

GRATITUDE'S FITTING GROWTH

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GRATITUDE is a response not simply to being benefited but to being benefited from good will—that is, to being *benevolently* benefited. Natural events and malicious persons may cause some end of mine to be fulfilled, and while I may resultantly be glad that that beneficial state of affairs arose, I am not ordinarily thereby disposed to feel grateful to or thank anyone. This is because gratitude—at least that of the central sense of interest to me—is a response *to* another *for* a benevolently given benefit.¹ Peter Strawson expresses this thought about gratitude by distinguishing between the response to merely being benefited, on the one hand, and the response to being benefited *from good will*, on the other: “If someone’s actions help me to some benefit I desire, then I am benefited in any case; but if he intended them so as to benefit me because of his general good will towards me, I shall reasonably feel gratitude which I should not feel at all if the benefit was an incidental consequence unintended or even regretted by him, or some plan or action of a different aim.”² On this point, Strawson is in good company; the claim that gratitude construes another to have manifested good will is a mainstay in philosophical discussion of gratitude.³

Little discussion, however, has been devoted to the responsiveness of gratitude to *outcomes*—particularly the unforeseen and unintended outcomes—of manifestations of good will. Although the above picture of gratitude does not preclude gratitude’s being appropriately outcome sensitive, given its focus on

- 1 Another sense of ‘gratitude’, employed in sentences like ‘The farmer is *grateful that* it rained’, fails to pick out an inherently interpersonal emotion. This other reaction, *propositional gratitude*, involves a dyadic relation between a person and state of affairs (or proposition), with no essential reference to benevolent agency. See McAleer, “Propositional Gratitude”; and Rush, “Motivating Propositional Gratitude.” This is not my topic. By ‘gratitude’, I mean the essentially agent-directed emotion involving a triadic relation between two agents and (typically) an action, as in ‘Abe is grateful *to* Miranda *for* helping him move.’
- 2 Strawson, “Freedom and Resentment,” 62.
- 3 Berger, “Gratitude,” 299–300; Walker, “Gratitude and Gratefulness”; Camenisch, “Gift and Gratitude in Ethics”; McConnell, *Gratitude*; Roberts, “The Blessings of Gratitude”; Manela, “Gratitude and Appreciation”; Roberts and Telech, “The Emotion-Virtue-Duty Triad of Gratitude”; and Macnamara, “The Emotion of Gratitude and Communal Relationships.”

benevolence, it is unsurprising that the question has gone largely unaddressed.⁴ This article investigates the possibility that gratitude may be appropriately outcome sensitive by reflecting on cases in which gratitude is amplified owing to the unforeseen consequences of a manifestation of good will. To anticipate, I propose that gratitude can be appropriately outcome sensitive, but this requires more than a causal relation between the original manifestation of good will and the fortunate outcome.

To clearly distinguish outcomes of manifestations of good will from those effects of a benefactor's intentions that are part of the manifestation of good will (e.g., the intended benefit), it is useful to restrict our discussion to cases in which the gratitude-amplifying outcomes occur long after the initial manifestation of benevolence.⁵ In such cases, the outcomes are not only unforeseen and unintended (which can be stipulated in any case); it is also implausible that the benefactor could have foreseen and intended such distant outcomes. By attending to cases of diachronic gratitude that span many years, we are provided a "macroscale" view of the target phenomenon.

Accordingly, consider the following case.

Musical Fulfillment: When he is eleven years old, Tim receives a baroque flute from his aunt, Ida. Ida has taken Tim to several baroque performances in the past, which Tim has enjoyed. After some reflection on what instrument might suit him, Ida has decided on the flute. Tim is touched by his aunt's thoughtfulness, appreciates the gift, and expresses his gratitude with a heartfelt hug and words of thanks. Years pass without Tim's thinking of the flute. But on his seventeenth birthday, having watched Ingmar Bergman's film *The Magic Flute*, Tim decides to play with the instrument that his aunt gave him years ago. Finding the experience enjoyable, Tim begins taking flute lessons. To his surprise, he displays a knack for the instrument. After considerable time practicing, followed by a series of increasingly important recitals, Tim emerges as a virtuoso, eventually

- 4 This is the case at least in recent literature. Adam Smith addresses gratitude's sensitivity to features of benefits "beyond what is due to the motives or affections from which they proceed" (*The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, I.I.II.2.1) and thus touches on the general issue of interest to me. But Smith maintains that gratitude's sensitivity to more than quality of will is warranted by its social utility. As I discuss below, the justification of interest to me is of a different kind from that afforded by forward-looking considerations, like those of utility.
- 5 So while it is possible to individuate actions such that any benefit is an outcome—i.e., an *outcome of the benefactor's intentions*—as I employ these terms, the intended benefit that the benefactor brings about is one thing (the manifestation of good will, or at a least a *part* of the manifestation of good will), and the downstream consequences of the benevolently given benefit are another.

becoming a highly skilled and esteemed flautist. By the time he is in his mid-thirties, Tim is a world-renowned flautist whose craft (and “calling,” as he refers to it) provides him with a sense of meaning in life that he never thought possible as a young man. He is immensely grateful to his aunt. Thinking of it as a token of his gratitude, he dedicates (and then mails several copies of) his first recorded album to her. The record sleeve reads, “To Aunt Ida, with gratitude, for introducing me to my calling —Tim.”

Call the time that Tim receives the flute t_1 . Call the time from which Tim takes being a flautist to be his calling and career t_2 . At t_1 , Tim is grateful to his aunt for gifting him a flute. At t_2 , Tim is considerably *more grateful* to his aunt. That is, he is grateful *to a greater degree*.⁶ Yet Tim is not and does not take himself to be the recipient of any greater degree of benevolence between t_1 and t_2 .

Extrapolating from its details as presented, note that the case has the following structure: (1) a person (S) is grateful at some time (t_1) to another person (V) for ϕ -ing; (2) S is at some later time (t_2) *more grateful* to V for ϕ -ing, even though (3) no change in V 's degree of benevolence has occurred between t_1 and t_2 ; and (4) S knows that 3. I use the term ‘gratitude growth’ to refer to the this phenomenon. Musical Fulfillment is meant to be an example of gratitude growth.

My primary question is: Can gratitude growth be fitting? To say that an instance of an emotion is fitting is to say that it accurately appraises that which it is about.⁷ As emotions are assessable relative to standards other than fittingness—e.g., moral or prudential standards—there are other ways that emotions

- 6 In emphasizing that Tim's gratitude increases in *degree*, I mean to indicate that the change in question is not merely a change in the *scope* of his gratitude—i.e., what Tim's gratitude is about/what he is grateful for. See Zimmerman, “Taking Luck Seriously,” 560. I clarify in section 2 below how I understand “more grateful,” but to anticipate, I take this to involve an increase in *both* the appreciative and motivational elements of gratitude, which I introduce in section 1.
- 7 D'Arms and Jacobson, “The Moralistic Fallacy” and *Rational Sentimentalism*. I understand appraisal capaciously, as including not only the representational content of the emotion but also its motivational profile concerning its object. Fear of the wolf, for example, not only represents the wolf as dangerous—a *judgment* concerning the wolf could do this—but also (perhaps, thereby) poises one to flee, given the wolf's perceived dangerousness. The motivation to flee is not arational but something that is *justifiable* by reference to the considerations that render fear's representation accurate—namely, the wolf's dangerousness. The emotional motivation to flee can be excessive or deficient and, as such, unfitting even if one has a negatively valenced emotion that represents the wolf as dangerous. How exactly to understand the relation between an emotion's representational content and its motivational profile—including whether the fittingness of the latter can be reduced to that of the former—is beyond our scope here. For discussion, see Mason, “Dimensions of Emotional Fit.” For a holistic view of emotional appraisal as including evaluation and motivation, see D'Arms and Jacobson, *Rational Sentimentalism*.

can be (in)appropriate.⁸ But here, I am interested in gratitude's appropriateness *qua* fittingness. Consider what we mean in saying that your gratitude is a fitting response to, e.g., an acquaintance for kindly helping you with some distressing problem. Here, gratitude is fitting in that it accurately appraises the relevant evaluative qualities of the action—namely, its benevolent and beneficial qualities. Your acquaintance is, as we can put it, *gratitudeworthy* for benevolently helping you.

