even bypass the cerebellum³, triggering Alice's emotional response before the cerebral cortex can even begin to process the information or revise the initial emotional reaction.

Salmela,(2005, pp.210) cites a vignette proposed by **de Sousa, (1987a)** asking which is more authentic, the spontaneous negative initial emotional reaction towards a friend who has confided he is gay, or the considered reflective view which prompts an apology the following evening, begging forgiveness and assuring the friend that his sexual orientation will not affect their friendship.

Price, (2015, pp.107-9) situates initial emotional reactions in teleosemantic theory, in the functional properties of natural evolutionary biological mechanisms, which may be moderated by development and learning to produce social analogues. Emotional responses are reductive but not wholly deterministic, so can even be in error. This type of error is explained in schema theory as action slips⁴, where crosstalk and

³ Ekman, P., in Brady 2013 ch.3.2

⁴ Eysenk, & Keane, pp.145-59

competition from competing cognitions, result in emotional responses that are not necessarily coherent with beliefs nor necessarily rational.

Emotional Episodes

Price, (2015, pp.39) eschews structuralism per se, but describes emotional responses as patterned behaviours, their structure shaped by underlying biological mechanisms refined by evolutionary success. Typically, when we are angry, we seek to retaliate, why does the initial angry emotional response often entail this intentional response? Why does love, even unrequited, endure, 'why does a particular emotional response involve acting in that way?' For Price these reflect the emotion's functional responses encoded in biological mechanisms resulting from of evolutionary processes.

Price,⁵speculates, if emotional evaluations are judgements then according to **Solomon, (1993)**, this may be sufficient reason to react emotively towards the intentional object. If emotional evaluations are embodied appraisals, then according to **Prinz, (2004)**, we may be impelled to change or escape the situation. In any case **Price**⁶ argues it is the functional history of the emotion that shapes the pattern of the response, biological determinants moderated by idiosyncratic social and personal constructs.

In summary, Price posits a functional structuralism, based in evolutionary psychology, with its paradigm of fight or flight responses, moderated by constructs contingent on social and cultural upbringing. Emotional responses are a 'matter of instinct or habit'⁷, functionally, they may be 'the products of our cultural history, our personal histories' or have an evolutionary origin.

Certainly, teleosemantic functionalism has strong explanatory power for initial transient emotional reactions, but arguably less casual force when considering reflection and changes of mind. Reflection and changes of mind have different content than the initial emotional reaction. They are surely mediated more by social cognitions than evolutionary biology. As the critique of philosophical vignettes demonstrates⁸ reflection is also contingent on extrinsic factors like institutions and friendship groups each with their own normative expectations.

Emotional episodes are proceeded by initial emotional reactions, but their content is changed. Reflection on Zack's inconsiderate behaviour now must include the additional fact that his hands were not free as he tried to negotiate the door while carrying a large pile of books. Similarly, the protagonist in de Sousa's' initial homophobic reaction must now consider how her friends and peers might judge her. She may genuinely hold values that are anti-homophobic, or may be conflicted on

⁵ **Price,(2015,pp.40,41)**

⁶ **Price,(2015,pp.47,8)**

⁷ **Price,(2015,pp.47,9)**

⁸ Section 6.

the issue, in either case she needs to repair the social error of the initial emotional reaction.

She reflects on the matter, discounts her initial emotional reaction as not representing her true self, she apologises and reinstates her liberal identity and persona.

In referencing two different psychological traditions, namely Evolutionary Psychology and Social Constructionism, Price recognises issues may become 'unmanageably complicated' and so elects for evolved biological mechanisms giving the 'broad brush' explanation of function and structure while the socio-cultural factors contribute to fine grained features⁹.

Price agrees that emotional reactions are likely to be more predictable than longer term emotional responses. This includes emotional episodes, extended emotional episodes and emotional attitudes, which entail cognitive reflection and changes of mind. Socio-cultural explanations are more appropriate. Alice's emotional response to Zack's behaviour is tempered by the facts of the situation and the gay friend's hurt is hopefully assuaged by the apologetic repair.

3. Enhancements to Teleosemantic Theory

Prices 'kind of teleosemantic theory' is not disputed, however, it may be enhanced by references to schema theory.

Cognitive schemas are posited as encapsulated information processing modules that assist both perception and cognition, they represent the agent's store of relevant information, built up by learning and experience¹⁰. Schemas facilitate heuristic matching processes, a rapid pattern matching against the continuous flow of sensory data, reducing expenditure of scarce cognitive resources, freeing limited resources for exceptions that require full attention.

Schemas explicate Alice's initial anger as a breach of her library schema of sobriety and silence, similarly, in de Sousa's vignette the friend's immediate homophobic reaction may call on residual prejudiced schemas from childhood, that no longer represent her considered beliefs and judgements in the here and now.

Rapid matching schemas can of course result in action slips that 'emerge from the interplay of conscious and automatic control' but they are 'the normal by-products of the design of the human action system, **Sellen & Norman,(1992)**. Similarly, teleosemantic theory allows that 'intentional states can misrepresent the situation, that beliefs and judgements can be false or perceptions inaccurate' **Price, (2015, pp.108)**.

⁹ Price, (2015,pp.48,9)

¹⁰ Eysenk & Keane, (2000,pp.352)

4. Social Constructionism:

There may be little to recommend schema theory over the 'broad brush' functional claims of teleosemantic theory other than schemas posit the agents store of relevant information, rather than evolutionary biological mechanisms. Even this may be discounted by Price's inclusion of social constructionism for fine grained discrimination in emotional responses.

Brady, (2013), argues, in line with evolutionary biology, that emotions capture and consume attention, while **Monteleone, (2017)** argues that emotional attention manifests underlying dispositions, shaped by repeated associations with pleasure or relief.

De Sousa, (1987b) puts **Monteleone's** case for mental representations from a social constructionist viewpoint, this sounds very much like a description of how cognitive schemas are developed in the human mind

'stories characteristic of different emotions are learned by association with "paradigm scenarios". Paradigm scenarios involve two aspects: first, a situation type providing the characteristic objects of the specific emotion-type (where objects can be particular and formal), and second, a set of characteristic or "normal" responses to the situation, where normality is determined by a complex and controversial mix of biological and cultural factors. These scenarios are drawn first from our daily life as small children and later reinforced by the stories, art, and culture to which we are exposed. Later still, they are supplemented and refined by literature and other art forms capable of expanding the range of one's imagination of ways to live'

5. Schema theory implications for judgemental and perceptual models.

Price, (2015, pp.59), considers candidate criteria for identifying instances of emotion, these include bodily feelings **James (1890)**, judgements **Solomon(1993)**, emotional evaluations, an embodied appraisal, **Prinz, (2004)** and perceptual evaluations, **Tappolet, C., (2003)**.

Price, (2015, pp.90,91) posits that initial emotional reactions entail a phenomenology and that this could constitute a 'kind of evaluation of the situation', that feelings of fear might be the evaluation of imminent danger. This is supported by **Ekman, (1992)**, who considers that brief emotional reactions 'capture everything that is distinctive of emotion', in summary the initial emotional reaction is identical to the emotion.

Price does not argue for schemas, preferring teleosemantic theory which prima facie dismisses instances of emotion as judgements as outlined by **Deigh, J. (2010)**, or perceptions of value as outlined by **Tappolet, (2018)**. However, Price does accept the naturalism of **Brady, (2013)** who argues emotions are epistemic, emotions capture attention and represent an evolutionary advantage.

