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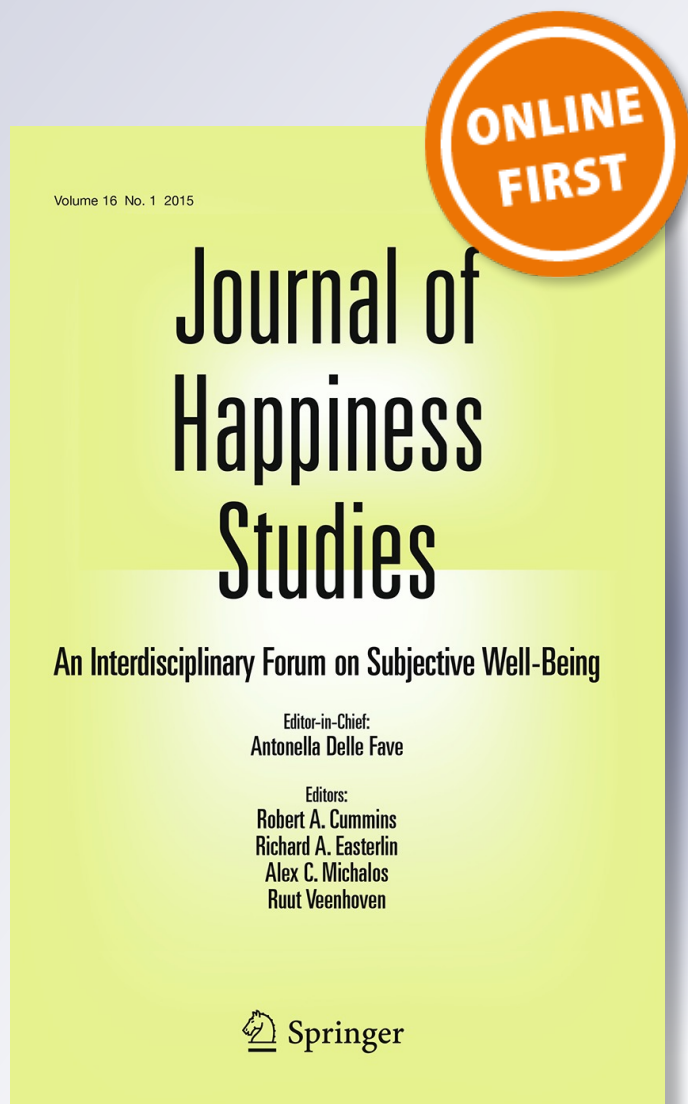
# *Happiness, Dispositions and the Self*

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# Happiness, Dispositions and the Self

Søren Harnow Klausen<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract** I argue that happiness is an exclusively categorical mental state. Daniel Haybron's inclusion of dispositions into his emotional state theory rests of a confusion of constituents of happiness in the narrow psychological sense with objects of prudential concern, to which obviously belong "mood propensities" and other dispositional states. I further argue that while it is probably correct to require of a constituent of happiness that it must in some sense be "deep" and belong to, or directly impact on, a persons' self, the importance of depth may be overrated by the emotional state theory, which also ignores the possibility that mental states other than moods and emotions can be deep in the relevant sense.

**Keywords** Definition of happiness · Emotional state theory · Happiness and the self · Happiness and consciousness · Hedonism · Dispositions versus occurrent mental states · Phenomenology of happiness

## 1 Introduction

Happiness is widely held to be a psychological state.<sup>1</sup> But psychological states come in many different varieties, and psychologists and philosophers of mind disagree on their classification and description, so this leaves many substantial questions about the nature of

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<sup>1</sup> There are, however, quite a few conceptions of happiness that are non-psychological or at least not purely psychological. Some philosophers, notably in the Aristotelian tradition, have insisted on viewing happiness as an evaluative, most often moral, notion. Still more have, as a matter of fact, treated it as something that comprises both psychological and normative aspects. I shall only be concerned with happiness in a purely psychological sense (see also Sect. 3).

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happiness open. I will focus on two such questions, viz. the question of whether happiness is a *dispositional* or a *categorical* state and the question of the relationship between happiness and the *self*. The questions are related in that both concern the relationship between happiness and consciousness: Should unconscious aspects of a person's mentality be included among the factors that can be directly constitutive of her happiness? Or should they be seen as having at most a causal impact on happiness, to the extent that they can cause behavioral or psychological reactions that are eventually reflected in the person's conscious experience?

I shall argue that happiness is an exclusively categorical psychological state. Nothing dispositional can be an element in happiness as such. This also means that if happiness is to be considered a state of the human self, only the conscious parts of the self can matter directly. We may have a more hidden self, as not least psychoanalytic thinkers have been prone to argue. But as long as it remains hidden, it is irrelevant to the happiness of the person whose self it is. And as far as our happiness is concerned, we may be better off by not being aware of all aspects of ourselves.

By arguing for this view, I am going to challenge an influential and in many respects very promising contemporary theory of happiness, the emotional state theory of Haybron (2001, 2005, 2008). Haybron insists, quite plausibly, that genuine happiness must have a sufficient degree of stability and depth, and this leads him to include unconscious aspects of the human psyche, notably mood propensities, among the factors he holds to be constitutive of happiness. I think that he overstates his otherwise well-motivated case and exaggerates the stability and depth requirements. Haybron tends to overlook the ways in which happiness can be relatively superficial, transient, fragile or dependent on pure luck and fortunate circumstances. He also tends to confuse factors that are strongly and widely *instrumental* to happiness, and for that reason figure prominently in our reasoning about happiness, with elements of happiness itself.

Haybron has been criticized earlier—by Hill (2009) and more briefly by Feldman (2010, p. 29)—for including mood propensities into his theory and thus conceiving of happiness in dispositional terms. My criticism has an obvious affinity to that of both Hill and Feldman, especially to their putative counterexamples. It goes beyond it by considering more general ontological questions about dispositionality and the self, as well as our practices of psychological explanation.

I will not commit myself to any specific theory of happiness, though I presume that if successful, my arguments will tend to dispel some of the criticism leveled against hedonism by Haybron and others and so contribute to rehabilitating it, perhaps pointing towards a more mixed theory.

## 2 Dispositions Versus Categorical States

Psychological states are commonly divided into two broad classes: those that are categorical or “occurrent”, and those that are dispositional. Sensations and acts of conscious thinking are paradigm examples of the former, whereas emotions like jealousy are paradigm examples of the latter. A person can only be said to be in pain if she is actually undergoing some concrete mental process, if a certain mental event is happening at the time. (Moreover, the pain has to be *felt* or *experienced* by her. It is usually said to be *phenomenally conscious*. We should, however—at least initially—leave open the possibility that there can be other kinds of states which are conscious, but not phenomenally

so,<sup>2</sup> or mental states which are categorical, but not conscious). By contrast, a jealous person can be said to be so even at a time when nothing in her actual behavior or experience manifests her jealousy, if only she is sufficiently *disposed* to react in a manner characteristic of jealousy—e.g. if seeing her husband in female company would elicit in her a certain feeling or prompt her to react in a certain way towards him or his companion. As this example shows, the relevant potential manifestations can comprise both overt behavior and specifically mental, including experiential, reactions. Often, the distinctive dispositional “profile” or “stereotype” of a dispositional mental state is taken to consist in a mixture of the two (Schwitzgebel’s (2002) analysis of belief is a good example). It is common to require at least some connection to a potentially experiential state, thus making dispositional states systematically dependent on categorical states (Searle 1992, p. 151ff.; Burge 1997). Some, however, have defended purely behavioral-dispositional accounts of moods or emotions (e.g. Stocker (1996), Ryle (1949) is usually read in this way, but see Schwitzgebel (2002) for some doubts about the correctness of such an interpretation).