Can gratitude growth be fitting? It is not obvious how it can be. Gratitude is a backward-looking emotion; it is about and justified (when it is) by something past. Particularly, gratitude represents some past action as a benefit to oneself motivated by another's good will. It is fitting when it correctly represents another to have benevolently benefited oneself.⁹ But given that the past is unalterable, gratitude growth is presumably unfitting. For if gratitude of a certain sort was a fitting response at t_1 , on the basis of a manifestation of good will, ϕ , which occurred prior to t_1 , given that ϕ 's occurrence is fixed in the past, how can a greater degree of gratitude for ϕ be fitting at t_2 ?¹⁰

- 8 Gratitude is thought to promote subjective well-being and relationship quality. See Emmons and McCullough, "Counting Blessings Versus Burdens"; Seligman, *Authentic Happiness*, 74; Peterson and Seligman, *Character Strengths and Virtues*, 524; Wood et al., "Gratitude and Well-Being." To the extent that being *more* grateful contributes to one's well-being and relationships, there may be prudential and moral reasons in favor of gratitude growth. I return below to these kinds of reasons—i.e., reasons of the "wrong kind," which do not bear on whether the emotion accurately appraises its target and (for that reason) are not considerations on the basis of which we can *directly* feel emotions. That is, even if some evil demon's credible threat of "Admire me, or else I'll torture you and other innocents" is a good reason to (come to) admire him, being a wrong kind of reason, it does not render the demon admirable—i.e., a fitting target of admiration. It provides you not direct (i.e., fitting) reason for admiration but indirect reason to admire him—e.g., to act in a way that enables one to construe the demon as admirable. See D'Arms and Jacobson, "The Moralistic Fallacy"; Rabinowicz and Ronnow-Rasmussen, "The Strike of the Demon"; and Hieronymi, "The Wrong Kind of Reason."
- 9 Strictly speaking, this should be "oneself or one with whom one (correctly) identifies," for one can feel grateful to another without construing oneself as the beneficiary. See Roberts and Telech, "The Emotion-Virtue-Duty Triad of Gratitude," 1; and Lewis, "Gratitude," 2. For simplicity's sake, however, the grateful agents discussed in this article are beneficiaries.
- 10 Although I characterize gratitude growth as an increase in the *degree* to which gratitude is fitting, nothing hangs on the assumption that when an agent is gratitudeworthy, there is a single (i.e., unique) degree of gratitude that is fitting. It may be that whenever an agent is gratitudeworthy for some action, there is a bounded *range* of degrees of gratitude that is fitting. On this point as it concerns blameworthiness, see Sommers, "Partial Desert," 255–56; and Telech and Tierney, "The Comparative Nonarbitrariness Norm of Blame," 33–35. Those sympathetic to this view can read gratitude growth as a thesis concerning an increase in the range of degrees to which gratitude is fitting. For example, perhaps it was fitting at t_1 for Tim to feel gratitude toward Ida within a range (R_1) of degrees (D_1 – D_5),

But although gratitude growth, considered in the abstract, may appear unfitting, when we reflect on particular cases, outcomes of manifestations of benevolence intuitively *do* sometimes render fitting a greater degree of gratitude than was fitting in response to the original manifestation of benevolence. Granting, as per Strawson and others, that beneficial outcomes cannot themselves render gratitude fitting—that is, in the absence of benevolence—it is puzzling why outcomes should sometimes appear to make a difference to gratitude's fittingness.

The puzzle concerning gratitude growth can be fruitfully viewed in the context of a broader discussion about the rationality of emotional change. Philosophers have recently attended to several backward-looking emotions that, despite the constancy of the facts that presumably render them fitting, appear to fittingly change across time.¹¹ For example, anger (or resentment) is a fitting response to wrongdoing, but as the wrongdoing cannot be undone, it is unclear how anger fittingly diminishes. Yet when we forswear anger (or resentment) in forgiving wrongdoers, the diminution of anger that often follows seems not only statistically ordinary but also fitting—i.e., it seems a correct response to the relevant evaluative phenomena. Similarly, if grief is a fitting response to the loss of a loved one, given that the loss cannot be *unlost*, how can grief fittingly subside? While different philosophers unsurprisingly offer different responses about different backward-looking emotions, the literature displays a common tendency—namely, a focus on the *diminishment* of emotion. Indeed, the problem concerning backward-looking emotions is sometimes framed as the problem of the diminution of backward-looking emotion.¹² In attending to the possible fittingness of gratitude's *strengthening* across time, this article makes an indirect case for broadening the scope of the discussion concerning changes in backward-looking emotions.

In what follows, I attend to the relationship between gratitude and factors external to quality of will, particularly the fortunate consequences of manifestations of benevolence. I focus on cases of diachronic gratitude, arguing that the (unforeseen and unintended) consequences of a benefactor's manifestation of

and at t_2 , Ida is more gratefulworthy, such that she is, from that time, the fitting target of a greater range (R_2) of degrees (D_{10} – D_{15}) of gratitude.

- 11 For example, Callard, "The Reason to Be Angry Forever"; Cholbi, "Grief's Rationality, Backward and Forward"; Hieronymi, "Articulating an Uncompromising Forgiveness"; Marušić, "Do Reasons Expire?"; Moller, "Love and Death"; Na'aman, "The Fitting Resolution of Anger"; and Schönherr, "Two Problems of Fitting Grief."
- 12 For example, Na'aman, "The Fitting Resolution of Anger." But see Na'aman, "The Rationality of Emotional Change," 260–61. Additionally, the literature focuses on changes to negatively valenced emotions. But for exceptions, see Archer and Matheson, "Admiration over Time"; and Coren, "Giving Up Gratitude."

good will can render fitting the beneficiary's being more grateful to her benefactor than she was for the initially willed benefit. It is only a subset of fortunate consequences, however, that can render fitting an increase in gratitude—namely, those that are *rationaly accommodated* by the *hopes* present in the benefactor's initial manifestation of benevolence. When one acts from good will, one's benevolent desires may find expression not only in intentions and intentional action but in attitudes governed by weaker evidential norms—namely, hopes. The fittingness of gratitude growth is explained by the relation between the benefactor's benevolent hopes and the (unintended *but hoped-for*) state of affairs.

I proceed as follows. In section 1, I outline three paradigmatic components of gratitude. In section 2, I briefly discuss what it is to be more (or less) grateful. In section 3, I focus on a candidate case of gratitude growth. After identifying the mechanism by which gratitude growth occurs, I argue via contrastive analysis that gratitude growth is fitting for that subset of fortunate outcomes that are rationally accommodated by the manifestations of good will from which they proceed. Section 4 clarifies my proposal by comparing it to another possible view on which gratitude can be fittingly outcome sensitive and by addressing a concern about moral luck. The conclusion briefly reflects upon the implications that gratitude growth may have for questions concerning the rationality of emotional change.

1. GRATITUDE'S PARADIGMATIC FEATURES

To make sense of the change in gratitude described by gratitude growth, we need to get clear on gratitude's paradigmatic features. In this section, I propose that gratitude characteristically (1) represents a benefit to have been done *from good will*, (2) is a way of *appreciating* being benevolently benefited, and (3) *motivates* the beneficiary to give thanks.

I hasten to add that I am not committed to each of the abovementioned features being *essential* to gratitude such that, necessarily, when one is grateful, each feature is present. My aim here is not to provide an analysis of gratitude but rather to introduce those features of gratitude that do explanatory work in cases where gratitude fittingly increases, even if some are inessential to gratitude. I do, however, take the three abovementioned features to be present in paradigmatic cases of gratitude, understood as cases in which the benevolent agent is *successful* in her benevolent aim of benefiting another in a manner appreciated by the beneficiary.¹³ The cases of gratitude that I discuss are paradigmatic in this sense.

13 Manela, "Does Gratitude to R for ϕ -ing Imply Gratitude that R ϕ -ed?" 3262n25. For skepticism concerning the mainstream view that gratitude is paradigmatically a response to benevolently motivated benefits (or attempted benefits), see Riedener, "Beyond Benefits."

1.1. Benevolence

In paradigm cases of gratitude, a feature of S 's being grateful to V for ϕ -ing is *benevolence*—i.e., S takes V to have ϕ -d from good will.¹⁴ Gratitude construes another to have manifested good will or benevolence. To act benevolently is to act with the motivation of promoting another's good (whatever this is), for noninstrumental reasons. Good will can be unpacked in a variety of ways; we need not settle on a particular understanding. We might identify good quality of will with the "motive of duty" or with the intrinsic desire for what is good or right, properly conceptualized, or in some further way still.¹⁵ Since I use the terms 'good will' (and 'good quality of will') and 'benevolence' interchangeably, benevolence too should be understood in this noncommittal sense.

I focus below on the subset of manifestations of good will featuring benevolent action. Benevolence might on some occasions be manifested exclusively in one's attentional and emotional responses (e.g., feeling distress upon recognizing another to be suffering). But in the paradigmatic case, willing good consists in part in benevolent action. For when it is within one's power to benefit another and when one's motives are also sufficiently strong, barring weakness of will and other agential failures, willing another's good is a matter of *exercising one's will to bring about* the other's good, i.e., to benefit her. Here, benevolence is efficacious, allowing for beneficence. In any case, I restrict myself below to manifestations of benevolence that, though they may include further elements, centrally feature beneficial action.