As outlined above perception is moderated by cognitive schemas. This very much equates to Price's 'kind of evaluation of the situation' based in the agents store of relevant information, which according to **de Sousa, (1987b)** includes previous phenomenological memory. Indeed, schemas identify perception with cognitive evaluation, thus resolving the conflict between judgemental and perceptual models of emotion.

Like other theorists, Price points out that the judgemental model relies on mental concepts which fail at the first hurdle for animals and young children. Perceptions on the other hand according to Price are unconscious and automatic, although they may be a 'kind of evaluation' This might suggest a dualist approach, the perceptual model for emotional reactions and a judgemental model for conscious reflection, but this makes for poor philosophical theory.

Teleosemantic theory does not address the conceptual problem inherent in judgemental models or the evaluative problem of perceptual models.

In schema theory initial evaluations of perceptual data is prima facie a matching process against the continual stream of perceptual data, a re-cognition guided by representational modular pre-processing schemas. They contain the agent's store of relevant information, built up by learning and experience. They are not concepts, like 'snakes are dangerous', rather they are encapsulated pattern matching modules that 'evaluate' perceptual information without the need to call on further cognitive resources. Children and animals can indeed 'evaluate' an approaching snake as dangerous or not dangerous based on their particular store of relevant information gained through experience.

Schema theory thus avoids the problem of conceptual reasoning in children and animals. In both animals and young children, attention is focused on the intentional object. This may confirm Price's 'broad-brush' instinctive biological mechanisms, in preparation for fight or flight. In young children emotional responses are betrayed by facial expressions of fear or joy, perhaps at the approach of the neighbour's dog. Previous encounters with dogs will have contributed to semantic memory and a dog schema with the phenomenology of these encounters. New encounters with dogs are matched to the dog schema obviating the need for conceptual processing, at the same time preserving cognitive resources.

In schema theory, perception is not represented as the passive delivery of sensory data to cognitive processes. Rather it is a dynamic pattern matching process an 'evaluation' assisted by schemas. Schema theory answers the problem of evaluative perception in perceptual models, much as Price concedes, perception may be a 'kind of evaluation'.

Section 3: The rationality of recalcitrance emotion.

Introduction:

Definitions of cognitive and strategic rationality are given. In this essay they are treated as synonymous with philosophical and practical rationality respectively.

Recalcitrant Emotion (RE) is prima facie considered irrational, however RE is a theoretical space where rationality is contested. This section posits that rationality is contingent on time and place, on society and culture.

Philosophical theories which posit RE as irrational generally highlight the incoherence between the initial emotional reaction and the more reflective considered emotional response.

This section introduces a typology of RE which along with psychological and discourse theory which can explicate this apparent incoherence.

The standard cognitive theory of emotion, the judgemental model, described by **Deigh, J. (2010)** entails propositional attitudes that may be evaluated as true or false by a well-functioning naturalistic system, while the perceptual model promoted by **Tappolet, C., (2003)**, rejects judgements but posits perceptual evaluations of some kind.

Price, (2015, pp.88) points out that, according to the cognitive model, judgements and beliefs conform to the 'norms of rationality', but RE does not so conform and so escapes rationality. Price's examples are challenged by explication using schema theory and discourse theory.

Vignettes used by **Price** and **Benbaji** are discursively critiqued: they take no account of the discursive work done by their protagonists. By extension this applies to their authors who Hume-like posit only cognitive rationality, consigning strategic rationality or conditioned behaviours to the therapist's couch.

Brady's critique of the perceptual model is reviewed but not challenged, Brady posits modularity and informationally encapsulated modules, much like schema theory. However, Brady's vignettes are critiqued, they are considered exemplars of philosophical hubris in this essay, viz. they present only cognitive rationality and impute political values to their protagonists that are hardly impartial.

Finally, **Döring** and **Arpaly** support the view presented in this essay, that the agent who acts according to her beliefs and judgements is practically rational. This includes acting on one's 'gut feeling' as described in Emily's tale, even if it appears to be against one's better judgement.

1. Definitions of rationality and recalcitrance.

Scarantino and de Sousa, (2018, section 10.1)¹¹, distinguish between cognitive rationality of emotions and strategic rationality.

Emotions are cognitively rationality if they are fitting, warranted or coherent. Our fear is fitting on the appearance of a shark while swimming unprotected in the sea, it would prompt us to head for the shore. Our fear is warranted by evidential information that rates the possibility of shark attack as higher when falling into the sea off the Australian coast than in the English Channel. If we believe that climate change has increased the possibility of great white sharks in English coastal waters, then our fear in seaside bathing off Worthing would be coherent with our belief.

'Emotions have cognitive bases, which consist of cognitions whose function is to provide emotions with their particular (intentional) objects'. Emotions that prompt actions that are instrumental in promoting the agent's goals and align with the agent's interests are deemed strategically rational.

In summary cognitive rationality equates to philosophical intuition while strategic rationality has its bases in Theory of Mind and discursive performance, which equate to practical rationality. The terms are used interchangeably in this essay.

Judgements, according to Price 'can be assessed as rational or irrational. 'Our judgements are irrational when we hold them for no good reason or when they plainly contradict each other. In contrast, perceptions are generally thought to be arational states – states that are neither rational nor irrational. The agent's own subjective judgements, guide and control his actions, normative judgements which provide him with at least 'subjective reasons' for action

Recalcitrance and Acrasia are explicated by **Döring** and **Davidson. Döring, (2010)**, references the widely held aphorism that "emotions can get the better of you" a state in which the agent becomes increasingly irrational with emotion interfering and taking over completely from the agent's rational pursuit of his goals.

Emotions are seen as non-inferential¹² evaluations of perceptual information to form best normative judgements, except when emotional salience overtakes judgment this leads to acratia actions.

Döring, (2010, pp.283,4), 'it is constitutive of being an agent to comply with the requirements of rationality, so that to violate them is, at the limit, to cease to be an agent'. 'Agents are set above the brutes, so to speak, by virtue of their rationality; they are attributed the 'role of Rational Animal'. An 'agent is practically rational to the extent to which he complies with his judgements about what is best for him to do in a given situation'.

¹¹ The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy

¹² Heuristics

Davidson, (2004) goes further allowing for reflection and changes of mind as in (RE). Davidson delineates two separate evaluative judgements, viz. an 'all-out' judgement and an 'all things considered' judgement, arrived at by reflection. As Fido approaches, Jane will either pet him or escape depending on which evaluative judgement prevails. If 'all-out' prevails it may be described as recalcitrant.

2. Recalcitrant Emotions as incoherence:

Price, (2015, pp.93,4), describes RE as the conflict, between our initial emotional reaction and our holistic mature beliefs and judgements. By example, she cites her own irrational fear of rollercoasters.

It is unlikely that any conscious cognition accompanies the initial emotional reaction, at best perceptual evaluation occurs simultaneously as is suggested by **Döring, Price, and Tappolet**, and as it is posited in schema theory. More likely, any conscious awareness of conflict occurs after the initial emotional reaction, it occurs on reflection, where emotions are chronologically separate, and according to schema theory, they are modularly separate.

In choosing to privilege reflection we introduce a technical incoherence.