It is also common to treat some kinds of mental states as coming in both dispositional and occurrent varieties. Moods, for example, can arguably be occurrent as well as dispositional states (Prinz 2004, p. 181). This may be taken as an indication that our concepts of those states are loose constructions that do not carve out any real psychological kinds. But it seems to be in keeping with ordinary usage and folk psychology that one can, e.g. be in a state of hate both by being disposed to react in a certain way towards a person and by having an actual *feeling* of hatred. I shall commit myself as little as possible to any specific account of the mental states in question (but see Klausen 2008; 2013) and simply assume the standard view that moods and emotions have both dispositional and occurrent aspects, and possibly also come in both dispositional and occurrent forms.

My claim that *happiness* is a categorical state requires some qualification. This is because I am, like Haybron, concerned with happiness in its “long-term” psychological sense. This is a highly complex notion of a broad and lasting state of an individual, which can be realized by infinitely many combinations of lower-order mental states. I take it to be categorical inasmuch as happiness is *made up* exclusively of categorical states in the above sense, viz. states that are phenomenally conscious. It does not, however, denote some particular phenomenal state or quality. Nor does my view imply that happiness is, so to speak, permanently “turned on”. A happy person may be temporarily depressed, have only experiences that are indifferent to her happiness, or even have no conscious experiences at all, for example during a period of dreamless sleep. If she has enough happiness-constitutive experiences over a broader span of time, she can still be said to be happy in the long-term sense.

### 3 The Emotional State Theory

Haybron presents his emotional state theory as an alternative to hedonism and life satisfaction accounts of happiness. He argues that happiness consists not in a positive overall balance of pleasure over pain, as hedonists would have it, nor in life satisfaction, but in a

<sup>2</sup> For a defence of the existence of nonphenomenal conscious states (see Nelkin 1989; Lormand 1996; Peacocke 2003; Georgalis 2005). Especially conscious propositional attitudes (e.g. acts of thinking) have been having no distinctive phenomenal character in themselves, but merely being—very often—accompanied by other states that have such a character (e.g. conscious imagining, thinking “in words” etc.). However, a majority of philosophers of mind seem to think that conscious states are necessarily phenomenal (Strawson 1994; Siewert 1998; Levine 2001; Dainton 2008; Farkas 2008; Kriegel 2009). For a defence of the view that propositional attitudes have a distinctive phenomenal character (see Klausen 2008).

positive emotional condition (Haybron 2008, Ch. 4–7). Pleasures are often too superficial and fleeting to be directly relevant to something as fundamental as a person's happiness, he contends. Judgments of life satisfaction are likewise too insubstantial; they are too sensitive to contextual factors and too strongly influenced by moral and other norms to plausibly capture the overall quality of one's life. They do not track factors like strong positive or negative effect, which are, supposedly, very closely connected to one's happiness. According to Haybron, happiness must be conceived as a mental state with sufficient causal depth and stability. It is a state, which, though not immutable, is robust and typically enduring, since it is keyed to the general conditions of a person's life rather than the details (Haybron 2008, p. 125). And happiness is centrally connected to many other states of the person in question, as it serves as a basis for explanations and predictions of her behavior and experiences (2008, p. 73f.). This points to emotions and moods, which are arguably deeper and more pervasive mental states, as the most likely candidates for the psychological components of the complex state of happiness.

There is nothing of this I would like to dispute, at least not very strongly. Haybron has made an important contribution to the philosophy of well-being and to happiness research by highlighting the importance of moods and emotions, which has been hitherto almost completely overlooked.<sup>3</sup> There is no denial that a person's emotional state is a very important factor in her happiness. One might consider whether we should still grant a complementary constitutive role to pleasures, both in the form of experiential states that are not themselves moods or emotions—like sensations—and in the form of pleasurable aspects of moods and emotions, but that is a different question. I further agree with Haybron that a certain degree of depth and stability are sensible requirements on happiness, though I think he tends to exaggerate them (see Sect. 7).

The main point of contention is Haybron's claim that happiness is to a large extent constituted by *dispositional* mental states—or, to be more precise, that the dispositional *aspects* of happiness-constituting states are themselves constitutive of (i.e. “ingredients in”) happiness (Haybron 2008, pp. 110f., pp. 134ff.). Haybron includes dispositional states in his account of happiness not just by taking it to be constituted by emotions and moods, which are standardly conceived as at least partially dispositional states, but by adding as a further constitutive element which he calls *mood propensities*: conditions that *dispose* one to experience moods (Haybron 2005, p. 305f., 2008, p. 136f.). Mood propensities of the relevant sort are further characterized by Haybron as being *emotionally based* (and not, say, grounded in personality traits or sensations) and *generalized*, that is, dispositions to experience positive or negative moods in a wide range of circumstances, and not just in response to specific kinds of objects (Haybron 2008, p. 137).<sup>4</sup>

Haybron admits that happiness cannot be purely dispositional (Haybron 2008, Ch. 4, footnote 17), and suggests that occurrent states have priority over dispositional ones; that they should be given more weight when determining a person's overall level of happiness (Haybron 2008, p. 145). But he does think it possible for a person to be happy even though she rarely has any corresponding experiences, simply in virtue of being in favorable

<sup>3</sup> Although, as Haybron himself notes (Haybron 2008, p. 285, n. 6), affect-based empirical research on happiness, notably the work of Kahneman, has also recognized the relevance of moods and emotions.