1.2. Appreciation

A paradigmatic feature of S 's being grateful to V for ϕ -ing is *appreciation*—i.e., that S be disposed to appreciate V 's ϕ -ing. Gratitude is a way of positively regarding that which it is about; it involves a positive evaluation of its object. As such, gratitude involves a construal of its object as *good* in some way. More particularly, gratitude paradigmatically involves appreciating another's benevolently given benefit. By 'appreciate,' I do not mean 'take pleasure in' or imply anything about hedonic tone. Gratitude is often understood to be a pleasant emotion.¹⁶ But it is also sometimes characterized by (or at least associated

14 Where S and V stand for distinct agents and ϕ stands for some act token, as in "Sue (S) takes Val's (V 's) restarting Sue's stalled car (ϕ) to have been done from benevolence towards her."

15 Arpaly and Schroeder, *In Praise of Desire*.

16 See McCullough et al., "Is Gratitude a Moral Affect?"; Roberts, "The Blessings of Gratitude"; Tsang, "Gratitude and Prosocial Behaviour"; Watkins, *Gratitude and the Good Life*; Fagley, "The Construct of Appreciation"; and Darwall, "Gratitude as a Second-Personal Attitude (of the Heart)."

with) unpleasant feelings, e.g., those of indebtedness or guilt.¹⁷ It may be that these negative feelings are not part of gratitude itself. Perhaps gratitude involves a disposition to be pleased, but this disposition is masked in certain circumstances. Though sympathetic to this idea, I take no official stand on it here.

In saying that gratitude involves a disposition to appreciate, I mean chiefly that gratitude is a way of *valuing* something, particularly another's manifestation of benevolence. I leave open the precise details of what valuing *X* consists in, although it includes being disposed to judge (or otherwise construe) *X* to be valuable.¹⁸ Those (like me) sympathetic to the idea that valuing also involves a positive emotional disposition (which can be masked) can include this in their understanding of 'appreciation', but nothing hangs on this for my purposes.

Appreciation accounts for the intuition that a beneficiary who perceives another to have manifested good will but who remains indifferent (or worse) about this does not count as grateful. Notably, one may be grateful even if there are elements of another's manifestation of good will that one does not value. I am grateful, for example, to my young niece for making breakfast for me (or trying to), even if the product of her culinary efforts is inedible. As the saying goes, sometimes "it's the thought that counts." But that is to say, although I do not value the dish as such, I do *appreciate* (and so, construe as good) my niece's trying to do something kind for me.¹⁹ Someone who appreciates *neither* the intended benefit nor "the thought" (i.e., another's benevolently aiming to benefit them) may say "thank you" (and otherwise act in ways the grateful person might), but I am reluctant to attribute the emotion of gratitude to them. After all, a speech act regularly used to express gratitude is "I appreciate it," and a sincerity condition of this kind of expressive speech act is that its speaker possesses the attitude purportedly expressed: that of appreciation.²⁰ Nevertheless, what matters for present purposes is that paradigmatic instances of gratitude involve appreciation.

17 See Gulliford et al., "Recent Work on the Concept of Gratitude in Philosophy and Psychology"; Manela, "Does Gratitude to *R* for ϕ -ing Imply Gratitude that *R* ϕ -ed?"; and Oh and Tong, "Mixed Emotional Variants of Gratitude."

18 Following Scheffler, valuing is standardly understood to consist partly in judging valuable ("Valuing").

19 If I *greatly disvalue* my niece's making of the dish—e.g., if it gives me severe food poisoning or if my niece destroys my oven in the process—this may preclude my being appreciative of her manifestation of good will. Though I am inclined to deny that I might be grateful nonetheless, I again take no stand here on whether gratitude requires appreciation (only that paradigmatic instances of gratitude involve appreciation).

20 The idea that gratitude's illocutionary aim includes expression of appreciation is prominent among speech act theorists, e.g., Searle, *Speech Acts*; and Leech, *Principles of Pragmatics*. Manela notably rejects that gratitude implies appreciation, but he means something

1.3. Motivation

A paradigmatic feature of *S*'s being grateful to *V* for ϕ -ing is *motivation*—i.e., that *S* is motivated to overtly give thanks to *V* for ϕ -ing. A grateful person not only appreciates another's benevolently benefiting her but, in appreciating the good will shown her, is motivated to express her gratitude *to* the benefactor.²¹ The motivation is to overtly give thanks as, paradigmatically, the beneficiary not only wishes her benefactor well but wants to convey to the benefactor what the manifestation of benevolence means to her.²² Sometimes all that is involved in a beneficiary's giving thanks is saying "thank you" (or some such) out of appreciative recognition of another's expressed good will. I am grateful, for example, to the person at the grocery store who invites me to check out ahead of him (his shopping cart overflowing with produce, mine containing a solitary case of coconut water). My gratitude is expressed with a smile and "thank you" in response to his offer—the smile and the utterance both being expressions of gratitude.²³

But manifestations of good will sometimes have deeper effects on our motivational dispositions. The gratitude one feels toward one's mentor, parent, or rescuer may be considerably stronger and therefore apt to motivate one to do much more than say "thank you." In such cases, the motivation to give thanks might be construed as (something like) a *debt of gratitude*.²⁴ Leaving aside what so-called debts of gratitude amount to—including whether they should be understood on the model of duties—we can acknowledge that gratitude's motivational disposition may be experienced by the beneficiary as her owing a debt of gratitude to the benefactor.

Finally, giving thanks is not simply something a grateful agent is disposed to do but something she, at least from the perspective of her emotion, *has reason* to do.²⁵ When it is (at least *pro tanto*) justified, giving thanks is justified

narrower than I do by 'appreciation'—namely, that the beneficiary values the (intended) "benefit in and of itself" ("Gratitude and Appreciation," 285).

- 21 Gordon et al., "To Have and to Hold"; McCullough et al., "Is Gratitude a Moral Affect?"; Roberts, *Emotions*, 294; and Watkins, *Gratitude and the Good Life*.
- 22 See Shoemaker, "Qualities of Will," 117; Macnamara, "The Emotion of Gratitude and Communal Relationships," 108; and Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, II.iii.10.
- 23 Sometimes we are not in any position to express our gratitude to our benefactors, e.g., because they are deceased or unknown to us. In these cases, one's motivation might manifest in wishing one could give thanks or in giving thanks to some proxy for one's benefactor. See Helm, "Gratitude and Norms," 186.
- 24 Lyons, "The Odd Debt of Gratitude"; McConnell, *Gratitude*; and Roberts, "The Normative and Empirical in the Study of Gratitude," 887.
- 25 See, e.g., Berger, "Gratitude"; McConnell, *Gratitude*, ch. 2; and Roberts and Telech, "The Emotion-Virtue-Duty Triad of Gratitude," 4.

by what gratitude is about—namely, one’s being benevolently benefited by another. Indeed, the claim that beneficiaries sometimes construe themselves as owing debts of gratitude presupposes the idea that beneficiaries recognize *reasons* to give thanks (or at least, “seeming reasons,” in cases of unfitting gratitude). While one might have other (e.g., instrumental) reasons for (or against) giving thanks—reasons irrelevant to whether one’s addressee is gratefulworthy—*reasons of gratitude* are those to which one is responsive to in being motivated to give thanks from recognition of being benevolently benefited by another.

To take stock, I characterize gratitude as a response that (1) represents a benefit as done *from good will*, (2) is a way of *appreciating* being benevolently benefited, and (3) *motivates* the beneficiary to give thanks. We need not assume these to be necessary features of gratitude, only that they are paradigmatic of gratitude.

2. BEING MORE (OR LESS) GRATEFUL

Implicit in the above outline is the idea that gratitude comes in degrees, or that it is a scalar phenomenon. Two persons may both be grateful, though one is *more grateful* than the other. Since changes in degrees of gratitude are central in what follows, we should pause on what it is for someone to be more (or less) grateful.

When one person (*A*) is more grateful than another (*B*) for *X*, there will be two dimensions along which the difference between *A* and *B* can be understood: an appreciative dimension and a motivational dimension. Along the appreciative dimension, the difference resides in *A*’s being disposed to appreciate *X* more strongly. What is it for *A* to appreciate *X* more strongly than *B* appreciates *X*? Recall that appreciating something is a way of valuing that thing. Accordingly, whatever else it involves, *A*’s appreciating *X* more strongly (or to a greater degree) than *B* does involves *A*’s regarding *X* as more valuable than *B* does. If appreciating also involves a positive affective element—which I find plausible but do not presuppose—*A*’s appreciating *X* to a greater degree than does *B* may consist also in *A*’s having a stronger positive emotion concerning *X* than does *B*.