In therapeutic practice when dealing with RE we are often be dealing with fears that entail anxiety, these fears are often emotional dispositions. As the phobic object comes closer, in time and space, clients experience increasing levels of anxiety, that mean escaping them or being overwhelmed by them.

Price finds the action of riding a rollercoaster quite terrifying while not judging rollercoasters per se to be dangerous, else she would not let her children talk her into rollercoaster rides. As a therapist¹³ who has a lifelong persistent fear of heights, who could not allow his children to talk him into climbing all but the nursery slopes Ben Nevis, I partly acknowledge her description of RE.

Both examples describe beliefs and emotions about some intentional object that are inconsistent, but not necessarily inconsistent with the agent's fears and anxieties.

Price's inconsistency might be explained discursively as stake evaluation¹⁴, lest her fear should catch her out and overwhelm her. My own fear explains lengthy diversions to avoid high bridges like the Queen Elizabeth II road bridge. My avoidance, more an example of operant conditioning than recalcitrance, each avoidance another escape that strengthens my fearful resolve.

This subsection also proposes that RE has its own typology of incoherence that maps to Price's typology of emotional responses, viz. reactive recalcitrance, where emotion comes uninvited, Alice's reaction to the library slamming door; episodic recalcitrant, where fear persists before, during or after the encounter as with Monty, Yolanda's pet python¹⁵ and finally recalcitrant attitudes or dispositions like Price's

¹³ Therapist with Anxiety UK

¹⁴ Discourse theory concept

¹⁵ Price pp.3(emotional episode)

fear of rollercoasters where the agent acknowledges her prospective recalcitrance to herself and others.

3. Recalcitrant theories and evaluations

1. Price, (2015, pp.93-6), surmises 'that initial emotional evaluations and evaluative judgements are different kinds of intentional state produced by separate processes of evaluation'. Initial emotional states may sometimes clash with considered judgements.

Price¹⁶, describes her theoretical approach as a 'kind of teleosemantic theory' whereby we can 'appeal to people's intentional states', namely beliefs, desires, emotions, etc. in order to explain their behaviour. Our intentional systems have developed over the millennia to produce functionally optimal responses that favoured survival, intentional states are directive rather than deterministic.

Intentional systems can be modified by learning and experience. Socio-cultural constructs entailing beliefs and judgements can utilise these same functional biological mechanisms. This allows faulty beliefs and judgements to 'misrepresent the situation'.

If it is the case, that social constructs supervene on biological intentional systems then Price's use of a 'kind of teleosemantic theory' explicates structure and function of emotional responses in general. Fear will prepare the body for fight or flight, direct attention and exclude irrelevant cognitions, just as Bills fearful response to Monty focuses his attention and prepares body for escape, sadly excluding other reasonable strategies when faced with the slithering serpent.

According to Price¹⁷, initial emotional evaluations are not judgements or beliefs, although they do answer to our personal likes and dislikes, they have personal significance. Price¹⁸ also holds that initial emotional reactions entail a phenomenology and that this could constitute a 'kind of evaluation' of the situation.

In RE initial emotional evaluations may be inconsistent with reflection, as in the example of the gay friend coming out. This incoherence, according to Price is resolved in favour of the agent's holistic reflective self, one who has mainly rational liberal values.

This essay argues for additional psychological explication viz. schema theory. Price's emotional evaluations 'that answer to our likes and dislikes' are posited by schema theory and schemas with their encapsulated pre-processing modules.

This essay separately challenges the ecological validity of discursive vignettes, using discourse theory. The apology to the gay friend is a discursive performance that may be made to obfuscate the fact that the original reaction was authentic. The apology may be made to maintain the consistency of her performed identity and persona

¹⁶ Price, (2015,pp.105-108)

¹⁷ Price (2015,132,33)

¹⁸ Price, (2015,pp.90,91)

within a particular friendship group. Typically, vignettes do not take proper account of discursive work done.

2. **Benbaji, (2013, pp.578,9)**, argues that reductive theories cannot explain RE without contradiction. This is true for judgemental models and by extension must also be the case for perceptual models where emotions are posited as a kind of evaluative judgement.

Jane's belief that Fido is innocuous along with her evaluative fearful judgement of Fido are contradictory and occurrent in her 'belief box'. Jane is consciously aware of the contradiction, yet reflection cannot rid her of her fear. **Benbaji** cites **Hume** who considers the moment we perceive our incoherence 'our passions yield to reason', accordingly Jane ought not to fear Fido. **Tappolet, (2012)** is equally strict, holding that RE is irrational by analogy of the stick in water, bent by refraction. Optical illusions which persist, and resist reflection are not irrational, but since RE can be corrected therapeutically it need not persist and should therefore be considered irrational.

This essay considers that the normative rationality of emotions posited by **Hume et al.** is incommensurable with descriptive personal reports of persistent recalcitrant fears. Consigning RE to the therapy couch may well discursively warrant its irrationality. However, this essay argues that Hume et al. are motivated to discursively warrant their own canonical positions, rather than address the explanations in the remainder of this section, or arguments for strategic rationality in section 5.

Besides, Jane's fear may not be based on judgement but on causal antecedents, a dog-bite or an aggressive dog in childhood, remains in semantic memory, specifically episodic memory. Her fear may be automatic, a conditioned reflex, with escape practiced many times at the sight of dogs, or even the thought that Fido will be visiting today.

To relegate her fearful conditioned¹⁹ responses to irrationality seems premature. Jane, through her personal dog schema may not perceive Fido as innocuous, but Hume-like may wish to warrant her partial rationality to others by saying she really knows that Fido is innocuous.

3. RE as separate modular systems: **Brady, (2007, pp.273)** introduces much of the psychological literature relevant to RE, based on the widely held view by cognitive neuropsychologists that cognitive systems are modular and relatively independent, see **Eysenck and Keane, (2000, pp.12-16)**. **Brady** repeats the perceptual fallacy that sensory perceptions are passive, a view that is not shared in schema theory.

Brady, agrees emotions and evaluations are intricately connected. In perceptual illusions there is a conflict between what the subject sees and what the subject

¹⁹ Instrumental conditioning

believes, because the visual system and the evaluative systems are modular and 'informationally encapsulated'²⁰. This logic may be applied to RE where the intentional object is perceived as dangerous while the judgmental module considers the object as safe.

Brady, (2013, pp.86-88) challenges the view of **Döring** and other supporters of the perceptual model who 'significantly overstate the epistemic value of the emotional experience' at the expense of perception itself. Brady argues that perception itself is sufficient for non-evaluative judgements, giving the example of seeing a red car outside of his house arguing, that this alone is sufficient for the belief that there is indeed a red car outside of his house.

Brady compares this with experience of fear on hearing a noise downstairs while trying to get to sleep at night. This focuses our attention and typically motivates us to seek explanation from a limited range of scenarios including that we are probably in danger from an intruder. In summary, the emotional experience alone is not sufficient to determine we are in danger, 'it would seem wrong or improper to form evaluative judgements *solely* on the basis of our emotional experiences'.

This dismisses the argument that emotional experiences are similar to perceptual experiences at an epistemic level, it is a false premise that emotions provide any sort of evaluative judgement.