<sup>4</sup> If moods and emotions are themselves conceived as (partly) dispositional, it seems that a mood propensity must be second-order disposition, viz. a disposition to (inter alia) acquire other, more specific dispositions. This might seem somewhat strange, but need not be considered unreasonable; arguably, quite a few significant psychological or moral traits take the form of second-order dispositions. Moreover, Haybron seems to restrict the relevant manifestations of mood propensities to the phenomenal (and thus categorical) aspects of moods, when he speaks of a disposition to *experience* moods.

emotional condition, that is, by being disposed to give positive emotional responses. He describes happiness as a “substantially dispositional phenomenon” (Haybron 2001, p. 510) and bases much of his criticism of hedonism on this point. So dispositionality is clearly a central feature of the emotional state theory.<sup>5</sup>

#### 4 Focusing on Happiness

It is a further merit of Haybron’s approach that he clearly distinguishes happiness, conceived as a purely psychological notion, from well-being, which, though some want to reduce it to happiness, carries further normative connotations and presumably also involves non-mental states. According to Haybron (2008, p. 30), happiness is something one should be able to have even when hooked up to Robert Nozick’s infamous experience machine. This restriction to the purely psychological is important. It does not, of course, decide the categorical-dispositional issue, since many psychological states are widely held to be wholly or partially dispositional. But it does restrict the range of intuitions and considerations that can be legitimately appealed to in order to settle the issue. Haybron (2008, p. 139) insists that happiness is not just a state of one’s consciousness, but a state of one’s *being*. While there is no inconsistency in this, the terminology does invite an objectivist misunderstanding, viz. that happiness is not just a matter of a person’s mental state, but also requires that the person’s life conform to some external norm. For example, an Aristotelian, who equates happiness with well-being or the still more comprehensive notion of “living the good life”, will naturally include dispositional aspects in her notion of happiness, since *virtues* are usually conceived as dispositions (for a notable exception, see Hurka 2006). However, Haybron (2008, pp. 32f., pp. 155ff.) rightly dismisses such a view as being not about happiness in the purely psychological sense. His claim that happiness is a state of one’s being can only mean that it is a state of one’s mind.

Note, for example, that while it may seem plausible that the range of available options for action matter for my well-being—I would be better off by having a larger “option space”, even if I happen to have just the right narrow set of options and so stroll contentedly through life without caring much about possible alternatives—this cannot matter for my happiness, since my option space is not part of my psychology. The same goes for authenticity, a factor that Haybron rightly confines to his theory of well-being (Haybron 2008, p. 187). Happiness can be more or less authentic; it is happiness nonetheless. Moreover, when *caring* for a person, we might be concerned with other factors than a person’s happiness. The primary object of care is rightly held to be well-being in the full, potentially psychology-transcendent, sense (Darwall 2002). It is important to keep in mind the irrelevance of all such normative factors, which might otherwise influence one’s judgment, when studying the ontology of happiness considered as a purely psychological state.

#### 5 The Case for the Dispositional View

There is a straightforward argument for the dispositional view of happiness, which is not explicitly stated by Haybron, but deserves consideration nevertheless. It seems undisputable that our psychological notions of emotions and moods are dispositional (though

<sup>5</sup> In one place, Haybron even says that happiness “primarily concerns a person’s psychic dispositions” (2008, p. 69). This does not sit quite well with his suggestion that occurrent states should have priority over dispositional one’s when assessing a person’s happiness.



one can of course debate the extent to which they are so, their possible connections to occurrent mental states etc.). Hence it may be argued that if happiness is constituted—“made up”—by emotions and moods, then it must itself be conceived in dispositional terms. If, for example, boredom and irritability matter for (un)happiness, which clearly they do (and, according to the emotional state theory, not just as its possible causes, but as its component parts), then happiness becomes just as much a dispositional state as its constituents.

While this may at first seem like a strong argument, it is far from compelling. It can be maintained, quite consistently, that only the *occurrent* aspects of dispositional mental states—that is, only their actual *manifestations*—should be seen as genuinely constitutive of happiness. In fact there is nothing unusual in counting only some aspects of a happiness-constitutive mental state among the genuinely happiness-constitutive factors. According to many forms of hedonism, only certain phenomenal qualities of experiential states are happiness-constitutive (see Crisp 2006, pp. 103ff.). A visual experience may be pleasurable and thus happiness-constitutive, but it might have aspects, e.g. presenting the subject with certain objective features of the environment or certain colors, that are neutral with respect to pleasure and displeasure. Inasmuch as mental states are complexes comprising of distinct parts, it is perfectly possible, and probably quite common, that they enter into other complex mental states not in their entirety, but only partially. This is particularly obvious in the case of putatively dispositional states like emotions and moods: If one can have an emotional disposition without actually having the corresponding conscious experience, and a one can have a conscious experience (of, say, fear) without be disposed to have it, then the two components are sufficiently distinct to play different roles in one’s mental life. If one is not persuaded by this line of reasoning, a easy way out is to say that it is not emotions and moods per se, but rather a person’s *experienced* emotions and moods—now conceived as a distinctive kind of mental state—that are genuinely happiness-constitutive factors.

Haybron’s own argument for including dispositional states in the notion of happiness focuses on its role in our inferential practices. He notes that we base our intuitive judgments about people’s happiness on inferences from their observed behavior to their emotional condition (Haybron 2001, p. 519, 2008, pp. 134f.). We use their responses to things and situations as indications of their basic emotional dispositions, and use these, in turn, as evidence for their happiness or unhappiness. Moreover, happiness is itself used as a basis for psychological explanations and predictions (Haybron 2008, p. 73f.), as when we expect that a happy person will be a more agreeable companion than an unhappy one.

Formulated thus broadly, Haybron’s description of our typical inferential practices is probably correct. But it does not vindicate the ontological conclusion that happiness is dispositional. Haybron must show not only that happiness and mood propensities are closely connected and that evidence for the one can serve as evidence for the other, but that mood propensities are themselves elements in happiness. His argument seems to go something like this:

1. on the basis of observing how a person responds to her environment, we infer not only (and not primarily) what the person’s mood is, but also (and primarily) what the person’s *mood propensity* is
2. we form predictions and expectations regarding a person’s future state and behavior based on an assessment of her happiness (happiness “underwrites” our expectations)
3. happiness and mood propensities play quite similar roles in our inferential practices

4. happiness and mood propensities are likely to be identical (or more precisely, mood propensities are likely to be sufficient<sup>6</sup> for happiness, which may be realized differently, by occurrent mental states)

The controversial steps in the argument are obviously (3) and (4), but even the earlier, more descriptive premises can be challenged. Haybron's justification for (1) is that moods themselves vary too much and are too loosely connected to a person's behavior at a given moment. I may appear cheerful though I am currently sad, perhaps because I have just witnessed a comical situation. Hence the explanatory basis must be something deeper than moods, though not, Haybron contends, something as deep as the person's temperament (Haybron 2008, p. 134). Happiness is an enduring and relatively robust, but not very long-term state, and it is not fixed by personality traits.

It may be part of our everyday notion of happiness that it is located thus between the highly changeable and the more or less immutable aspects of our mentality. But whether this is actually true of happiness ought to be viewed as an open empirical question. The folk notion could reflect a certain wishful thinking. We would like happiness to be something we can both control and maintain. And maybe it is. But a substantial body of empirical happiness research indicates that happiness is very closely tied to personality factors (e.g. Costa and McCrae 1980; Diener and Lucas 1999). The emotional state theory does not rule out the existence of such a connection, since it allows that mood propensities can be causally conditioned by a variety of factors. However, the case for the central role of mood propensities will be weakened if it turns out that other dispositional states track happiness almost just as reliably.