For *A*’s gratitude to be stronger than *B*’s along its motivational dimension is for *A* to be motivated to give thanks to a greater degree than *B*. This is ambiguous between two interpretations. On the first interpretation, the claim is exclusively about motivational strength; holding fixed what it is for one to “give thanks,” if *A* has a stronger motivational disposition than *B* to give thanks, this means that, other things being equal, greater obstacles (or stronger countervailing reasons) are necessary to prevent *A* from giving thanks. On the second interpretation, being motivated to give thanks to a greater degree is a matter of being motivated to, as it were, *give more*. For example, thanking someone by taking them out to dinner is intuitively a “larger” (because, e.g., more resource-intensive) way of

giving thanks than, say, writing them a thank-you email. Which interpretation do I have in mind? Both. At least, a greater disposition to give thanks often involves both elements: a stronger motivational tendency to give thanks and a tendency to “give more.”

While there is a sense in which gratitude increases if there is an increase in at least one of its appreciative or motivational elements, I understand gratitude growth conjunctively such that being “more grateful” implies an increase in *both* these dimensions.²⁶ There is at least something odd about a beneficiary's becoming more appreciative of her benefactor's manifestation of benevolence but not disposed to give thanks to any greater degree. (Directives to the effect that one “be more grateful” presumably call for greater thanksgiving, not merely greater appreciation.)²⁷ And there is something mysterious about one's gratitude increasing *only* along its motivational dimension. (What would account for this change if not an increase in one's appreciation?) I do not mean to deny the possibility of these kinds of (isolated) changes, but a view on which gratitude increases in both its appreciative and motivational elements is a stronger candidate for a view on which *gratitude* (and not merely one of its components) increases. Additionally, in Musical Fulfillment, Tim's gratitude *does* increase along both appreciative and motivational dimensions. (More on this shortly.) Accordingly, I seek to understand gratitude that grows in this way. On the descriptive story I provide in the following section, it is no accident that gratitude increases along both appreciative and motivational dimensions. The latter dimension is modulated by the former, at least in cases like Musical Fulfillment.

3. GRATITUDE GROWTH

In this section, I focus on the case presented in the introduction, Musical Fulfillment, which features Tim being grateful at one time (t_1) to his Aunt Ida and *more grateful* at a later time (t_2). This is a case in which the fortunate consequences of a manifestation of benevolence seemingly render fitting a greater degree of gratitude than was fitting in response to the initial manifestation of benevolence. For this proposal to be convincing, two aims must be met. First, we must specify the mechanism by which gratitude increases diachronically. *How is it* that Tim's gratitude grows? The second aim is to provide grounds for thinking that Tim's increase in gratitude is *fitting*. Since, to anticipate, not

26 Thanks to an associate editor for this journal and an anonymous referee for prompting me to think more carefully about this issue, which in turn contributed to how I understand gratitude feedback in section 3.1.

27 Whether such directives are *felicitous* (at least as naturally interpreted) is a further matter. See Macnamara, “‘Screw You!’ and ‘Thank You.’”

all fortunate consequences of manifestations of benevolence make gratitude growth fitting, meeting the second aim requires specifying which features of cases like Musical Fulfillment render gratitude growth fitting.

3.1. *The Mechanism of Gratitude Growth: Gratitude Feedback*

This subsection provides a description of the dynamics of Tim's change in gratitude. Recall that at t_1 , Tim's response displays all paradigmatic features of gratitude₁: he takes his Aunt Ida to have benevolently benefited him in a way he appreciates and is motivated to give thanks in response. But given that Ida's manifestation of benevolence occurs at t_1 , in virtue of what is Tim more grateful at t_2 ? Since there is no change in benevolence manifested between t_1 and t_2 —and I stipulate that Tim knows this—Tim's gratitude growth cannot be understood as response to an increase in benevolence manifested. Instead, it is in virtue of his immense appreciation of having received the gift that his gratitude grows. Tim's appreciation that he received the flute greatly increases by t_2 , and this appreciation *feeds back* into his already existing gratitude *to* his aunt *for* giving him the flute. Although Ida's benevolent action occurs prior to t_1 , a richer appraisal of this action is available to Tim by t_2 —e.g., “It is through Aunt Ida's benevolently gifting me a flute that I found my calling.” While this description does not attribute *more benevolence* to Ida, it does attribute more value to Ida's benevolent action, via its outcome—namely, Tim's finding his calling. As it is gratitude's appreciative element that construes its object as valuable, we can understand why Tim's gratitude increases along its appreciative dimension by t_2 . And as Ida, being Tim's benefactor, is the agent to whom Tim is disposed to give thanks, it is intelligible that Tim's motivation to give thanks to his benefactor increases with his increased appreciative disposition.²⁸

I introduce the label *gratitude feedback* to refer to the kind of gratitude growth that Tim undergoes between t_1 and t_2 . At t_2 , Tim is motivated to express a greater degree of gratitude *to* his original benefactor for her gift, and this is plausibly so in virtue of an increase in Tim's gratitude along its appreciative dimension. Gratitude growth, as originally characterized, leaves open the mechanism by which gratitude increases; gratitude feedback specifies that the growth is a function of the increased appreciation of the benefit *feeding back* into the gratitude *to* the benefactor, generating a stronger motivation to give thanks.²⁹ While plenty questions concerning gratitude feedback remain, this rough outline suffices for now.

28 To put this in terms introduced by Zimmerman, Tim's gratitude increases in scope (it is *about more* at t_2 than it was at t_1) and in degree (he's *more grateful*, along gratitude's appreciative and motivational dimensions) (“Taking Luck Seriously”).

29 Gratitude feedback, then, is a *type* of gratitude growth. There may be further types. Perhaps, for example, gratitude can increase in response to the *costs* that one's benefactor

In addition to its intuitive appeal for diagnosing the way in which Tim's gratitude increases, gratitude feedback has the following virtue: it appeals to a form of interaction among gratitude's elements that also accounts for counterfactual judgments in cases of *synchronic gratitude*. Intuitively, Beneficiary 1 might be more grateful to her benefactor (and so motivated to give thanks to a greater degree) than her counterfactual counterpart, Beneficiary 2, in virtue of the fact that Beneficiary 1 appreciates the manifestation of benevolence to a greater degree than does Beneficiary 2. Importantly, we can make sense of this difference in appreciation without assuming there is any difference in the degree of benevolence that each beneficiary attributes to her benefactor's action. Beneficiary 1 might be more appreciative if, for example, her values align more closely with her benefactor's (than Beneficiary 2's do with her psychologically identical benefactor) such that she is capable of recognizing the benefit she receives *as a benefit* (rather than merely an intended benefit) or (more simply) if her benefactor succeeds in benefiting her as intended, while her counterpart fails (through no shortcoming of benevolence). Leaving aside questions of fittingness, we typically *do* display more gratitude towards our benefactors for providing us with benefits that we greatly value than we do for benevolent *attempts* that are similarly motivated.³⁰ More generally, when comparing cases of synchronic gratitude across worlds, the degree to which one is disposed to give thanks can easily be understood as partly a function of the degree to which one appreciates the benefactor's manifestation of benevolence, holding fixed facts about perceived benevolence. While "the thought counts," it is not the *only* thing that counts, as far as gratitude is concerned. This so far is merely a descriptive claim. But if, in cross-world cases of synchronic gratitude, one's greater motivation to give thanks can be attributed to one's greater appreciation, it is natural to think that a single person's gratitude can change diachronically via the same basic mechanism—i.e., that in virtue of a difference (particularly an increase) in appreciation, one's motivation to give thanks increases.

I hasten to add that gratitude feedback is compatible with the following: after t_1 but long before t_2 , Tim comes to better grasp the benevolence of his aunt's initial action and, resultantly, becomes more grateful to her for the original manifestation of good will. Tim is a child when he receives the gift, and he may be incapable of seeing the manifestation of good will for what it fully is. This may be because Tim has yet to occupy a role of guardianship over another.

comes to bear as a result of her beneficence. To develop this idea, see Manela, "Negative Feelings of Gratitude"; Miller, "Attributionism and Degrees of Praiseworthiness"; and Nelkin, "Difficulty and Degrees of Moral Praiseworthiness and Blameworthiness."

30 Gulliford and Morgan, "The Meaning and Valence of Gratitude in Positive Psychology," 205; Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, II.iii.2.1; and Scanlon, *Moral Dimensions*, 151–52.