Brady, (2013, pp.112), gives exemplar back to back vignettes, the irrational shame of one's Glaswegian accent and rational anger at the University Principal's 20% pay increase compared with 10% for staff

This is yet another example of philosophical hubris, the example of irrational shame of one's Glaswegian accent can be otherwise interpreted. Accents are social markers and carry connotations of which both Brady and the subject will be well aware. Emotions are responsive to reasons even if they are bad reasons (**Elgin**). The Glaswegian, fearing he will be judged negatively, as unsophisticated, and aware that his broad accent might be misunderstood, which could entail embarrassing requests to repeat what he has just said, may well justify his apprehension and 'shame'.

His 'shame' may be practically rational, and anyhow the example begs the question of how the observer Brady knows what the subject feels, and why Brady says it is shame, why not anxiety? Emotions can provide sufficient reason and memory sufficient evidence to believe he may be misjudged, his emotion if he indeed feels shame it is both strategically rational and epistemic. Brady's anger at the Principal's pay rise however is arguably unreasonable and irrational.

4. Döring, (2010, pp.8) describes RE as cognitive conflict, but 'conflict without contradiction', not irrational. Emotional states compete with judgements, both inform the agent who must negotiate a course of action based on these two cognitions.

Döring argues for agency and practical rationality. An agent is practically rational if she acts according to her beliefs and judgements in the context of her given situation. By extension this would include emotion, which is in fact argued by **Arpaly**,

²⁰ This accords with schema theory

(2003, 2000), an agent acting according to her emotions can act rationally and even morally against her better judgement.

The agent is not irrational in experiencing a recalcitrant emotion, **Döring, (2014, pp.1,2)**, 'just like recalcitrant perceptions, recalcitrant emotions reflect the cognitive conflict between experiential state and better judgement'. Also, there is a hierarchy of judgements where all-things-considered judgements may be overridden by all-out judgements or by conative states, the desire something or someone overriding rational sensibilities.

Acting against one's better judgement is contested per se by **Arpaly, N. (2000, pp.490,1)** who contests the widely held philosophical view that one can genuinely act against one's better judgement (acrasia). **Arpaly** proposes that 'one just changes one's best judgment as to what to do', 'as a result of deliberation' one simply changes one's mind.

'Emily's tale'²¹ demonstrates how we may act on emotions, as surrogates for reasons that we are not explicitly aware of at the time. Emily's emotional concerns are enough reason for initiating action, her sense of dissatisfaction and feelings of unease stand as a proxy for her cognitive conflict, namely her wish to achieve her manifest goals and gain a PhD in chemistry and her opposing belief that by comparison with other students she lacks the requisite qualities. Emily makes the decision to quit her course against her better judgment at the time, only to realise later that it has turned out for the best and so was the better decision.

On this account Emily's decision to quit the course is rational even if she has doubts and it appears irrational to her at the time. The 'schism between judgment and desire' makes her question her decision but in following her emotions she is in fact following her best judgment.

Arguments by **Döring** and **Arpaly** for practical rationality²², reflection and changes of mind, are supported in this essay which argues for strategic rationality and contingency both psychologically and discursively.

5. RE as faulty cognition now critiqued.

Price, (2015, pp.133-137), like **Brady (2007)**, dispels the analogy between optical illusions and RE, only RE is irrational. Brady considers RE is a waste of cognitive resources and epistemically risky, taking one's eye off the ball

Price like **Brady** and **Tappolet** agree that initial emotional reactions which are not coherent with our considered beliefs are irrational and in need of therapeutic re-education, using CBT or some other therapy to overcome non-functional thoughts and behaviours.

²¹ Arpaly (2000, pp.504)

²² Practical rationality is treated as synonymous with strategic rationality, in this essay

Price²³ considers Meg who has a recalcitrant fear of flying, which occurs as she takes her seat on plane. This subsection argues this is an unrealistic portrayal of Meg's fear of flying or Price's own recalcitrant fear of rollercoasters. As posited at the end of section 3.2 there is a typology of RE, reactive, episodic and dispositional. This section proposes that most fears and phobias consist of a continuum of all of these types. Meg will experience RE in booking the flight, while travelling to the airport, in the waiting lounge and in passport control.

Meg's recalcitrant fears are neurotic, and she may benefit from CBT or other therapies. However, as suggested above her RE may be the result of conditioning, modularity, or a simply a discursive device. If the latter, then therapy is hardly relevant.

²³ **Price, (2015, pp.134)**

Section 4. Strategic rationality and authenticity

Introduction.

This section argues that if emotions are coherent with how we perform our identity and persona in our contingent socio-cultural milieu, they may be considered *sui generis* rational. This can include managed and counterfeit emotions.

This section argues for strategic rationality, based in true belief and authenticity, also for strategic rationality based in rhetoric and discursive practices.

For **Salmela, (2005)**, psychological sincerity equates to authenticity and this should resolve the antimony between RE and overall emotional response. If the agent sincerely feels that her reflective considered response truly reflects her identity and persona, her goals and beliefs, then this warrants the authenticity and rationality of her emotional response.

Counterfeit and managed emotions can be assessed by this same warrant.

RE is not denied, only that it represents an historic or faulty cognition, not an authentic, sincere emotion.

For **Kremer, F. (2009)** who takes a language analytic approach, emotions are discursive objects to be used rhetorically, they have no intrinsic rationality in discourse. However, they may be performed to warrant rationality or irrationality. Similarly, authenticity is a discursive object that can be used rhetorically.

Kremer raises the question of moral responsibility in a discursive world, to which virtue ethics responds with a resounding 'yes', and the recommendation of cognitive retraining.

This essay does not favour one approach over the other since both are psychologically sound explications of strategic rationality.

1. Resolving the antimony between initial emotional reactions and reflection.

In Price's typology the initial emotional reaction generally morphs into an emotional episode which itself may in turn be part of an extended emotional episode or even an emotional attitude or disposition. These initial reactions represent part of our evaluative belief system, they have cognitive bases.

Salmela, M. (2005, pp.209-10) cites de Sousa's vignette and the problem of attributing too much authenticity to initial emotional reactions, in the example of a gay man coming out to a female friend. Her initial response expresses hostility, disgust and anger but then later telephones him to apologise for her unreasonable behaviour. **Salmela** asks which is more authentic response,

the spontaneous negative reaction towards the friend or her considered reflective emotion, accepting his sexual orientation with the assurance that it need not affect their friendship. Salmela also notes that emotions need not all arise at the same time, and so does not consider spontaneity as a necessary condition for authenticity.

De Sousa, (1987a) describes the initial emotional reaction as spontaneous, uncensored and unreflective, so 'presumably genuine'. Demonstrably the initial emotional reaction takes place below the level of consciousness awareness, this is certainly supported by **Billig, M, (2005, pp. 215)** who contends that the cut and thrust of normal conversation is so fast that it cannot take place at the level of conscious reflection.

It seems likely then, that initial emotional reactions which come uninvited, occur below the level of consciousness awareness, while beliefs are built up over time, stabilising the identity and persona of the agent. There is no reason to assume that the agents anger at her friend's confession has more than a fleeting relationship to the agent's character and moral worth. As **de Sousa²⁴** speculates her 'prejudiced reaction may be a mere reflex' it may have 'stemmed from a narrow-minded education that she has not yet had time to mend'.

Again, schema theory can explicate the antimony, the initial emotional reaction is a rapid heuristic response by a the pre-processing module, possibly containing representations acquired earlier in the subject's development, perhaps now outdated. However, the considered reflective emotion answers to different cognitive processes, that index our mature beliefs and opinions.

