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J. Edward Hackett
Department of Fine Arts, Humanities and Wellness
Savannah State University

Value Commensurability in Brightman and Scheler: Towards a Process Metaethics.

Abstract:
In the following paper, both Max Scheler and Edgar Sheffield Brightman's rankings of value are compared. In so doing, Brightman's table of values is found wanting along the lines of Scheler's value rankings. The reason is, in part, that Scheler's ordering of preference and hierarchy of feelings more readily explain what Brightman's account presupposes: affective intentionality. What is more, we can apply Brightman's test of consistency to Scheler's account and find it more desirable than how Brightman defines what values are in his *A Philosophy of Religion* (1940). Between both thinkers an account will emerge that can help clarify the commensurability of values in experience-based accounts of value in both thinkers. In doing so, a blended account reaches three conclusions about how each personalist might adopt points the other would have suggested to him. (1) Love is the process of coalescement in rough outlines; (2) The *ordo amoris* should reflect the rational coherence of Brightman's more systematic laws; (3) And the demand of coherence means that phenomenology in Scheler becomes a system of idealistic metaphysics concerning values despite the fact that Brightman thinks the moral law system will hold phenomenologically regardless of which metaphysical interpretation of reality holds sway about values.

Keywords:
Edgar Sheffield Brightman, Max Scheler, process metaethics, value rankings, value commensurability, table of values, phenomenological ethics, personalism, personalist ethics

Introduction

For some time, I have labored with Max Scheler's writings, and I have found him wanting in that his ethics come across as non-prescriptive. Perhaps, we have a duty to realize more love into the world, but that is never directly stated though he presents us with phenomenological descriptions of affective intentionality. In coming to know Edgar Sheffield Brightman's writings, I have found them equally complex and open to synthesis with Scheler. My efforts here concern the central defects of Brightman's efforts regarding the commensurability of value.

Brightman's brief star in philosophy can be found in two historical facts in the tradition of American thought. First, he was the famous thinker that put Boston personalism on the map.[1] Next, his star shone enough that the young Martin Luther King, Jr. wanted to study with him when he left Crozer Theological Seminary for his doctorate in theology at Boston University. Beyond these factors, not much attention is paid to Brightman's thought. However, Brightman's *Moral Laws* (1933) embody so much originality that I would call it the first American work in process metaethics and it represents the most significant work in moral phenomenology *qua* metaethics second to Scheler's *Formalism in Ethics*. For this reason, these philosophers are natural complements to each other. Process metaethics is the study of how values are disclosed in the unfolding elements of moral experience in time, as opposed to traditional metaethics that attempts to square the ontological reality of values by either rejecting moral realism or moral anti-realism of some variety. For the purposes of this paper, I will only engage the problem of value commensurability. More precisely, Brightman's ethics will not be complete unless one engages the central insight that religion is about experiencing the source of value, and this is the major thesis of his *A Philosophy of Religion* (1940).

In the following paper, both Max Scheler and Edgar Sheffield Brightman's rankings of value are compared.[2] In so doing, Brightman's table of values is found wanting along the lines of Scheler's value rankings. The reason is, in part, that Scheler's ordering of preference and hierarchy of feelings more readily explain what Brightman's account should presuppose: affective intentionality. What is more, we can apply Brightman's test of consistency to Scheler's account and find it more desirable than how Brightman defines what values are in his *A Philosophy of Religion*. In this way, both thinkers reinforce each other.

1. Scheler's Phenomenological Assumptions

Scheler identifies intentional feelings as that which produces values. For him, intentional feeling is the first moment of ontological and epistemological contact and relation with the world, which only undergirds that this type of intentionality informs all later abstractions and constructions in epistemology, moral theory, and subsequent interpretations of the human person. [3] "There is a *primacy* of the givenness of contents of values over

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1) For an interesting account of the demise of Boston personalism and its overall historic trajectory, see Gary Dorrien, "Making Liberal Theology Metaphysical: Personalist Idealism as a Theological School," *American Journal of Theology and Philosophy* 24, no. 3 (September 2003): 214–244. One will notice that all scholarship in personalism tends to be divided along Protestant and Catholic lines – that is, when the question of personalism is mediated through attention to it as a form of Christian philosophy. However, this is not always the case. Juan Burgos's assessment of over twenty personalists in his *Introduction to Personalism* (Washington DC: Catholic University of America, 2018) is cursory, but may provide an overall eclectic approach. Still, the best introduction to Boston Personalism (and Brightman in particular) is *Personalism: A Critical Introduction* by Rufus Burrow (Saint Louis: Chalice Press, 1982).