The swift ruling out of explanations in terms of the person's temperament (or character) is in fact curious and seems to beg the question. Haybron is right in pointing out that a person's temperament cannot be a constitutive factor in her happiness. There is an obvious conceptual difference. But by taking for granted that the judgment in question is about the person's happiness (and therefore not about her temperament), he assumes what is to be proven, viz. that happiness is what we posit as the primary explanatory factor. Schematically, the reasoning seems to go something like this:

- P1 we explain a person's emotion-related (etc.) behavior in terms of her happiness  
 P2 happiness is conceptually different from temperament  
 C we do not explain a person's emotion-related (etc.) behavior in terms of the person's temperament

There are at least two problems with this argument. First, while Haybron's examples do show that we *sometimes* explain a person's emotion-related behavior in terms of her happiness, they leave open the possibility that at other times we explain it in terms of e.g. her temperament. Moreover, it is perfectly possible to explain one and the same instance of emotion-related behavior *both* in terms of the person's happiness and her temperament, if there is a sufficiently close correlation between the two. So the conclusion does not really follow, as we might explain one and the same event in terms of factors that are conceptually different. And I assume that we do in fact often infer directly from a person's

<sup>6</sup> This seems to contradict Haybron's claim that happiness cannot be purely dispositional. But I understand him as allowing for the possibility that happiness may be temporarily ("locally") made up by purely dispositional states. His admission that happiness must involve some occurrent states appears to be nothing more than a kind of ("global") system requirement: a happy person must *sometimes* have *some* characteristic experiences. This is consistent with the possibility that her happiness is purely dispositional some, or even most, of the time.

emotion-related behavior to her temperament. If I have seen Martha smiling and joking six out of the seven times I have met her, in different and sometimes quite stressful conditions, I will probably infer that she has an easy temperament.<sup>7</sup> If this is a sufficiently common practice, then it seems that we do at least sometimes ground happiness ascriptions in states that are not themselves ingredients in happiness, but merely happiness-conducive or happiness-sustaining factors.

Premise (2) can also be challenged from the other direction: Though it may be a less than optimal (and, in any case, a strongly fallible) inferential practice, we presumably also quite often infer directly from a person's emotion-related behavior to the presence of a certain mood, taking the mood to be the most likely cause of the behavior.<sup>8</sup> If William is smiling and humming, I take him to be in a good mood. If he smiles and hums, even though I have evidence that he is actually not in a good mood, I may indeed take it to be due to something rather like a mood propensity in Haybron's sense. But I might as well go one step deeper and take it to reflect his temperament. And of course, there is also the possibility that he is merely pretending or acting according to certain cultural conventions. There is a whole array of possible (but defeasible) explanations available, in terms of more or less long-term and more or less superficial factors. Many of these are complementary, rather than mutually exclusive: William's smiling may be explained by his good mood (or simply by his being happy), but this might be due to his mood propensity, which could explain both; his mood propensity could, in turn, be explained by his temperament, and so on. It will probably require more close empirical examination of people's explanatory habits in different circumstances before we can confidently single out mood propensities as the central and most closely happiness-related factor.

These are mostly quibbles, however. Haybron may be right that there is a distinctive intermediate category between moods and temperament—mood propensities—and that it figures prominently in our inferential practice. The crucial question is whether there is sufficient reason for *identifying* mood propensities with happiness (or, more precisely, taking them to be elements in happiness, rather than just happiness-conducive factors). I don't think there is. If mood propensities and happiness are sufficiently closely connected, then this can account for their apparent co-extensivity, without taking it to imply their identity (or constitutive connectedness). If happiness is a long-term state that centrally involves moods and emotions (i.e. the occurrence and persistence of positive emotions and moods), then it is most likely to be found in individuals that are sufficiently disposed to being or going into such states. Quite generally, the surest indication for the presence of a state, apart from having direct evidence for it or knowing that a straightforward causal condition of it obtains, is to know the presence of a strong propensity to produce that state under the given circumstances.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> I would be more cautious with judging Martha to be happy, not merely because of the alleged difference between the concepts of temperament and happiness, but also because the link between behavioral dispositions and the affective states required for happiness can be rather weak.

<sup>8</sup> Haybron briefly notes this possibility, but seems to think that is at best an unusual practice (Haybron 2008, p. 34).

<sup>9</sup> The notion of a propensity has proved extremely difficult to define precisely (see Belnap 2007 for an overview). For present purposes it should suffice to notice that while not identical to probabilities of outcomes, propensities are closely similar to such probabilities, and are regularly used to explain probabilities and ground predictions about the frequency of events. Moreover, it is generally assumed that a propensity to yield an outcome E obtains if and only if it is the case that outcome E would be produced in a sufficiently large and varied number of cases (paraphrasing Alston 2005, p. 110).

We might also *care* just as much, or even more, for such a propensity as for the resulting state itself, and so give it an equally or even more prominent role in our practical deliberation. A genetic disposition is not itself a disease, yet one can be more strongly concerned with it than with an actual occurrence of a disease. A 80 % probability of developing cancer (over a life course, i.e. over the course of many discrete time points) might seem more threatening than a single instance of cancer which does not reflect a similarly strong disposition.<sup>10</sup> But it should be born in mind that the object of care is not happiness in the psychological sense, but rather well-being.

We may perhaps consider a person particularly “happy” (meaning, in effect, something more like “lucky” or “fortunate”), if, besides from having experiences of the right sort, she happens to have favorable emotional dispositions. But that is because we consider this to be *good* for her in a broader sense. It is roughly similar to e.g. being in good health. So it cannot be an attribution of happiness in the narrow psychological sense.

Mood propensities are obviously an extremely important *means* to happiness. They are the closest one can come to a universal tool for producing and maintaining this much-desired state. This accounts for Haybron’s observations, without compelling us to build mood propensities into the notion of happiness itself.

## 6 Happiness and Good Fortune

Haybron considers it a strength of his emotional state theory that emotional states are more stable and less sensitive to transient contextual factors than life satisfaction attitudes or pleasurable experiences. It is probably correct that our ordinary notion of long-term happiness does require it to have a certain degree of stability or robustness, and that this counts against the rival views, especially hedonism. But if emotional states are conceived of in a strongly dispositional manner, as including mood propensities, they become *too* stable, too insensitive to changes in the contextual factors.

An adequate theory of happiness should accommodate the fact that happiness can be a matter of *luck*. One might be so lucky as to avoid getting one’s negative mood propensities triggered. And if one comes to know about one’s negative mood propensities, it is possible to take precautions, changing one’s pattern of behavior so as to keep out of harm’s way. Similarly, if others who care for one come to know about one’s negative mood propensities, they may act, or help rearrange the environment, in such a way that it does not afford the negative emotional reactions to which one is disposed. For example, one might manage to keep out of a certain company, which is likely to trigger one’s jealous tendencies. And those who know that I am likely to be irritated by pushy or noisy behavior may tactfully refrain from behaving so in my presence.