Salmela, seeks to reconcile the antimony between initial emotional reactions and a reflective response, by determining if both can sui generis be authentic emotions. If both are occurrent in our cognitive belief-box we have agency to choose to privilege the reflective emotion which accords with our identity and persona. This does not mean the initial spontaneous emotion is inauthentic, rather it is an intrinsic part of our evaluative system albeit based in learning processes the subject has not yet amended. Salmela certainly thinks this is the case, we privilege reflective emotional responses that are coherent with our long-term judgements and beliefs.

²⁴ Vignette, de Sousa(1987a), highlights the contingency of initial unconscious emotional reactions, in 2020 the initial reaction would be informed by different cognitive bases representing current socio-cultural attitudes, which would now describe the initial emotional reaction as homophobic rather than prejudiced, in any case in need of re-education.

Salmela, (2005, pp.211-12) posits as a fact that 'spontaneous emotions and deliberative attitudes' are bound up with 'our conception of peoples character and moral worth'. Salmela is in accord with **Pugmire**, that the initial spontaneous reaction is an authoritative evaluation, 'part of my actual valuational attitude', authentic in its own terms in respect of cognitive bases. However, initial emotional reactions do not necessarily represent my 'real beliefs' nor my real values. This situates reflective responses, and change of mind, in the realm of conscious awareness and conscious control. Salmela characterises philosophical authenticity as normative, how one should feel, regardless of one's actual feelings. How subjects actually feel, 'deep inside', these descriptive feelings, can be judged by different standards, by psychological sincerity. Salmela posits that if psychological sincerity is to be reconciled with philosophical authenticity, then it will be 'in terms of coherence between emotion and one's internally justified values and beliefs'²⁵

This is theoretically possible not least because the two evaluative systems represent different modular processes. The emotional reaction is automatic, brief and historical while the reflective emotional response represents long term consolidated justifiable beliefs and judgements. According to **Pugmire** spontaneous emotions should be considered as valid expressions of the agent's values and beliefs. They can further be construed as a challenge to our current values and beliefs, a feedback loop encouraging change and personal enlightenment

This essay supports Salmela, that the question of psychological sincerity versus philosophical authenticity is resolved by true belief and transparency of our internally justified values and beliefs. Sincerity is 'a matter of presenting an existing emotion to oneself, frankly, without dissimulation or duplicity'²⁶, like authenticity sincerity is consistent with the agent's long-term identity and persona. Both the initial emotional reaction and the considered reflection emotion are based in the agent's evaluative system, they are consistent with the agent's beliefs. Sui generis they are cognitively rational while at the same time promoting strategic change.

2. Counterfeit emotions

Counterfeit and managed emotions prima facia challenge the premise of cognitive rationality but not the premise of strategic rationality, nor the premises of discursive theory.

²⁵ **Salmela, (2005, pp.210)**

²⁶ **Salmela, (2005, pp.216,17)**

Psychologically insincere emotions can take many forms, there are implicit socio-cultural rules for the fittingness of certain emotions and their duration. Their expression is guided by contingency of time and place, between friends and colleagues, between superiors and subordinates, in music halls and critical care wards. Emotions can also be suppressed and displaced. Anger at a bullying boss can be displaced onto others, including loved ones.

There is a fine line between counterfeit and managed emotions. Managed emotions include social displays of emotions, smiling at the customer or a sombre attitude at funerals. Counterfeit and managed emotions have much of the phenomenology of real emotions and so may feel like real emotions. The agent may for nefarious purposes choose to construe their counterfeit emotions, as representing their real emotions, in which case they are a purposeful deception by the agent to shape how she is perceived by others. These assertions are speculative, especially when considering managed emotions, as epitomised by actors on stage and screen.

Counterfeit emotions may feel like the real thing, but how can subject or observer know if they are authentic? Salmela agrees with Pugmire, that the agent can so discriminate, if the emotion is internally inconsistent, it will be interactively inconsistent. The structure of emotion will be functionally inappropriate, and the emotion is self-defeating.

Both Salmela and Pugmire are perhaps over-optimistic here, not conceding the propensity of people for self-deception, to consciously or unconsciously perform personas that are in the end self-destructive, e.g. denying one's sexual orientation or social class.

Price (2015, pp.4,5) offers an antidote to such clarity of introspection with examples of managed emotional responses which by feedback have come to modify the initial emotional reaction. Now construed as authentic by the agent's biased attitudes and dispositions. Ceri, whose boyfriend cheated on her, is disposed to become jealous whenever she thinks of him. Her jealous response recurring over weeks and months as she reinterprets past events. Or Dan the environmental campaigner who has become an obsessive eco-warrior who now cannot see any government policy in a positive light, becoming angry with each new policy initiative.

Both Ceri and Dan experience emotions of jealousy and anger, although Ceri has not yet fully consolidated her jealousy into her identity and persona, but she may well continue to manage her emotions, much in the same manner as Dan has done. Whether she is able to confront her emotions in the heat her jealousy 'without dissimulation or duplicity' is a moot point.

3. Language Analytic approach

Kremer, F. (2009, pp.72-75), takes the same approach as section 5 of this essay, namely, to critique to vignettes from a discursive analytic perspective. She critiques **Mulligan** who posits we should commit to fundamental epistemic values viz. 'that truth and falsity really exist'²⁷ and inauthentic emotions are not fully fledged emotions. This is not ontologically compatible with a discursive analytical point of view.

For **Kremer**, authenticity per se is problematic and not ontologically meaningful in a language analytic approach. The authenticity or truth value of an emotional response is a negotiable discursive feature used rhetorically to manage the agent's performance. An agent may have actual feelings of jealousy, fear or unhappiness, but she arguably she has agency and can consciously choose how to express these emotion words²⁸ in her utterances, she may not wish to confess to negative emotions or may choose to perform them rhetorically for strategic advantage. She may not be consciously aware of her feelings but still perform them unconsciously.

Performing counterfeit emotions is a valid rhetorical tactic in discourse which paradoxically can activate physiological feedback mechanisms that entail the very emotional states performed. However, any second order emotions have no more claim to authenticity than the counterfeit emotion

In DA, including language analytic, authenticity is performed by choosing words, including emotion words that warrant sincerity or authenticity, these utterances 'do work' in advantaging the agent in personal and social relationships. This includes communicating real or ascribed emotional feelings, and optionally displaying bodily signals mutually recognised as associated with the emotion.

Mulligan, considers inauthentic emotions are not real emotions, fictive non-emotions not factual emotions, although Kremer rebuts this with the concept of emotions in drama moving from fictive to real as the actor inhabits the role. Besides, this is fictive argument for discourse analysts like Kremer who are not concerned with authenticity or truth per se, only what is indexed and achieved by utterances. Authenticity in this domain is rhetorical, not ontological, it is epistemic. In DA language is a meaning making system, consciously or unconsciously used to advantage the speaker and promote her views and interests.

²⁷ **Kremer, F. (2009, pp.73)**,

²⁸ See Wetherell(2005)& Edwards(1999) below

If we do ascribe authenticity to emotions this refers to the emotion's function and structure. The narrative of how emotions ought to function and how we ought to behave, therefore it can make sense to apply the standard of authenticity to emotions, the fittingness of the descriptive component with the intentional component in accord with TOM.