Once he is an adult (perhaps sooner), Tim may be capable of better grasping the value of Aunt Ida's manifestation of good will—i.e., value that was there all along but not visible, as it were, to his child self. This phenomenon—*enhanced benevolence perception*, as we might call it—is distinct from gratitude feedback. To illustrate, imagine Tim*, who is like Tim in all respects up to t_1 but who never takes flute lessons and does not become a world-renowned flautist. Now an adult, Tim* is better positioned to grasp Ida's benevolent motivations. Still, it is difficult to imagine him being as grateful to his aunt as is Tim, our musically fulfilled and world-renowned flautist. While Tim*'s maturity enables him to be grateful for features of the manifestation of benevolence that he could not apprehend as a child, his increased gratitude is responsive to the benevolence at t_1 . There is no puzzle here. As an adult, he is simply in a better epistemic position to recognize the value of the initial manifestation of benevolence.

3.2. A Fitting Change in Gratitude?

Turning now to the question of fittingness, it is useful for dialectical purposes to introduce, as a foil of sorts, a skeptic about gratitude growth's fittingness whose skepticism has its basis in the idea that gratitude is fittingly sensitive *only to the quality of will manifested*. This skeptic—a quality of will theorist about gratitude—holds that while gratitude feedback may reflect something of *Tim's psychology* (and even of human psychology generally), it has no normative significance. “Perhaps people tend to be more grateful to their benefactors when their benevolent acts bear fruit,” this skeptic might say, “but it hardly follows that they ought to be more grateful.”

First, recall that my proposal is not that (1) Tim *should* be more grateful at t_2 . More modestly, I maintain that (2) it is *fitting* for Tim to be more grateful at t_2 . We can understand the sense of ‘should’ in 1 to be roughly that implying that Tim would be *criticizable for failing* to be more grateful at t_2 . We can understand the sense of ‘fitting’ in 2 to be that which entails that Tim's gratitude is apt or correctly appraises its objects (that which it is about) but is not for that reason something one *ought* to feel. Proposal 2 is clearly stronger than 1. One can have a fitting reason to feel an emotion without it being the case that one would be criticizable for failing to have it. If Nour completes a charity marathon, she might be fittingly proud of herself for doing so. But it does not follow that she is criticizable if she fails to feel proud. To use concepts better suited to action, pride is in this case permissible but not required.³¹ While I am sympathetic to the idea that Tim would be criticizably ungrateful if he did not undergo gratitude feedback, my goal here is only to make sense of it being *fitting* for Tim to be more grateful at t_2 .

31 But see Fritz, “Why Fittingness Is Only Sometimes Demand-Like.”

Granting the above point, the skeptic might contend that although Tim's increased gratitude at t_2 is unfitting, it may be otherwise appropriate (even all things considered), as Tim may have strong reasons other than those of fittingness to be more grateful at t_2 . If there are, for instance, pragmatic reasons for Tim to be more grateful at t_2 —reasons to be more grateful that have their basis in the benefits secured (or harms averted) by an increase in gratitude—it may be the presence of *these* reasons, not anything to do with the fittingness of increased gratitude, that makes it (and explains our intuition that it is) appropriate for Tim to be more grateful at t_2 .

If given the opportunity, the skeptic might point to pragmatic considerations that could plausibly justify Tim's increase in gratitude at t_2 . But rather than consider what is inevitably an incomplete set of possible pragmatic reasons for increased gratitude at t_2 , by engaging in a kind of contrastive analysis, we can cast doubt more directly on the idea that the intuitive appropriateness of Tim's gratitude growth can be adequately accounted for without reference to fittingness. For we can identify cases in which gratitude feedback appears patently unfitting. But these cases differ markedly from the one at hand. Consider, for example, the following case.

Wealth and Happiness: Tan's life until t_1 is in all relevant respects identical to Tim's. But suppose that around the time when Tim finds and starts playing with the flute that was given to him by his Aunt Ida, Tan instead trades his flute, which was given to him by his Aunt *Ada*, for a watch at a pawnshop. Sometime after, Julia stops Tan to compliment his watch. Julia and Tan hit it off. There begins a long and beautiful relationship. Early in this relationship, Tan and Julia develop the habit of playing the lottery, using a combination of their "lucky numbers." Ten years later, Tan and Julia renew their wedding vows, and the next day, they win millions in the lottery. At t_2 , Tan recalls the role of the flute and is immensely grateful to Aunt *Ada*—much more so than he was at t_1 . Thanks to her gift, he met the love of his life and, as a result, is also a millionaire. In addition to having the financial freedom to pursue a variety of exciting projects, Tan is part of a deeply gratifying relationship that provides him with a sense of happiness that he never thought possible as a young man.

For each of Tim and Tan, the flute occupies a causal role in the coming to be of their respective happy states at t_2 . Let us stipulate that at t_2 , Tim and Tan are equally grateful to their respective aunts, where this is a function of their being equally appreciative of the aspects of their adult lives that I have highlighted and their having equally strong motivations to give thanks. Yet there is intuitively an important difference between Musical Fulfillment, on the one hand, and Wealth

and Happiness, on the other. Were Tan to express towards his aunt gratitude of a magnitude like Tim's at t_2 , I suspect that both we and his aunt would find something amiss in his response. It is of course understandable for the aunt to be pleased to learn of the unlikely effect of her gift. And Tan might of course be fittingly *glad* that he received the flute (although we would expect him to be especially glad that he traded it for the watch), but this attitude is distinct from the essentially agent-directed attitude that is gratitude. While gratitude feedback here might not be *unintelligible*, Tim's gratitude feedback is a much stronger candidate for fitting gratitude than is Tan's. A sign of this is found in the difficulty of imagining what form Tan's expression of gratitude at t_2 could take. To be sure, we can imagine Tan sharing some of his newfound wealth with his family, perhaps especially with his aunt. But, I submit, it will come more naturally to conceive of such actions as expressions of *generosity* rather than ways of expressing to his aunt what her initial manifestation of benevolence means to him—i.e., it is less natural to conceive of them as expressions of gratitude. Here, I am primarily reporting an intuition. Tim's gratitude feedback is intuitively fitting in a way that Tan's is not. I propose a normative basis for this intuition below.

3.3. *Hope and Rational Accommodation*

Taking at face value the intuition that Tim's gratitude feedback is fitting while Tan's is not, why might this be so? My proposal is that in Musical Fulfillment but not in Wealth and Happiness, the benevolence manifested at t_1 *rationaly accommodates* the fortunate state of affairs at t_2 . Although Aunt Ida does not intend or foresee that Tim will become a world-renowned flautist, we can nevertheless understand her to be *aiming at* Tim's musical success. Consider the conative attitudes underlying her gifting Tim the flute. What is it that she wants for Tim? Among other things, she wants Tim, for his own sake, to find artistic value and fulfillment in playing music. That is, she has an intrinsic desire that, roughly, Tim flourish and succeed musically.³² While this is not itself something she can rationally *intend*—at least where intending that p implies believing or expecting that p (more on this below)—she *can* rationally intend to give Tim a flute and that Tim try his hand at the flute. Her benevolent desire for Tim's musical fulfillment is in this way actionable.³³

32 Where to have an intrinsic desire for X is to desire X at least in part for its own sake.

33 More fully, Ida lacks sufficient evidence to believe that Tim will find artistic value and fulfillment in playing music, and intending that p (at least, *rationaly* intending that p) implies believing/expecting that p . See Harman, "Practical Reasoning"; Davis, "A Causal Theory of Intending"; Setiya, *Reasons Without Rationalism*, 52; Wedgwood, "Instrumental Rationality," 294; and Velleman, "Practical Reflection" and "What Good Is a Will?" While I assume the standard view that intention entails belief/expectation, the claim that

But desires can find expression in conative attitudes other than intentions, e.g., in hopes. Given that Ida wants Tim to find artistic fulfillment in playing music and that she takes this desirable state of affairs to be *possible*, we can assume that this is something she hopes for. While it suffices for my purposes to stipulate that Ida has this hope, we can do better than this. Given the previously articulated features of Musical Fulfillment—along with facts about the nature of hope—attributing to Ida a hope for Tim's musical flourishing is not only intelligible but plausible. This is so for three reasons.³⁴ First, it is already assumed that Ida desires that Tim flourish and succeed musically. This desire underlies her benevolent intentional action of gifting Tim the flute. But given this desire, the main ingredient needed to attribute hope to Ida is the belief that it is *possible* that Tim flourish and succeed musically. For hope is widely thought to be constituted in part by the desire for some state of affairs, along with the belief that that state of affairs is possible (though not guaranteed).³⁵

Second, just as desires, intentions, expectations, and beliefs can be implicit, so too with hopes.³⁶ Ida need not reflect on or attribute to herself a hope for Tim's musical flourishing. It is not difficult to imagine, however, that *were she asked* (around the time when she gifts Tim the flute—i.e., t_1) whether she hopes that Tim will thrive musically and find considerable value in playing the flute, she would reply affirmatively. Hope is a dispositional attitude, and this kind of (counterfactual) affirmative response, along with Ida's feelings of gratification in learning of Tim's success at t_2 , are among the possible manifestations of Ida's hope.