While we might consider it a sorry state of affairs if such precautions are needed—it would have been better, in a certain sense, if one had a different set of mood propensities, enabling one to stay happy in less optimal conditions—it is hard to see why a person who manages to stay clear of the negative mood-triggering circumstances, or who has the good luck not to encounter them, should be less happy than her more robust counterparts. We could also judge the situation more favorably. A person who has a negative mood propensity, but nevertheless manages to attain happiness, might seem to exhibit more prudence or wisdom. Some might even argue that hard-won happiness is, in a certain sense, better than happiness that somehow just falls into one’s lap. Haybron actually adopts this

<sup>10</sup> Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for helping me to clarify this point.

line of thought, both when suggesting that brain surgery cannot produce authentic happiness (Haybron 2008, p. 185) and, more generally, when urging us to focus on the allegedly more malleable mood propensities instead of personality traits. But it would be more consistent of him to treat a change of triggering circumstances as being no less significant than a change of one's mood propensities (for the possible objection that there is no real difference between the two strategies, see below). In any case, and most importantly, the question whether it is better or worse to be shielded, or shield oneself, from unhappiness is irrelevant to the question of the nature of psychological happiness itself].

The following example (a variation on examples due to both Haybron himself (2005, p. 305) and Hill (2009) and Feldman (2010, p. 29f.) may help to illustrate my point.

## 6.1 Happy Helicopter Kid

Jane is an anxious child, prone to rumination and excessive worrying about everyday things. She thus tends to experience negative moods in a wide range of circumstances.<sup>11</sup> However, fortunately for her, Jane's parents, family and friends are extremely caring and attentive, as well as socially and psychologically skillful. They are thus able to foresee and prevent most of what would have triggered her anxiety, and so Jane actually rarely comes to experience negative moods (In fact, her parents are not "helicopter parents" in the usual pejorative sense, hovering over their child in a pushy, hysterical fashion. They are not just intending, but actually doing good to her; and they do it with sufficient discretion and respect, so as to not appear overly patronizing or intrusive). Jane's friend Jill has a much more favorable mood propensity, but with less caring friends and relatives, she ends up having the same balance between positive and negative moods and emotions as Jill.

I would submit that since Jane and Jill have the same balance between positive and negative moods and emotions, they must therefore be considered equally happy.

It might be objected that the example is about different temperaments rather than mood propensities. But I've already noted the close structural similarity between the two (Haybron himself concedes that changes in mood propensity are tantamount to temporary changes in temperament (Haybron 2008, p. 183)). And we might imagine Jane not having an anxious temperament in general, but going through a certain difficult phase in which she, uncharacteristically, has acquired a negative mood propensity. Being immediately sensitive to her new condition, Jane's parents, family and friends react by seeing to it that as long as her disposition seems to last, she is shielded off from the factors that might trigger it.

Haybron's intuition seems to be that this is merely a kind of symptom treatment, which, though it obviously helps to raise Jane's level of happiness, does not suffice to completely eradicate her more fundamental unhappiness. She is unhappy, or at least far from completely happy; but she is kept from *experiencing* this state of hers (Haybron 2005, 305; cf. also 2008, 135f.). Now it is probably true that some might be inclined to say something like "deep down, she was still unhappy" of Jill. But very much depends on the exact description—and understanding—of the cases. In Haybron's Tom and Jerry (sic) case, Tom, who is otherwise described as having a slightly better mood balance than Jerry, is said to weep uncontrollably on two occasions. We do indeed take this to be a sign of some deep distress. But this is because we expect it to be associated with some *actual*, persisting bad mood. This is the natural thing to expect; people seldom react that dramatically without

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<sup>11</sup> The case thus complies with Haybron's—somewhat ad hoc—constraint that mood propensities not be tied to specific objects.

being (i.e. *feeling*) really sad.<sup>12</sup> The very hypothetical (though admittedly *possible*) case where we have a conjunction of clear behavioral signs of deep distress, positive mood balance and negative mood propensity is difficult to judge, but I suspect that if we manage to get the implications clear, we will judge the person to be (strangely) happy.

To get back to my own *Happy Helicopter Kid*-case: If it is likewise made clear that Jane's alleged deep and hidden "unhappiness" has *no* actual experiential manifestation whatsoever, I am sure that most will no longer be inclined to view it as something than can genuinely detract from her happiness. A different scenario, which would—and should—elicit an intuition that Jane is unhappy, is one in which she has a favorable balance of pleasurable sensations, but at the same time experiences a sad or nervous mood at the level of pre-reflective consciousness. That is, she does not *notice* her unhappiness-constituting experiences, but they are *there* nonetheless; so she can rightly be said to *feel* unhappy deep down. If, on the other hand—and this is the case with *Happy Helicopter Kid*—she has no such experiences, but only a propensity for having them, there is no longer any basis for describing her as unhappy.

Haybron does acknowledge the possibility of "fragile" happiness,<sup>13</sup> but considers it inferior to the more robust variety, which is based on positive mood propensities (Haybron 2008, p. 145). But why should it be inferior considered as (psychological) *happiness*? The fact that it might easily be lost—which is the only reason Haybron explicitly gives—cannot matter. It is, at most, *prudentially* relevant. I take it that Haybron's more fundamental, though implicit, reason for considering fragile happiness inferior is that it seems to have less depth. But there is no necessary connection between depth in the relevant sense and the kind of counterfactual stability that is gained by adding mood propensities. Fragility is not shallowness or superficiality. Moods and emotions (of the relevant kind) are themselves central affective states (Haybron 2008, p. 128ff.); they can be said to "get to us" and be states of *ourselves*, regardless of whether we experience them by chance or due to some stable disposition. (Note that one could also have *sensation propensities*, i.e. dispositions to get pleasurable sensory experiences out of a wide range of objective stimuli or situations. But we would surely *not* consider pleasurable experiences any more deep or "self-affecting" just because they could be seen to have arisen from such dispositions).

In fact, the association between genuine happiness and stability and deep-rootedness, which Haybron assumes to be quite intuitive, may not be that strongly endorsed by common sense. The folk seems be more open the possibility—and significance—of fragile or "lighthearted" happiness. For one thing, it should be noted that in quite a few languages other than English, there is a common word for "happiness", "fortune" and "luck". The German word *Glück* is a case in point; the French *Bonheur* and the Russian счастье also suggest a connection between happiness and good fortune. Apparently, "happiness" originally had the same connotation (cf. "good hap"; the English expression even seems to suggest that happiness must be occurrent, as it is something that happens to one, and thus *eventlike*). Both linguistic usage and common sense seem to have it that it is part of the human condition that happiness is something one can be "graced with", and that this does not make it any less positive. Surely it is also part of common sense—and has been taught by philosophers and religious thinkers alike for thousands of years—that we should try to cope with this condition by becoming less susceptible to the whims of fortune and finding more stable sources of happiness. But again, this latter point is more about prudence or wisdom than about the nature of happiness per se.

<sup>12</sup> Hill (2009, 220f.) makes a similar point about some of Haybron's other examples.

<sup>13</sup> Contrary to what Feldman (2010, 29ff.) appears to assume.

A different way of objecting to my interpretation of *Happy Helicopter Kid* would be to agree that Jane and Jill are in fact equally happy, but insist that this is because they do in fact also have the same mood propensities. This would make the example compatible with Haybron's theory. And couldn't it be argued that Jane's friends and relatives manage to change her very mood propensity? They bring it about that she is *actually not likely* to experience negative moods or emotions.<sup>14</sup> Such a description of the case might seem particularly attractive if we assume Jane to have a problematic temperament. For mood propensities are supposed to be more malleable than a person's temperament, and Haybron suggests that one might change one's mood propensities by changing the context (though he is likely to have in mind only a causal connection between the two). So it may be said that while Jane's temperament remains the same, her mood propensities are altered, which results in a corresponding raising of her happiness level.