As Kreamer points out authenticity is evaluated differently from 1st person perspective than from a 3rd person perspective. With first person perspectives, we have arguably some cognitive control in educating our emotional responses, just as we can reflect and change them. We can learn to love a stepchild as much as our own genetic offspring. **Mulligan** disagrees stating that real emotions are never subject to the will of the agent. This view is not shared with **Salmela** above, our initial emotional reaction might be the result of faulty upbringing which in any case can be overridden by our mature reflective beliefs and judgements, by our consolidated identity and persona. This is not to imply identity and persona are fixed, rather we have multiple identities that are contingent on socio-cultural context.

Kreamer,²⁹ gives the example of authenticity from a third person perspective. The employer who unconsciously facilitates institutional racism while denying any such personal bias. The employer denies any racist feelings, but the empirical evidence is clear, it implies bias. Perhaps her unconscious bias is the result of previous prejudice, but she may not consciously have these racist feelings anymore.

Kreamer asks if she is still morally responsible for them. This is a dilemma for discursive analysis, that depends on whether the subject is posited with agency and free will, perhaps best left to ethicists. This essay posits agency and free will, according to the virtue ethicist **Rosalind Hursthouse (1999)**, she should undergo cognitive retraining.

4. Summary

As proposed at the introduction to this section, if an agent's personal beliefs and emotional responses are authentic and coherent with the agent's identity and persona then they are sui generis strategically rational. Salmela and Kreamer separately argue for authenticity of emotions, psychologically and discursively respectively. This essay posits authentic emotions are sui generis strategically rational.

Mulligan and others posit cognitive rationality where authenticity is founded in fundamental epistemic values of truth or falsity, not what authenticity may achieve in promoting and preserving the self. This essay does not argue for cognitive rationality.

²⁹ **Kreamer, F. (2009, pp.76),**

Section 5: Discursive rationality

Introduction.

The rationality of emotions is discursively presented in vignettes by Price and others in order to explicate their philosophical theories. It seems appropriate the vignettes should be critiqued using Discursive Analysis (DA).

This section includes a brief summary of DA followed by a summary of Discursive Psychology (DP), followed by a presentation Edwards' DP study of 'emotion words' and a critique of the study by Gee.

Philosophical vignettes generally promote cognitive rationality, they are in fact discursive performances, of protagonists articulated by their authors. Of particular interest is the interpretation of the discursive work done by the protagonists of the vignettes, to warrant rationality.

Like any narrative, vignettes are not 'value free', and so can be analysed to identify underlying standpoint views of their authors. The ecological validity of vignettes is challenged by common sense counter examples often revealing the standpoint views of their authors.

The vignettes generally posit cognitive rationality while the counter examples posit strategic rationality.

1. Summary of Discourse Analysis (DA):

Discourse is described by **Margaret Wetherell, (2003, 2005, introductory chapters)** as 'language in use' and human 'meaning-making'. It includes speech, texts, artefacts, customs, institutions and culture. Up to the early 20th century language and texts were more the domain of linguists. Customs, institutions, artefacts and culture occupied anthropologists, ethnographers and social scientists alike.

This essay acknowledges that social science practice is situated in the methodologies available within cultural and institutional practices including debates over knowledge construction. The 'turn to discourse' in social science like the turn to the social in linguistics can be seen as a critique of the previous epistemological

traditions of linguistics, anthropology and philosophy. These mainly positivist approaches saw language as a transparent medium for communicating meaning, although it is in linguistics and philosophy that the 'turn' has its roots and its significance for social scientists.

Meaning, identity and social interaction are all played out through discourse, more radically discourses may be said to speak through individuals and groups, discourse itself constructing and articulating their very identity and actions. Discourse is theoretically ubiquitous, present in internal cognitive processes, personal interaction and in social and cultural relations.

Wetherell, (2005, pp.10) proposes the concept of discourse as social action as an organising principle common to six distinct traditions, viz. Conversation Analysis (CA), looking at patterns and tacit rules in interpersonal interaction e.g. stake inoculation and turn taking. Its close cousin interactional sociolinguistics looks at language patterns in different social and institutional settings, such as work or the doctor's surgery. The turn to discourse in psychology Discursive Psychology (DP), recognises the action of discourses outside the functioning of the human mind and their implication in issues such as identity and representation. Critical linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis look at patterns from the theoretical position that they are driven by power differentials in society and culture maintained by both large and small discourse. Bakhtinian research like critical linguistics reinforces the constructed nature of individuals through discourse at every level in response to all that has gone before, a concept echoed in Foucauldian research concerned with the genealogy of big discourses and their effects on epistemologies, institutions and individuals alike.

Edwards, D. (1999) situates (DP) as a form of (DA), specifically concerned with psychological topics, under the broad headings of cognition, memory and affect. DP examines how utterances referencing cognition, memory and emotion are used discursively to explain or account for an agent's actions in social interaction. These utterances are often referred to as performances emphasising the rhetorical nature of discourse, although this does not imply that performances are necessarily conscious or reflective, as **Billig³⁰** points out conversation can be so fast it must take place at a level below conscious awareness. (CA) is a separate field of analysis but can be subsumed into DP.

DP theory recognises empirical regularities such as scripted event sequences³¹ that are performed by participants. Utterances and emotions are used as rhetorical tools for making meaning and influencing interactions.

The use of scripts, seldom articulated but intelligible to participants, are contingent on context including daily encounters, the doctor's surgery, a restaurant, faculty meetings etc. In the example given here, a therapy session.

³⁰ **Billig, M, (2005, pp215)**

³¹ **Edwards, D. (1999, pp.278)**

Discursive interpretations in this essay are catholic with regards to the above traditions.

2. Critique of Edwards' discursive psychology by Gee.

Edwards, (1999, pp.281-283) lists what emotion discourse can do 'in narrative talk and text', the list is taken from **Edwards, (1997)** and covers the types of rhetorical work use of emotion words can perform.

This includes item 2, using 'emotion words' to warrant rationality³². Jimmy presents his pathological jealousy as rationally accountable by referencing his emotional state as 'boiling' with anger at sustained provocation from his partner Connie. Similarly, in conversation item 10, authenticity³³, can be warranted by immediacy of responses³⁴, with the caveat that it could be a counterfeit artificial response.

The other items of Edwards list are relevant to Price's typology of emotional responses, bearing in mind they are discursive performances of emotion. This does not mean the agent has no experiential feelings, only that reporting real or counterfeit feelings is rhetorical, the domain DA and DP in particular.

'The conceptual repertoire of emotions provides for an extraordinary flexibility in how actions, reactions, dispositions, motives and other psychological characteristics can be assembled in narratives and explanations of human conduct'³⁵. Employing emotion words can be taken prima facie as reporting involuntary reactions or as a rhetorical device under the agent's control. In either case warranting the rational accountability of the agent's internal state, her reactions and dispositions. Utterances are indexical referencing not only socio-cultural narratives but also the immediate context of the discursive interaction. Emotion displays 'can perform flexible, accountability-oriented, indexically sensitive, rhetorical work'.