Third, it is no part of my proposal that the content of Ida's hope is nearly as specific as what actually happens by t_2 . Despite its lack of specificity, my hope (or desire) for, for example, a delicious cup of green tea is satisfied by my receiving an expertly brewed Saemidori cultivar gyokuro tea served in a ceramic cup. Indeed, the latter is a particular lofty way of satisfying my tea-related hope. Similarly, Tim's above-described t_2 state of affairs constitutes a specific way—a

it would not have been rational for Ida to intend Tim's musical success does not depend on this.

34 Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for prompting me to specify these reasons.

35 While hope has been analyzed as consisting in a combination of desire and belief (Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 36, I.VI.14; Day, "Hope"; Downie, "Hope"; and Milona, "Finding Hope"), many theorists think this "standard view" requires supplementation. See, e.g., Bovens, "The Value of Hope"; Pettit, "Hope and Its Place in Mind"; McGeer, "The Art of Good Hope"; Meirav, "The Nature of Hope"; Martin, *How We Hope*; and Chignell, "The Focus Theory of Hope." For an overview, see Rioux, "Hope."

36 Heckhausen, *Hoffnung und Furcht in der Leistungsmotivation*; Schultheiss and Köllner, "Implicit Motives."

particularly lofty way—of satisfying Ida’s (far less specific) hope that Tim flourish and succeed musically.

Importantly, it can be rational for Ida to hope that Tim flourish musically even if it would not be rational for her to have an intention with the same content. For assuming that intending that p implies believing or expecting that p will obtain—such that one assigns a greater probability to p than not- p (i.e., one assigns a subjective probability of greater than 50 percent to p)—*hoping* that p implies believing only that the desired state of affairs *is possible*, even if the subjective probability one assigns to it is quite low, e.g., 1 percent. So although she does not (and rationally cannot) intend Tim’s musical fulfillment at t_1 , a hope of this sort is rationally available to her at t_1 . Further, given that her intrinsic desire for Tim’s musical fulfillment is sufficiently strong to find expression in her benevolent intentions and actions (those that render fitting gratitude at t_1), it is not only possible but plausible that her intrinsic desire would also give rise to the hope in question.³⁷

Next, while hope is not action guiding in the same way as intention, it can nonetheless be expressive of one’s quality of will.³⁸ Without settling on a view of what is essential to hope, note that in contrast to merely desiring some state of affairs, hoping is often thought to be broadly agency-involving—e.g., in including endorsement of one’s desire, the disposition to devote mental energy imagining what the world would be like if one’s hope were realized, etc. That we think of hope as expressive of an agent’s good will is reflected too in our responses to others’ hopes concerning our well-being. When others wish us well, they are often expressing interpersonal hopes, as in, for example, “I wish you a speedy recovery” or “I hope you get well soon.” These “well wishes” are often met with thanks. While such exchanges may sometimes be mere pleasantries, they can also be heartfelt, both by the giver and by the receiver.

My proposal, then, is that Ida’s benevolent attitudes at t_1 rationally accommodate the happy state of affairs at t_2 . In particular, it is the fulfillment of her hope for Tim’s musical success that accounts for the fitting *increase* of Tim’s gratitude. While her benevolent intentions are fulfilled long before, her benevolent hope becomes satisfied only by (or around) t_2 . The benevolent intentions (to give Tim the flute and that he try his hand at the flute) and her associated

37 In referring to desires as “finding expression in” intentions, I aim to remain neutral on the metaphysics of intention—e.g., on whether intentions are partly constituted by desires or are instead *sui generis* attitudes.

38 On quality of will being expressed through nonactions and nonintentions, in a way that licenses reactive emotions, see Shoemaker, *Responsibility from the Margins*; Smith, “Responsibility for Attitudes”; and Zagzebski, *Exemplarist Moral Theory*, 231. On hope as expressive of good will among friends, see also Scanlon, *Moral Dimensions*, 132.

actions rationally accommodate gratitude to the degree fitting at t_1 , and the increase in fitting gratitude is accounted for by the hope's fulfillment at a much later time. It is in this sense that the benevolent attitudes at t_1 rationally accommodate the happy state of affairs at t_2 . The total degree of gratitude fitting at t_2 , then, is accounted for by the suite of satisfied benevolent attitudes underlying her gifting Tim the flute at t_1 —namely, the intentions and hope mentioned above. These attitudes are of a piece in that they share a conative basis in the intrinsic desire aimed at Tim's musical fulfillment.

Before specifying what must hold of some hope and some state of affairs such that the former rationally accommodates the latter, let me emphasize that it is not the mere benevolent hope that renders fitting the increase in gratitude but rather that hope's being *fulfilled* in the right kind of (to-be-further-specified-below) way. After all, this hope is present at t_1 . And although the presence of the benevolent hope at t_1 is a key ingredient for the fittingness of a greater degree of gratitude at t_2 , it is insufficient. This can be illustrated by noting that Tan's Aunt Ada has the same hope (i.e., a type-identical hope).³⁹ But Tim's gratitude feedback is intuitively fitting in a way that Tan's is not. The relevant difference, on my view, is that Ida's hope is fulfilled—i.e. as I put it, her benevolent hope is not only manifested but *realized*, and it is not until t_2 that it is realized.

To help motivate the idea that the realization of a benevolent attitude can impact gratitude's fittingness, recall that it was not Ida's mere benevolent intentions that rendered gratitude fitting (to the degree that it was) at t_1 . Her intentional *actions* and intended *outcomes*—that is, the “realizations” of her benevolent intentions—form an integral part of the object of Tim's gratitude at t_1 . And indeed, quality of will theorists generally include such worldly realizations of benevolent attitudes among “manifestations of quality of will.”⁴⁰ As Strawson writes, reactive attitudes are “reactions to the quality of others' wills towards us, as *manifested in their behavior*.”⁴¹ We do not always succeed in manifesting our quality of will as intended, so some such manifestations of good will may be better characterized as *attempts*. Nevertheless, the quality of will that others have toward us is of interpersonal significance in large part owing

39 Below, I consider the idea that Ida's and Ada's hopes might be nonidentical owing to their outcomes.

40 This is true of not only Strawson (in “Freedom and Resentment”) and subsequent Strawsonians (e.g., McKenna, *Conversation and Responsibility*, 59; Macnamara, “Holding Others Responsible,” 89; Shoemaker, “Qualities of Will” and *Responsibility from the Margins*; and Rosen, “The Alethic Conception of Moral Responsibility,” 77) but other quality of will theorists as well (e.g., Arpaly, *Unprincipled Virtue*, 84; and Arpaly and Schroeder, *In Praise of Desire*, 170).

41 Strawson, “Freedom and Resentment,” 84.

to its material role in our various relationships. A quality of will theorist, then—according to whom gratitude is fittingly sensitive only to *manifested* quality of will—*already* includes benevolently motivated outcomes among the manifestations of good will that are gratitude's proper objects. For this reason, though introduced as a foil, the quality of will theorist *can*, provided she adopts the idea that hopes can be expressive of quality of will, accommodate my proposal that gratitude feedback can be fitting. For as articulated above, benevolent hopes can be understood as part of the benefactor's manifestation of good will.

Since in Musical Fulfillment, the relevant benevolent hope is present at t_1 yet operative in a different way at t_2 , it is useful to distinguish between (1) quality of will that is (merely) manifested and (2) quality of will that is *realized*, where realization implies the fulfillment of a motivational attitude (previously) manifested. Thus, we can say that in our lead example, although the *manifestation* of quality of will is fixed in the past (i.e., at some time prior to t_1), an element of the quality of will manifested at t_1 —namely, a benevolent hope—becomes realized owing to the fortunate state of affairs at t_2 . In saying that the hope-involving element of Ida's t_1 manifestation of benevolence is *realized* at t_2 , I am simply providing a way of describing, in terms of quality of will, the change that occurs when Ida's benevolent hope becomes satisfied such that it *rationally accommodates* the happy state of affairs of Tim's musical fulfillment.