2) The only other work in recent memory to compare some aspects of Brightman's thought to Scheler's work is my essay "Why Ethics is a Normative Science," *Appraisal* 11, no. 1 (Spring 2018): 14–24.

3) Max Scheler, *Formalism in Ethics and Non-formal Ethics of Values*, trans. Robert L. Funk and Manfred S. Frings (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 68. Hereafter this work will be cited as F in the main text.

any other acts of consciousness," and as we will see "without feeling, there are no values."[4] In my own work, I have rendered Scheler's intentional feeling as affective intentionality. The adjective *affective* contains a depth of this ontological relationship that "intentional feeling" does not fully convey.

Like all phenomenologists, Scheler assumes the pre-intelligibility of the world as a *logos* that permeates the universe, and phenomenology describes the interconnections between feeling acts and intended objects. These relations are described as interconnections. Like essences, interconnections are *given,* which means "they are intuited", and these interconnections are a priori not the objects of understanding, or of rationality; they are not like Hume's *relation of ideas* in which the mind has access to them via imaginative construction of ideas. Instead, interconnections in which an immediate grasp of essences takes place are a priori because of the "*logos* of the universe." (F, 68) This *logos* funnels all the way down the cosmos into the human person and makes possible the elucidation of these interconnections.

> Value-intuition (*Wert-Erschauung*) that comes to the fore in feeling, basically in love and hate, as well as moral cognition of the interconnections of values, i.e. their being-higher and being-lower. This cognition occurs in *special* functions and acts which are *toto caelo* different from all perception and thinking. These functions and acts supply the only possible *access* to the world of values. It is not only in "inner perception" or observation, but also in the felt and lived affair with the *world*… *in* preferring and rejecting, *in* loving and hating, i.e. in the course of *performing* such intentional functions and acts that values and their order flash before us! (F, 68)

Scheler places value-qualities in relationship to intentional feeling acts. The "essence of moral values" is found "through *feeling*; and feeling is found with man, as are all laws pertaining to acts of value-feeling, preferring, loving, hating, etc." (F, 271) As we see in the above passage, these value-intuitions access value content in an order of the heart, the *ordo amoris*.[5] Values flash forth on an intuitive level because for Scheler phenomenology is a method of describing an immediate apprehension of meaning in intuition, not mediated by anything else. (F, 48) In this way, Scheler's description of these special intentional feeling acts apprehends truth "independent of causal explanation." (F, 49) For this reason, describing affective intentionality becomes a form of *transcendental phenomenology.* The connection of intentional feeling is "present in all feelings of value," and it is "an original relatedness, a directedness of feeling to something objective, namely, values." (F, 257)

Phenomenological descriptions are trying to get to the original-originating sense of the pre-rational and pre-cognitive modes of consciousness on which later theorizing relies. (F, 255) Scheler borrows from the Pascalian theme: "*Le cœur a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît point.*"[6] For us, we can say that Scheler's project of describing affective intentionality is a *reversal* of the priority of Western ethics. Affective intentionality undergirds moral epistemology and the metaethical project of analyzing moral language. Discerning these values in feeling and their relative order, Scheler inverts the traditional Western bias from Plato onward that reason masters emotional life. Instead, value experience is "completely inaccessible to reason" and the eternal "order and laws contained in this experience are as exact and evident as those of logic and mathematics." (F, 255) The phenomenological discernment of these laws from describing affective intentionality is, then, the goal of ethics.

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4) Manfred Frings, *The Mind of Max Scheler: The First Comprehensive Guide Based on the Complete Works* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2001), 25.

5) The best piece on love in Scheler is still and has always been Edward Vacek's article on love. See his "Scheler's Phenomenology of Love," *Journal of Religion* 6, no. 2 (April 1982): 156–177. https://doi.org/10.1086/486932.

6) "The heart has its reasons that reason does not know."