Gee, J. P. (1999, pp. 305-7), responds to Edwards analysis of emotion words, agreeing emotion and other folk psychological terms are used in discourse, to 'explain or exonerate what we have said and done' or proactively to inoculate how subsequent discourse will be interpreted. How emotion words bias or manage accountability in interpersonal interactions within the broad parameters of shared

³² **Edwards, (1999, pp. 282, Item 2)**

³³ Salmela's sincerity, 3.2 counterfeit emotions

³⁴ Disputed by **Salmela, (2005, pp.209-10)**, above

³⁵ **Edwards, (1999, pp.288)**

socio-cultural discourses and Theory of Mind (TOM), 'as part of (however partially) shared or contested rational and moral orders ('cultures', 'discourses').

However, according to Gee, DP is wholly contingent and situated, 'not designed to be integrated with other such principles in a consistent and grand theory'³⁶.

This essay, as a side issue, finds the search for a grand unified theory is a common aspiration amongst philosophers and psychologists, [Brady, Gee, et al.](#) which can be discursively interpreted as warranting the scientific nature of their respective domains.

Like [Churchland, \(1989\)](#), Gee dismissively considers DP as folk psychology and theory of mind embedded in language and interactional practices, usually exemplified and interpreted by middle-class people³⁷. Pace 'middle-class' this is indeed the ontological basis of DA and DP in particular.

For [Gee, \(1999, pp.107\)](#) 'What is more bothersome, perhaps, is that things like social groups and classes, cultures and institutions, are missing from Edwards' paper and from so much of the work in discursive psychology'. This misrepresents DP, which in fact entails the very description that Gee himself proposes viz. that people are apprenticed in social practices that ensure they operate in the 'right' for our group and culture, we are normed to behave in certain ways.

As outlined in 5.1 above, these are the very objects of study in DA. [Gee](#), certainly misrepresents both DA and DP in particular, since scripted event sequences, more concisely scripts³⁸, are part of analysis as is the use of emotion words to warrant rationality, [Edwards, \(1999, pp.278\)](#). In therapy the rhetorical work done is different to that in the faculty meeting, but contingent scripts are ubiquitous in meaning making. In the faculty meeting, it is arguably more fitting to perform middle-class virtue signalling scripts, just as it is for the authors of vignettes to perform their own rationality and virtue.

3. Vignettes and ecological validity

Philosophical theorists of emotion often illustrate their theories with vignettes, to explicate their premises. The protagonist's emotional responses in these vignettes are predominantly normatively rational rather than practically rational. Arguably, confirming the view that they also reflect middle-class values. Their argumentation posits cognitive rationality, where protagonists

³⁶ [Gee, \(1999, pp.306\)](#)

³⁷ [Gee, \(1999, pp. 307\)](#)

³⁸

must either overcome their negative emotional states, or indulge in cognitive retraining.

This section argues for a discursive approach to author's vignettes, across a spectrum of folk emotional states using DA which posits strategic rationality.

Authenticity.

Price, (2015, pp.156) gives examples of false or inauthentic emotion as when mourners at the funeral of some celebrated personage, not intimately connected to the bereaved, adopt a sad persona, or when someone's emotional behaviour is over-the-top, manufactured or fabricated, not a true reflection of the agent's core identity and persona.

Price considers the subjects' motivations are self-serving. This conforms with DP analysis where motivations are by definition self-serving, constitutive of the subject's contingent persona. Price even suggests this, e.g. for the agent being associated with a momentous event that she wishes to identify with, it performs her very identity, just as the agent's fabricated release of frustrations, can consciously manipulate the situation.

Price refers to other theorists who posit that the emotion is one the subject 'wants to have', but it is a 'fantasy and self-deception', however for **Pugmire, (1994)** it is nonetheless based in the agent's evaluative system.

Psychodynamic explanations of authenticity are not refuted by DP, when indexed in discourse as 'fantasy' they are simply another rhetorical resource, a narrative used by agents to warrant or excuse behaviours as authentic or unauthentic, rational or irrational, etc.

If these fantasies operate at a level below conscious awareness, the agent's fantasies and self-deceptions still articulate the agent's identity and persona as posited by the ubiquitous nature of discourse.

By chance, much of the discursive analysis on authenticity has been explicated by Price and Pugmire. However, when viewed through the prism of cognitive rationality self-serving emotions are considered as inauthentic. This essay begs to differ, positing contingency and eschewing fundamental epistemic values 'that truth and falsity really exist'.

Rationality.

Price, (2015, pp.161), introduces Rachael, a committed pacifist, who spontaneously feels elated on hearing news of a rout of her country's enemy. On reflection she feels ashamed of her initial emotion, feelings that are clearly not coherent with her longer-term personal values.

Salmela, (2005), argues on discursive grounds against taking too much stock of the initial emotional reaction, as does **Pugmire**, above. Rather we should take the

subjects overall emotional response as a true reflection of their identity and persona, this is after all the persona she performs. For **Kreamer, F. (2009)** it is the normative effects of social constructionism that determine the overall emotional response. In discursive terms she is articulated by social and cultural constructs.

Is this vignette ecologically valid? or does it represent how 'certain, usually middle classes of people'³⁹ might wish to portray their protagonists as, after all, rational, liberal and virtuous. It is of course possible that Racheal might hold a plurality of values, love of Country and hatred of war.

If Racheal herself actually reported these emotions, how are we to know she is *prima facie* authentic and not indulging in virtue signalling. Since, she is a creature of her creator Price, how are we to know she is not vicariously representing her creator's rationality and virtue signalling?

Brady's example of the Glaswegian's shame of his strong accent discussed 3.3.3 above is equally lacking in ecological validity, without any indexical reference to reasons or motives, identity or persona. Instead of empathising with his own protagonist Brady relies on canonical normativity to condemn him. Brady exacerbates this lack of empathy, for what this essay considers is a strategically rational Glaswegian, by describing staff anger at differential faculty pay awards as rational, thus indexing a politically correct narrative for Scottish faculty members.

In taking a standpoint viewpoint DA would argue, on the limited data, that Brady is both articulating and being articulated by wider discourses, which appear to index cognitively rational protagonists rather than strategic rationality, for both Brady and his protagonists. This is the problem with vignettes, they are not value free.

Recalcitrance.

Price's personal example of recalcitrant fear of rollercoaster rides is not explained, rather it is presented as an irrational fear which she acknowledges is not consistent with her considered beliefs about rollercoasters. DA however can help to explicate her discourse, on the limited data.

In admitting to RE she is indulging in stake inoculation, this prospectively excuses any irrational behaviour should she fail to overcome her fear RE when out with her children. Similarly, in admitting to fear of heights to my friends and family I am avoiding the need for explanations for avoiding high bridges or my phobic behaviour should I inadvertently find myself on such a bridge.

Tappolet, C. (2003, pp.98-108) considers most contemporary philosophers working on acrasia seem happy to accept the traditional claim that emotions are nothing but 'blind and potentially disruptive forces'. **Davidson (2004, pp. 196–7)** sets the standard definition of acrasia: if the agent free to follow her all considered judgment x, but intentionally does y then her action is acratia.

³⁹ Gee, J. P., pp.307

Tappolet then considers the fate of Paolo and Francesca, two unlucky lovers⁴⁰ who engage in adultery. Did they consider the risk of discovery? probably, but more likely they considered only some of the risks. Davidson to his credit concedes this exception to the irrationality of acrasia.

Hume, despite being well aware of the phenomenon of recalcitrant emotions, nonetheless insists that ‘the moment we perceive the falsehood of any supposition our passions yield to our reason without any opposition’.