This objection, however, is based on a faulty view of the nature of dispositions, which makes them too context-sensitive. The correct thing to say is that Jane is still disposed to experience anxiety; only in this particular case her disposition is *masked* (Johnston 1992) or neutralized with an *antedote* (Bird 1998). It is just like the case where a glass is carefully protected by packing material. The protection does not make the glass any less fragile, but merely reduces the dangers that would otherwise arise from its fragility. In almost all circumstances, including nearby possible worlds where just some minor monitoring and intervention on part of her relatives are missing, Jane will still have an actual tendency to experience anxiety. Of course it is possible, perhaps even likely, that living in a caring, attentive and safe environment will change one's mood propensity to the better. But clearly there is no necessity in this. Hence in *Happy Helicopter Kid*, we do have a case where a person's level of happiness is unrelated to her mood propensities, and thus a clear counterexample to Haybron's dispositionalism.

Consider also the (converse) example of Joan, who has a favorable emotional condition, inasmuch as she has a high threshold of stress and irritability. Unfortunately for her, she happens to be exposed to an environment full of highly stressful and irritating factors, and she has little opportunity to realize her otherwise considerable potential for engagement or attunement. Here it seems even more obvious that the dispositional aspects of the emotional condition and actual happiness can come apart. For surely we would not say of Joan that she is still more happy than her friend Jenifer, who has the same balance of actual moods and emotions, but as a result of interplay between a less positive mood propensity and a more friendly environment. Emotional resilience is clearly a good thing if one cares for happiness. Yet its actual contribution to a person's happiness depends entirely upon whether it is up to the emotional strain and pressure the person is exposed to.

## 7 Happiness, the Self, and a Plea for Pleasure

Haybron (2008, Ch. 9) discusses the role of the self mainly in relation to well-being. But he obviously takes it to be relevant to happiness as well. It is part of his argument against hedonism—and for the emotional state theory—that in contrast to sensations, which remain more or less “peripheral”, moods and emotions belong to, or directly impact on, our

<sup>14</sup> It can be questioned whether this suggestion conforms with Haybron's requirement that happiness-constitutive mood propensities must be emotionally based. But perhaps it could be argued that Jane's mood propensities are grounded in her emotional condition (which, in turn, is maintained by the intervention of her friends and relatives).

selves (e.g. Haybron 2008, p. 131). Moreover, Haybron takes happiness to be an important ingredient in well-being, and he is especially concerned with the “aspect of the self involving happiness” (Haybron 2008, p. 180).

In any case, there is good reason to inquire more deeply into the relationship between happiness and the self. It serves to highlight the issue of the relationship between happiness and consciousness, which I have still not resolved completely (inasmuch as there might be categorical mental states that are not conscious). It may also help to further clarify the quality of *depth*, which Haybron takes to be a defining property of happiness-constitutive mental states, and to clarify which states can be said to have this property.

The self is not just a vexed and controversial notion. The term is multifariously ambiguous, a fact well noticed by Haybron (2008, p. 183f.). Since we are concerned exclusively with the psychological notion of happiness, we can set aside a number of its different meanings, notably the concept of the self as a social role or identity. For if happiness is something that can be had even on Nozick’s solipsistic experience machine, then it cannot matter how one actually behaves or is viewed by others.

In line with his general emphasis on dispositions, Haybron takes a person’s *emotional nature* to be both an important aspect of her self *and* in part made up of the person’s mood propensities (Haybron 2008, p. 184). I see no need to dispute that we have, or could fruitfully adopt, such a notion of the “emotional self”, beside the many other explicit or implicit notions of the self we also employ. The question is, again, whether this aspect of the self is directly relevant to the issue of happiness and happiness. It might be said that this depends completely on one’s general notion of happiness: If Haybron is right about happiness being partly dispositional, the relevance of the emotional self is obvious; if I instead am right in taking happiness to be categorical, it is equally obvious that it must be irrelevant. This is true. But focusing on the self serves to further test the intuitions underlying the different notions happiness and bring out the consequences of the views under discussion more clearly. It seems to me that Haybron’s treatment of the self betrays a certain (mild, but significant) bias towards some, and against other, putative parts of the human self. While he is certainly not a rationalist—after all, he is emphasizing the *emotional* aspect of the self—his view has a certain structural similarity to rationalism, inasmuch as he prioritizes the allegedly calm and stable “core” elements of the self, even using the metaphor of an “inner citadel” (Haybron 2008, p. 130). He can also be said to display a certain traditional prejudice against sensory pleasure.

Let us return to the *Helicopter Kid* case. Adopting Haybron’s terminology, we may say that Jane has a problematic emotional self, at least when it comes to its dispositional aspect. This part of her self is unconscious, and it is kept from manifesting itself. It follows immediately from my general interpretation of the example that Jane’s emotional self does not directly affect her happiness. Now this also shows that what matters is not whether something is part or not part of a person’s self. Even parts of a person’s *psychological* self—as in this case her emotional self—can be irrelevant to her happiness (By “irrelevant” I mean without *constitutive* relevance. A problematic emotional self is of course highly relevant to a person’s happiness in that it *disposes* her to unhappiness).

While being a state of a person’s self is thus not sufficient for being a potential ingredient in her happiness, it may still be necessary. And it may be possible to find a more specific notion of the self, which is coextensive with the range of factors that are constitutively relevant to happiness. A promising candidate is the notion of the *phenomenal self*, according to which all (and only) experiences in a stream of consciousness belong to the same self or subject (Dainton 2008, p. 25). But if we adopt this notion, my sensory experiences must also be considered a genuine part of myself. Now I do think that the fact



that sensations belong to my stream of consciousness, just as much as do occurrent emotions or moods, puts Haybron's discriminative stance to the former under pressure. Still, I also think Haybron is right in noting that at least some sensations *are* superficial and shallow, and that this make them less constitutively relevant to happiness. It does make sense to distinguish more or less central layers of the self, even the phenomenal self, and give (at least some) priority to its "deeper" parts.

But now the question arises what is really to be understood by the metaphors of depth and superficiality. Haybron seems to operate with, but not clearly distinguish, at least two different notions: *Causal* and *phenomenal* (i.e. "felt") depth. Causal depth is defined in terms of *productivity*—having prolific and wide-ranging causal effects—and (somewhat circularly) in terms of a mental state's ability to affect one's psychological condition at a very deep and profound level (Haybron 2008, p. 69). When trying to spell out the hallmarks of "central affective states", Haybron resorts to an explicit criterion of phenomenological depth, describing them as "often visceral in feel", and seeming "to run all the way through us, in some sense, feeling like states of us rather than impingements from without" (Haybron 2008, p. 131).