One might wonder whether the present proposal can avoid the verdict that Tan's gratitude feedback is also fitting. After all, can we not suppose that Aunt Ada had hoped that, say, the flute would bring Tan joy? If so, given that the flute *did* bring him joy, albeit in an unintended way (in leading to his attainment of the watch that led to his wealthy and happily married life at t_2), am I not committed to saying that Tan's happy state of affairs at t_2 is rationally accommodated by the benevolent attitudes underlying the gift at t_1 ?

I am not committed to this. For intentions place rational constraints on one's hopes.⁴² Recall that what is true of Aunt Ida at t_1 is true too of Aunt Ada at t_1 . Accordingly, at t_1 , Aunt Ada intends to gift Tan the flute—but *crucially*, this intention has its conative basis in the intrinsic desire that Tan flourish musically. But the hope that one's nephew be happy *in any way whatsoever* cannot be expressive of the intrinsic desire that one's nephew flourish musically. This can be illustrated by attending to the diverging satisfaction conditions of these conative attitudes. Indeed, Tan's happy state of affairs at t_2 involves the satisfaction of the former but not the latter desire. But even if we modify Wealth and Happiness such that Ada *does* have an unconstrained hope of the above sort

42. On the rational constraints that intentions impose on our beliefs and other intentions, see Bratman, *Intention, Plans, and Practical Reason*. On rational relations between hopes and intentions, see Mason, "Hoping and Intending," 526–27.

(that the flute make Tan happy, in any way whatsoever), assuming we keep fixed the other features of the case, this hope cannot rationally accommodate Tan's state of affairs at t_2 . For a benefactor's benevolent hope to rationally accommodate some state of affairs, that hope must cohere with the benevolent aim underlying the benefactor's intention. Hope is, in this way, governed by a norm of structural rationality. Since the flute leads to Tan's happiness in a way that conflicts with the aim of his musical flourishing, this state of affairs cannot be rationally hoped for in the sense at issue. Thus, Tan's happy state of affairs at t_2 is not rationally accommodated by the manifestation of benevolence at t_1 .⁴³ The above point allows us to clarify that for a hope to rationally accommodate some state of affairs, the hope must be rational not only in being epistemically warranted (such that one is justified in believing that the hope's satisfaction is *possible*) but in being coherent with one's intentions.

We are in a position now to provide a definition of rational accommodation for hope.

Rational Accommodation: For a hope (H) to rationally accommodate some state of affairs (A), (1) H must be epistemically rational, (2) H must display structural rationality, and (3) A must constitute the fulfillment of H .

Next, for a hope to alter the fittingness of one's degree of gratitude, not only must it rationally accommodate some state of affairs; the hope must be benevolent. (Gratitude, after all, is fittingly responsive not to quality of will generally

43 We can modify Wealth and Happiness such that Tan's gratitude feedback is fitting. Suppose that the desire underlying Ada's manifestation of benevolence at t_1 was *not* that Tan flourish musically but that Tan *be happy*. This would be a substantive modification (as it would change the benefactor's intrinsic desire), and assuming that at t_1 , the cases of Tim and Tan are identical in all normatively relevant respects, in this modified case, Tim's fortunate state of affairs at t_2 would not be rationally accommodated by his benefactor's hope, except perhaps to the extent that his flourishing musically is a way of (or also involves his) being happy. Still, given my aim of establishing that gratitude feedback can be fitting owing to the satisfaction of the benefactor's benevolent hopes, I can grant that Tan's gratitude feedback *can* be fitting in a substantively modified version of Wealth and Happiness. If the aunt's benevolent desire is quite generic (and more easily satisfiable), however—as is the desire that one's nephew be happy *in any way whatsoever*—it may be that at t_1 , she is considerably less grateful-worthy for gifting Tan the flute than Ida is in Musical Fulfillment at t_1 (i.e., where Ida's desire is that her nephew flourish musically). For it may be that the satisfaction conditions of the benevolent attitude provide an upper limit to the degree of benevolence one can manifest in expressing it. Cf. Arpaly and Schroeder, *In Praise of Desire*, 189. If so, it may be that the degree to which Tan's gratitude (in the modified case) may fittingly grow is more limited than the degree to which Tim's gratitude may fittingly grow.

but to *good* quality of will—i.e., benevolence.)⁴⁴ Additionally, my proposal is only that a rationally accommodating benevolent hope can augment the degree of fitting gratitude *in cases where* this hope is expressive of the same intrinsic desire underlying the benevolent intentions from which the benefactor originally acted. In such cases, the benevolent intentions and hopes are of a piece; they are constituents of a single manifestation of good will. Ida's manifestation of good will includes both (1) her benevolent intentions (manifested and realized by t_1) and (2) her benevolent hopes (manifested at/before t_1 but realized only at/around t_2). Underlying both 1 and 2 is the intrinsic desire that Tim flourish and succeed musically.

The present proposal has the resources to explain why Tim's gratitude growth is intuitively fitting, while Tan's is not. Even if Tan somehow acquires equal or stronger overall reason to be more grateful to his aunt, the cases of Musical Fulfillment and Wealth and Happiness remain importantly different. Suppose, for example, that Tan has strong pragmatic reasons to be more grateful to his aunt at t_2 . Perhaps doing so will help launch Ada out of a debilitating depression. The positing of such reasons only brings into starker contrast the difference between intuitively fitting and unfitting cases of outcome-sensitive gratitude. Tim's gratitude feedback is intuitively fitting in the absence of any pragmatic considerations. He might foresee that his aunt will be gratified by his t_2 expression of gratitude, but this is not why his gratitude increases at t_2 . His gratitude remains importantly anchored in backward-looking considerations; it is gratitude to Ida for the benevolently given gift, but now the gift is construed as that which has led to Tim's musical success and flourishing. This change—particularly the *increase* in Tim's gratitude—is fitting given that the fortunate outcome of the gift is rationally accommodated by the benevolent attitudes (particularly, the benevolent hope) manifested at t_1 . Tan's happy state of affairs at t_2 is, by contrast, not rationally accommodated by the benevolent attitudes manifested at t_1 . The relation between the manifestation of benevolence at t_1 and Tan's happy state of affairs at t_2 is merely causal. The skeptic about fitting gratitude feedback, however, lacks such grounds for distinguishing between Tim and Tan. Though the skeptic can say that the aunts are fitting targets of gratitude at t_1 for their benevolently given gifts, the fruitfulness of a manifestation of benevolence is the wrong sort of thing to alter the fittingness of gratitude, and so Tim's gratitude feedback is, according to the skeptic, just as unfitting as is Tan's. This verdict, however, is neither intuitively plausible nor required for those attracted to the view that gratitude is fittingly responsive

44 As stated, Rational Accommodation is compatible with *malevolent* (or morally neutral) hopes accommodating some state of affairs. I briefly return to the possible import of this in section 5 below.

to manifestations of good quality of will. For benevolent hopes are plausibly understood as manifestations of good quality of will.

Before considering an alternative way that gratitude might be understood as fittingly outcome sensitive, let me address a concern about moral luck, particularly resultant moral luck (or “luck in consequences”).⁴⁵ One might worry that gratitude feedback entails resultant moral luck and that it should be resisted on those grounds. Ida and Ada manifest the same degree of benevolence (and exercise the same degree of volitional control) in gifting their respective nephews a flute. But if from t_2 onward, Ida is the fitting target of more gratitude than is Ada, given that this is explained by factors external to quality of will, it appears that Ida's being more gratefulworthy is a matter of luck. One way to press this point is to claim that it is *unfair* to Ada that she be the fitting target of less gratitude than Ida, given that each manifests the same degree of good will (and exercises the same degree of control) in benefiting their respective nephews.

In response, the moral luck debate traditionally concerns *moral responsibility*—that is, blameworthiness and praiseworthiness. Even if responding with gratitude can be a way of praising, it is far from uncontroversial—and in my view false—that being (more) gratefulworthy entails being (more) praiseworthy.⁴⁶ In any case, I make no such assumption here. One reason to doubt this assumption is that gratefulworthiness is intuitively patient-relative in a way that praiseworthiness is not. At t_2 , Ida is the fitting target of more gratitude from Tim, given that Tim is the beneficiary of Ida's benevolent action. But this does not entail that it would be fitting for third parties to respond to Ida with a similarly heightened degree of a corresponding positive attitude, like admiration or some other impersonal praising response.⁴⁷ For all I have said, Ada and Ida might be *equally* (and unchangingly) praiseworthy. Thus, gratitude feedback does not entail resultant moral luck.⁴⁸

45 Nagel, “Moral Luck,” 27.

46 However, see Scanlon, *Moral Dimensions*, 151–52, for the view that (1) blame's contrary is gratitude (rather than praise) and a qualified defense of the idea that (2) successful manifestations of good will render fitting more gratitude (or at least more by way of *grateful acknowledgement*—which I take to be a way of giving thanks—if not a greater readiness to help one's benefactor) than their unsuccessful counterparts. This is introduced as a point not about gratitude growing but of cross-world differences in synchronic gratitude. See section 3.1 above.