There is little if any empirical evidence for Hume’s intuition, although it is surely true that our passions can and do yield to reason, but pace Hume, seldom without opposition. Price’s RE has not been extinguished by her reasonable beliefs. The recalcitrant emotion of the agoraphobic is unlikely to assuaged, or her dysfunctional behaviours overcome by reason alone.

Summary:

While DA explicates strategic rationality, the protagonists in many vignettes are articulated by cognitively rationality, albeit generally without warrant. By proxy, the authors of these vignettes, virtue signal their own cognitive rationality and political correctness. This makes for poor theory if not subjected to critique.

⁴⁰ From Dante

Section 6: Conclusions:

This essay finds that philosophical theories of emotion predominantly posit cognitive rationality, accepting that emotions have cognitive bases which are the result of evolution or socio-cultural learning. Paradoxically, these cognitive bases result from strategically rational behaviours ensuring survival and success. Price's version of teleosemantic theory and schema theory being two examples of how these cognitive bases are formed.

Section 2. has demonstrated that the conceptual problem of judgemental models and the evaluative problem for perceptual models can be overcome by schema theory. Schemas are independent pre-processing modules encapsulated with representational information and emotional memory traces from previous encounters with similar intentional objects. Schemas are information matching modules so young children and animals do not have to engage in conceptual reasoning or its analogue in perceptual evaluations.

Section 3. has concluded that recalcitrance can be explained by the modularity of the normal functioning human brain. Two mutually exclusive emotional responses, viz. the initial emotional reaction and the considered reflective emotion, can occupy the subject's belief box, not necessarily at the same time. The subject has agency and can valorise the response that matches her overall identity and persona. The recalcitrant emotion is not irrational per se, it is an unconscious emotional reaction based on the subject's overall evaluative system. Recalcitrance is historic and may result from faulty learning or conditioning.

Section 3 has proposed there is a typology of recalcitrant emotions characterized in Price's fear of rollercoasters and my own fear of heights, viz. recalcitrant attitudes or dispositions. This is important in understanding the ubiquity of triggers associated the agent's fears and phobias. Recalcitrance may become firmly established by the agent's own operant conditioning.

When faced with the phobic object or thoughts of the phobic object, unconscious recalcitrant emotion such as fear and anxiety come unbidden, while reflection evokes judgements and emotions to the contrary. Since they are modularly separate in our belief box, it is difficult to determine which may prevail. As Davidson puts it this can result either in an all-out or an all-things-considered response.

Section 4. has demonstrated that the subject's true beliefs and expressions of emotion represent the subject's identity and persona. However, emotions can be manipulated and managed, they are under agential control whether real or counterfeit. This section has demonstrated the option available to agents to use emotion discursively, and so strategically.

Section 5 described how agents are articulated by social and cultural narratives, and how agents dynamically construct meaning in rhetorical performance. This has been particularly demonstrated in the work of Edwards citing how therapy clients explain, excuse or justify their behaviour, using 'emotion words'. Jimmy warrants his behaviour as 'rational' by indexing his emotional state, he was 'boiling' with anger.

It also concludes that many philosophers in attempting to display their protagonist's cognitive rationality in their vignettes, often betray their own biases and values, which does not make for robust theorising. The discursive analysis of vignettes in this section suggests the need for personal introspection and reflection before publishing and citing vignettes.

In Summary, these findings challenge the scope of current philosophical models of emotions, by positing discrete encapsulated processing modules, viz. schemas, which evaluate perceptions and replace conceptual reasoning with cognitive matching processes. Although schemas or the like are suggested by [De Sousa \(1987b\)](#) this essay supports a review of current philosophical models.

These findings challenge the value of canonical vignettes without proper reflection, viz. those positing predominantly philosophical cognitive rationality at the expense of practical strategic rationality, as proposed by psychological and discursive traditions.

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A854 Research Diary

Name of student: john jeffrey

Name of tutor: David Roden

PART A: SUBJECT SECTION:

Date	<p>Ideas (dissertation topics or research questions, methodologies)</p> <p>Sources of ideas (e.g. from reading of a piece of secondary literature? from thinking about a type of evidence?)</p>	<p>Actions to be taken to follow ideas up (e.g. key sources of literature, websites, things to find out more about, libraries to contact)</p>
22/3/20	<p>Emotions are a form of communication</p> <p>e.g. animal studies, mother and child, social learning, discursive psychology</p>	<p>Look through my own psychological literature d/b on Mendeley, then set up some library searches 'emotion' 'discursive psychology' 'communication' 'learning' 'identity' 'action'</p>
22/3/20	<p>Philosophical authors including Carolyn Price tend describe emotional actions and responses as rational, naturalistic but in my view tend to indulge in 'virtue signalling', in explications.</p>	<p>Review TMA01 for examples, search for 'virtue signalling' 'emotion'</p>
22/3/20	<p>Get ideas on categorisation of emotions better defined, non-cognitively processed, cognitive-learned, cognitive-social interaction.</p>	<p>Combine my ideas in scene setting background of history of emotions together with Price's</p>
26/3/20	<p>Does Stocker's ethical theory which includes action guiding evaluations and moral psychology, have any use in interpreting emotions, not having an overdependence on rationality</p>	<p>Read on (Stocker), look at moral psychology defn.</p> <p>Nietzsche and Machiavelli have s/t to say about morality</p>
2/5/20	<p>Search previous OU course material and add to background, include Mendeley</p>	<p>Set up dissertation folder in Mendeley. Looked at results but too varied.</p>
2/5/20	<p>Neuroscience has s/t to say about decision making, free-will, affect</p>	<p>Search previous papers in Mendeley. Looked at results but too varied, losing real focus of dissertation</p>
11/05	<p>Lost sentence about philosophers being middle class, Edwards?? Therefore normativity reflects middle class values</p>	<p>Find citation. Found in GEE</p>
16/05	<p>Normative is not the same as normative ethics where moral values trump non-moral values/judgments</p>	<p>Don't confuse normative actions relating to emotions with normative ethics</p>

date	Searched philosophical papers +	No of hits See OU library Searches
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PART B: DISSERTATION SECTION:

Date	Type of contact (outline dissertation proposal, TMA 05, TMA 06, email, phone/other conversation) Topic discussed	Summary of feedback Summary of actions taken
30/05/20	Tutorial re dissertation: tutor suggests embodiment of emotions useful strand, also Demasio	Don't want to go there, not arguing for phenomenological views of emotion. The session was helpful in deciding to change the focus of my argument from <i>are recalcitrant emotions rational</i> , to <i>are emotions rational</i> , uses the same psychological and philosophical papers.
15/06	In writing TMA05 realised argument should be based on both rationality and virtue	Title changed to <i>are emotions rational and virtuous</i> .
20/06/20	Tutor feedback identifies poor presentation of the ideas which I want to discuss in my essay	Changed title to rationality only, re-designed chapters to reflect ideas more clearly. Will include virtue signalling as problem philosophers have in interpreting their world (in vignettes).

NB: You must submit this form at the end of your dissertation manuscript.

OU Library searches:

- 1. Database search: Interface** - EBSCOhost Research Databases
Search Screen - Advanced Search 'recalcitrant emotions'
Database - Philosopher's Index;APAPsycArticles;APA PsycInfo
19 hits including Salmela (2005) used
- 2. Journal search:** subject contains 'philosophy' AND title contains 'recalcitrant emotions'
9 hits including Benjabi, H. (2013) used