Yet clearly there is no necessary connection between these two notions. All kinds of things, including all kinds of mental states and events, can have prolific and wide-ranging causal effects, including effects on one's psychological condition. (Again, the notions of temperament and character come to mind as likely candidates for "depth" in this sense). The phenomenology of depth and centrality may be a more or less reliable indicator of causal depth, but it is not likely to be a perfect one, and we can easily imagine the two properties diverging significantly (e.g. having illusions of causal depth).

My (admittedly tentative) claim is that depth (in both the causal and the phenomenological sense) is not an exclusive property of moods and emotions, and that depth is not all that matters, but merely one—albeit an important—parameter in the complex economy of happiness. I will press the case for these claims by envisaging the possibility of *deep pleasure* as well as of the *superficial* (or *sensory*) *self*.

Haybron makes his case appear particularly compelling by focusing on trivial pleasures. One's enjoyment of eating crackers is indeed unlikely to have any significant impact on, still less be a part of, one's happiness.<sup>15</sup> And it is easy to think of a libertine who pursues and successfully attains sensory pleasures without thereby gaining much happiness. But try to think instead of a passionate lover of nature or music. A music lover may reasonably claim that having had the opportunity to enjoy Bach's music has made a significant positive contribution to the quality of her life. Part of this claim may be about well-being or the good life, i.e. a realization of values other than happiness. But a significant part of it probably refers to the impact of the musical experience—and the element of enjoyment—on her happiness in the psychological sense. Similarly, though Haybron is right that even an experience as intensely pleasurable as an orgasm may fail to "move one" and so not make one any (or at least not much) happier, sometimes sexual pleasure *can* deserve the term "profound" (for an impressive collection of literary descriptions, see Maltz 2009). Again, this is not merely because it might cause or enhance various other positive states, like love, intimacy or endorsement of one's life. As in the case of musical experience or the enjoyment of nature, it seems to have an *intrinsic* quality that makes it directly happiness-constitutive. The fact that certain sensory experiences occur in one's stream of

<sup>15</sup> But ask Proust about eating a Madeleine. While it can be argued that the pleasure of his narrator—famously described at the beginning of *In Search of Lost Time*—only causally triggered an array of other, allegedly more central mental states, it did seem to have a rather deep significance in itself.

consciousness has a direct impact on one's level of happiness. It may be that the experiences must be accompanied by certain moods and emotional responses (as well as being conceptually formed) in order to do so. But such dependence is not enough to deem them constitutively irrelevant. Even if they are not genuine "atoms" of happiness, and not in themselves *sufficient* for happiness, they may still contribute to make a person happier than she would have been without.

On the negative side, while it remains conceivable that a person could be happy even when undergoing the most excruciating pain (assuming that she were able to maintain a positive emotional condition), it seems that some kinds of pain go deeper than others, and sometimes may even penetrate into one's core self. Alphonse Daudet famously described how his syphilitic pain advanced into his mental faculties and "infiltrated" his whole being; at times he even directly identified with it ("This is me: the one-man-band of pain" (Daudet 2002, p. 26)). Again, it is possible that such an intrusive, self-affecting pain can only occur when accompanied by negative emotions. Still, this does not rule out that it can make a distinctive contribution to a person's happiness level, apart from its causal contribution to her emotional state. Moreover, if it is felt to be part of, or directly affecting, one's self, then it is per definition phenomenologically deep. And as it is obviously able to influence one's psychological state at a profound level, it does seem to meet the requirement for being causally deep.

It might be objected that pains (more than sensory pleasures, I presume) are indeed experienced as "intruding", that is, as a kind of alien forces that are outside control of the self and thus not perceived as belonging to it. But while the difference between recalcitrant and controllable experiences is significant and can ground some distinctions between what is internal and external to the self (Klausen 2004, 387ff.), it is not relevant in the present context. For moods and emotions are commonly said to "befall" or "descend upon" or "arise in" us. They, too, escape our will. Hence Haybron himself quite rightly rejects the notion that only mental states directly under one's volitional control should be considered part of the self in the happiness-relevant sense (Haybron 2008, p. 187).

So there seems to be, or could be, deep pleasures—and pains—that do "get to" our selves. But we can also envisage the possibility of mental states that belong to or impact directly on the self, even though they are peripheral in either or both senses of the words (i.e. lacking productivity and/or felt profundity). Some such cases may be considered merely alternative descriptions of what I have just referred to as "deep pleasures". Instead of saying that the sensory experiences extend into the self, we might just as well say that the self extends out to the experiences. Yet there might be a real difference. For even markedly superficial experiences could be genuine and happiness-constitutive aspects of one's self. Sensing a warm breeze and gentle scent of flowers, unreflectively taking in the ambience of a room or a landscape or enjoying a friendly atmosphere are not experiences that are phenomenologically deep. In fact, much of their charm can be said to consist in their ephemeral, light and gentle quality (they are potential ingredients in what is sometimes described as "lighthearted happiness"). It seems trivial that to matter directly for one's happiness, an experience must somehow get to one's self. But it need not go deep into it; it can make an impact even while remaining on the fringes of the self.<sup>16</sup> A lighthearted person or sensual temperament may achieve more happiness by giving herself

<sup>16</sup> Correspondingly, there is empirical evidence that even fleeting, superficial mood states can have a highly significant and predictable influence on people's behavior and self-understanding (Forgas and Williams 2002, p. 74). This may be due to their being correlated with more central states, but still indicates that they are themselves more significant than might otherwise be expected.

to appearances, without this leading to the kind of impoverished existence usually associated with sensation seeking. Again, the emotional state theory could be said to be able to accommodate this possibility by assuming that the subtle, ephemeral experiences must have impact on the person's central emotional states—or else they cannot matter—and that the cases mentioned are just peculiar examples of depth. But again, it does not seem right to treat the experiences in question as being merely instrumental to the happiness of the lighthearted on sensual person; though peripheral in feel and in their relation to (what would traditionally be conceived as) her self, they are nevertheless central to her happiness.

Here it might seem tempting to bring back into play the otherwise repudiated preference and life satisfaction theories.<sup>17</sup> For it appears that what matters for happiness, and how much is matters, can depend on the subject's own attitudes and priorities. Depending on whether a person "gives herself to" gardening or dance, various otherwise seemingly insignificant experiences attain greater significance, and even the boundaries of her self can be extended to include what would otherwise be considered external to it (in this vein, Nozick (1981, p. 106) once suggested that bodily continuity might matter more to a basketball-player than a philosopher). I would not, however, push too far in this direction. For I share Haybron's *realist* intuition that a person can be unhappy even when her preferences are satisfied or she judges herself to be happy, if more basic parts of her psyche are not in a positive condition. The point is rather that the phenomenological quality (and thus the hedonic and prudential value) of an experience depends, among other things, on our attitudes to it and to ourselves, the relationship being not one of constitutive, but of—subtle and complex—causal dependency.