47 But on third-party gratitude that is proposed to be independent of one's identifying with the beneficiary and is meant to be distinct from both praise and admiration, see Eskens, “Moral Gratitude.”

48 There are, however, more capacious views of moral luck, according to which, moral luck exists if factors beyond one's control (or external to one's quality of will) can directly determine one's positive (or negative) *moral status*, where one's positive moral status may include

4. RETROSPECTIVE DETERMINATION

Before I conclude, let us consider another way in which gratefulness might be fittingly outcome sensitive. Drawing on work by Gerald Lang, one might maintain that until a benevolent outcome materializes, there is no determinate level of gratitude that is fitting.⁴⁹ For the moral goodness of the benefactor's benevolent attitudes may remain unfixed until its outcomes materialize. While I characterize Ida and Ada as acting on identical attitudes in benefiting their respective nephews, it may be that the *goodness* of the attitudes "embodied in these agents' acts is fixed retrospectively," and as such, the goodness of their respective motivations is unequal.⁵⁰ Gratefulness, then, might be outcome sensitive owing to the truth of the "determination claim," according to which the goodness of an actual outcome caused by moral agents who act on morally good mental states can fix the degree of goodness of the mental states that were embodied in these agents' acts.⁵¹

There are two ways of construing the determination claim in the present context. Construal 1 is consistent with my account of gratitude growth. Construal 2 is incompatible with my account, but it is also implausible. On Construal 1, the outcomes of Ida's good mental states at t_1 play a role in fixing the goodness of her mental states and also the degree to which she is grateful at t_1 . While I have reserved talk of outcomes for the unforeseen and unintended results of manifestations of benevolence, if we understand outcomes to include results that the benefactor intends, outcomes are on the scene at t_1 . We can use *proximate outcomes* to refer to intended outcomes. Among the proximate outcomes of Ida's benevolence, suppose, is Tim's being pleased with the flute—that is, that receipt of the flute bring him some pleasure (though in a way that is constrained with his engaging with the flute *qua* musical instrument). Tim, as it happens, is very pleased to receive the flute. This, then, is an outcome Ida intends. But we can

properties beyond one's being (more) praiseworthy, e.g., being (more) grateful, being forgiven. See Telech, "Forgiveness and Moral Luck," 239. Cf. Story, "Interpersonal Moral Luck and Normative Entanglement"; and Hartman, "Kant Does Not Deny Resultant Moral Luck," 144. Further discussion of the idea that gratitude feedback may imply the existence of positive resultant moral luck (capaciously understood) must wait for another time.

49 To be clear, Lang limits his discussion to blameworthiness (*Strokes of Luck*). Nevertheless, it is worth considering how his "determination claim" might work in the context of gratitude.

50 Lang, *Strokes of Luck*, 63.

51 My characterization of the determination claim is adapted from Lang, *Strokes of Luck*. He endorses this claim only in the context of blameworthiness and morally flawed mental states. The original sentence reads: "The badness of an actual outcome caused by moral agents who act on morally flawed internal states can help to fix the degree of badness of the mental states which were embodied in these agents' acts" (62).

imagine a nearby version of the case in which Ida has the same benevolent intention (and same motivating attitudes generally), yet the outcome is less successful.

Suppose our less fortunate benefactor—call her Aunt Uma—receives from the shop a flute made of a metal to which her nephew, Tum, is mildly allergic. Tum, we can suppose, is pleased to receive the flute—and so Aunt Uma's intended outcome *does* materialize—but Tum is *less pleased* to receive his flute than Tim is to receive his. (Suppose Tum knows that after about thirty minutes of handling the instrument, he will develop a mild and temporary rash.) Though I take no official stand on this issue, it may be that the goodness of Ida's and Uma's respective intentions is fixed in part by the outcomes to which they give rise. That is, it may be that Uma's benevolent intention is *less good* than is Ida's owing to its being embodied in a less desirable outcome. Assuming that one's gratefulness is in part a function of the goodness of one's motivating attitudes, Uma may be the fitting target of *less* gratitude than is Ida. This, however, is a claim about gratefulness at t_1 . As such, it is wholly compatible with the claim that at t_2 , Ida is the fitting target of a greater degree of gratitude than she was at t_1 , and this is so owing to the outcome at t_2 being rationally accommodated by her t_1 hope. But as Musical Fulfillment and Wealth and Happiness are identical at t_1 , Construal 1 of the determination claim fails to differentiate between the two cases.

On Construal 2 of the determination claim, Ida's level of gratefulness is indeterminate until t_2 . I take lack of determinacy here to imply that until t_2 , there is no fact of the matter concerning the level of Ida's gratefulness. After all, if 'indeterminate' just means mutable, then that is consistent with my view. On Construal 2, then, Ida's gratefulness does not *increase* between t_1 and t_2 . Rather, it is only from t_2 onward that there is a fact of the matter concerning Ida's gratefulness. This construal of the determination claim is at the very least counterintuitive. By Tim's and Ida's lights, Tim's grateful response at t_1 is fitting. But the claim that until t_2 there is no fact of the matter concerning Ida's gratefulness implies that Tim's gratitude at t_1 is not fitting, as there are no fit-making facts at that time. Additionally, in worlds in which the aunt's hope is not fulfilled (e.g., the world of Wealth and Happiness), it does not seem plausible that we need to wait until t_2 for there to be a fact of the matter concerning the aunt's gratefulness. A more natural understanding of the case is that Aunt Ida's gratefulness at t_2 is greater than her degree of gratefulness at t_1 —i.e., it increases. But an increase in gratefulness requires that there was a fact of the matter concerning Ida's gratefulness at t_1 .

While Construal 2 of the determination claim is coherent, its implication that there is no fact of the matter concerning Ida's gratitude until t_2 (roughly

twenty years after the original manifestation of benevolence at t_1) renders its way of accounting for the outcome sensitivity of gratefulworthiness revisionary in a way that the rational accommodation view is not. Nevertheless, if on Construal 2 of the determination claim, the goodness of Ida's t_1 hope is taken to be retroactively fixed by its fulfillment at t_2 , then an important feature of my view—that the fulfillment of benevolent hopes can contribute to one's overall degree of gratefulworthiness—is granted.

5. CONCLUSION

Gratitude, I have argued, is fittingly sensitive not only to the benevolence others manifest in their actions toward us but also to a subset of the beneficial consequences that such benevolent actions may bring about. Focusing on diachronic gratitude, I have presented a case of gratitude feedback: a phenomenon wherein the fortunate consequences of a manifestation of benevolence render intuitively fitting a greater degree of gratitude than did the initial manifestation of benevolence. For gratitude feedback to be fitting, I have argued, the initial manifestation of benevolence must play not only a causal role in the production of the fortunate outcome; that outcome must be rationally accommodated by the manifestation of good will, particularly by the satisfaction of a benevolent hope that shares a conative basis with the intentions of the manifestation of good will. For this kind of hope to rationally accommodate the state of affairs, in addition to its being fulfilled by that state of affairs, the hope must be epistemically rational (such that its component belief in the possibility of the hoped-for state of affairs is *justified*), and it must display structural rationality, such that it coheres with the intentions of the manifestation of good will.

In saying something about gratitude, I have said something about emotional change. Recall the general question concerning the rationality of changes in backward-looking emotions, changes that occur, and are intuitively fitting, despite the unchanging nature of that which seemed to render fitting the emotion in the first place. The literature on the fittingness of changes in backward-looking emotions tends to focus on the diminishment of emotion. In providing a vindicatory account of gratitude growth, we recharacterize the problem as encompassing questions both of emotional diminishment and of emotional growth.

Looking forward, there are questions to consider concerning the interplay between the fittingness of emotional growth and diminishment. It may be that a token backward-looking emotion can fittingly grow and then fittingly diminish (or vice versa). The idea of feeling increasingly sad about some loss that one eventually ceases to feel sad about, for instance, is far from unintelligible.

Additionally, while gratitude growth's fittingness does not straightforwardly entail the fittingness of a negative counterpart ("resentment growth"), if a case can be made for resentment growth—perhaps using the resources here developed, e.g., by appealing to the significance of the satisfaction of a *malevolent* hope underlying one's wrongdoing—then assuming that augmented responses of resentment may eventually diminish and subside (e.g., via a process of forgiveness), then there too we will have occasion to reflect on the interplay between the fittingness of growth and diminishment in a single emotion.⁵²

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