## 8 Categoricality and Consciousness

A question remains: If I am right that happiness is an exclusively categorical state, does this mean that it consists only of states that are conscious, i.e. phenomenal states?<sup>18</sup> I have taken this almost for granted so far. But I must admit that I have no knock-out argument against the view that categorical, but unconscious mental states could be an ingredient in happiness as well, though it seems to me strongly counterintuitive. However, apart from a brute appeal to intuition, the following can be said to speak against it. First, we have seen that being part of a person's psychological self is not sufficient for being a potential ingredient in happiness. In the *Happy Helicopter Kid*-case, the negative aspects of her Jane's self are kept from manifesting themselves to her and so prevented from making an impact on her happiness. There seems to be no reason why the same could not apply to unconscious, categorical aspects of a person's mental life. Categoricality in itself does not seem to matter.

Secondly, it can be seriously doubted whether there *are* any categorical, but unconscious mental states at all. Almost all serious candidates for unconscious mental states appear to be dispositional (Searle 1992, pp. 151ff.; Crane 2002, pp. 38f., pp. 105ff.). Some might point out that unconscious information processes, e.g. in the visual system, are also commonly described as mental, and so there could likewise be completely unconscious, but categorical emotional states or processes (Haybron has recently endorsed this view (cf. Haybron 2010, p. 30)). However, once the link to consciousness is completely severed, it becomes notoriously difficult to draw any clear line between the mental and the non-mental. If such states are

<sup>17</sup> See Feldman (2010, 52ff.; 72ff.); Haybron (2008, Ch. 5).

<sup>18</sup> I shall ignore the possibility that there can be states that are non-phenomenally conscious (but see footnote 2).

admitted as being not just causally, but constitutively relevant to happiness, we have set out on an slippery slope towards accommodating personal character and even chemical processes in the brain as well, as these factors do not seem to be any different in principle.

Yet it remains possible to insist that our folk psychology (or some suitably revised version of it) posits not only conscious and dispositional, but unconscious categorical states as well,<sup>19</sup> and argue that all three kinds of states are therefore legitimate ingredients in a psychological notion of consciousness. Such a view may seem idiosyncratic—temperament, character and pleasurable experiences are also posited by folk psychology, yet discounted by the emotional state theory. It is unintuitive, as it makes factors that remain completely external to a person's conscious self matter more directly to happiness than factors that (like sensations and pains) are phenomenally manifest.<sup>20</sup> But some might be prepared to pay the price.

Finally, it should be emphasized again that even if happiness is, in a sense, made up solely of conscious experiences, this does not mean that people can only be said to be happy as long as they are conscious.<sup>21</sup> For I am concerned with happiness in the long-term psychological sense, which is defined as a sufficiently positive overall balance of one's happiness-constitutive experiences (see Sect. 2). So we can say of a person that she is happy if she has had a significantly greater amount of positive experiences lately—and even if she is at present sleeping dreamlessly or anaesthetized. It is also possible to be conscious, but only have “neutral” experiences that do not contribute to the happiness or unhappiness of the person. (This is similar in a way similar to dreamless sleep). Even if happiness consists only of conscious states, it does not follow that all conscious states are happiness-constitutive. It should also be stressed that it is consciousness in the broad, phenomenal sense that is taken to be necessary for happiness. Hence I may become completely absorbed in an activity I like and so cease to be conscious of it in the sense of being *aware* of—i.e. *noticing*—what I am doing. As long as there is something it is like for me to do it, I can be said to be phenomenally conscious, and so the consciousness requirement for happiness will be met.

## 9 Conclusion

Let me take stock. I have argued that only occurrent (and, presumably, phenomenal) mental states are constitutive of happiness. It is tempting to include dispositional states like mood propensities in the notion of happiness as well, because they are very strongly instrumental to it. But this temptation should be resisted, as we should avoid confusing the sources of happiness (or prudential values) with happiness itself. I have further argued that

<sup>19</sup> I have assumed that dispositional states are essentially unconscious (though they may be constituted by their tendency to produce conscious experiences). But it is possible that some dispositional states do have a distinctive phenomenology (though this may better be seen as an accompanying categorical state). Being irritable or cheerful may have a certain feel of it (Klausen 2008; cf. also Feldman 2010, p. 142). This phenomenal side of dispositions could of course be directly relevant to happiness. But again, this is because it is a conscious experience and has nothing to do with dispositionality as such.

<sup>20</sup> It may be objected on Haybron's behalf that he does not intend to simply analyze the folk concept of happiness (Haybron 2008, p. 47), and that it is therefore less important if our intuitions do not favor the inclusion of unconscious states into that concept. But Haybron obviously does think that this inclusion is in agreement with, and perhaps even motivated by, ordinary usage. A more revisionary approach would be more open to the inclusion of e.g. character traits or brain processes.

<sup>21</sup> Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for raising this issue.

only phenomenal aspects of the self are directly relevant to happiness, and that the properties of depth and centrality are not as predominantly important as implied by the emotional state theory.

It is, however, equally important to stress those elements of the emotional state theory that my criticism has left unaffected (and which I think should simply be endorsed): central affective states like moods and emotions do play a fundamental role in happiness. A positive emotional condition may be a necessary ingredient in happiness (though it need not exhaust it). Relatively small changes in a person's emotional condition may trump or render irrelevant large changes in her sensory experiences, as for example the most exquisite meal can easily be overshadowed by a relatively mild sadness. Moods and emotions are likely to be located quite centrally in the complicated web of causal relationships between the various happiness-relevant mental states. Both phenomenal and causal depth may be a fairly reliable indicator of the potential contribution of a mental state to a person's happiness. While not directly constitutive of happiness, mood propensities are (barring doubts about their reality as a distinctive psychological kind) clearly extremely important for happiness—in a sense they may be more valuable than happiness itself—and thus prime objects of concern and care.

But while central affective states are thus highly important, it remains more of an open question how they should be characterized and delineated, and precisely how they should be balanced against other mental states. Happiness is of course a multiply realizable psychological kind. But it appears to be even more diverse and complex than has been recognized by the emotional state theory, and that a great many subtle and more or less interrelated factors must be taken into account in order to accurately determine a person's happiness level. Sadness may trump highly pleasurable sensory experiences; but it is more likely that it prevents the subject from having such experiences at all. It may simply block the subject's ability to transform sensory impressions into experiences of the relevant kind; or it may influence the phenomenology of the sensory experiences, reducing or experiencing the pleasurable aspect. Bodily experiences may be integral aspects of moods and not just their causes or effects, and so on. The intertwinement and subtle phenomenological nuances of moods, emotions, sensory experiences and even some cognitive states may not render the emotional state theory false, but at least requires it to be amended and perhaps further corrected.

Haybron has repeatedly stated that the science of happiness is still only in a nascent state because of our incomplete knowledge of the psychological factors involved. In this he is obviously right. But he also suggests that future work ought to focus on the deeper dispositional structures underlying happiness, and their still deeper categorical bases (Haybron 2008, p. 138, 2010, pp. 30f.). While knowledge of such factors would of course be extremely valuable, I doubt that it could teach us much about happiness as such. In order to advance on this topic, we should rather stay closer to the surface and delve into the phenomenology of, and relationship between, the many different kinds of mental states that may have some bearing on a person's happiness.<sup>22</sup>

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