As Scheler says, "*all* of ethics would reach its completion in the discovery of the laws of love and hate, which, in regard to the degree of their absoluteness, apriority, and originality go beyond the laws of preferring and those obtaining among the value-qualities." (F, 261) Affective intentionality consists of all of the following: the stratification and layers of intentional feeling, the laws of preferring, and the movement and creative openness of higher modes of love, and being closed off and blinded by lower feelings of hate.

Scheler distinguishes two levels of feeling. It is within emotional life that values are first given to us. As such, these two levels navigate the initial primordial contact we have with values. For Scheler, there are intentional feelings (*Fühlen*); these are a "feeling of something" (*Fühlen von etwas*). The feeling of something is the immanent relation taken to the correlate of the emotion. It is here that values give themselves without mediation. In other words, values must be able to give themselves to "feeling-consciousness." This feeling-consciousness is where values are felt and apprehended intuitively in their givenness. To say that values are given in the *feeling of something* does not mean that values exist only insofar as "they are felt or can be felt." (F, 244) Instead, in phenomenological feeling values are given as distinct from their felt reality. One does not have to feel the wrongness of killing a person to have that wrongness disclosed. Feeling acts, then, play "a disclosing role in our value-comprehension." (F, 261)

By contrast, feeling-states (*Gefühlszuständent*) are mediated. For example, pain is a feeling-state (*Gefühlen*). It is reactionary and is caused by something. I have to investigate why I experience the pain. The pain in my tooth is caused by the erosion of enamel and exposure of a nerve-ending. It does not manifest immanently and immediately as one experiences value-ception (*Wertenehmung*). Accordingly, it is vitally necessary that we do not identify the givenness of values with feeling-states. Otherwise, we would lose out on the "objectivity of values." If we did make that identification, then those feelings would be contingent, capable of being influenced in any number of causal ways. Hence, the division between intentional feeling and feeling-states secures the independent objectivity in the former. Without that level of feelings, we could not report on the phenomenological givenness of moral experience in general, if such givenness occurred in feeling-states.

Let us now transition to a description of those levels of intentional feeling that correspond to the order of value rankings: sensible feeling to sensible values, utility values to values of usefulness and unusefulness, vital feeling to vital values, psychic feeling to values of truth, beauty, and morality, and spiritual feeling to the order of holy values and the absolute dignity of the person.[7]

1.1 The Stratified Layers of Affective Intentionality

Scheler distinguishes four levels of feeling, while I adopt Frings's positing of five levels. These five levels of feeling correspond to the different levels of givenness of the value rankings. In other words, Scheler describes the types of depth of feeling constitutive of human life. As he puts them,

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7) Manfred Frings has made the argument that between sensible and vital there exists values of utility. For example, see his *The Mind of Max Scheler*, 28–29. This argument has had a profound effect, while many secondary sources simply list the utility values as a fifth rank, even though only the four modes of intentional feeling (sensible, vital, psychic, and spiritual) are listed at the end of the second chapter in Scheler's *Formalism*. See page 110. I will include this value ranking as I am convinced by Frings's scholarship. In addition, the substitution of utility values and life values is spelled out in the latter half of Scheler's *Ressentiment*. Peter Spader's *Scheler Ethical Personalism: Its Logic, Development, and Promise* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002) is one source that does not reproduce Frings's call for a fifth value-ranking of utility values. Spader's discussion of the value-rankings, however, is sorrowfully lacking. The most prominent place in that work where values-rankings could be discussed with more detail occurs on pages 122–123 in which he simply just reproduces two and half pages worth of the *Formalism* text to speak for itself rather than developing the *Formalism's* complexity.

> I find this phenomenal character of the depth of feeling to be essentially connected with four well-delineated levels of feeling[8] that correspond to the structure of our entire human experience. These are (1) *sensible feelings*, or "feelings of sensation", (2) *feelings of the lived-body* (as states) and feelings of life (as functions), (3) *pure psychic feelings* (pure feelings of the ego), and (4) *spiritual feelings* (feelings of the personality). (F, 332)

Next, no level is reducible to another level of affective intentionality. Let me describe sensible feelings and those characteristics Scheler attributes to them.

Sensible feelings are localized and extended in certain parts of the body. Scheler thinks of these sensations as not acts, or even functions as we have already outlined. Instead, these are experienced through identifiable units of organs in the lived body. Scheler describes them as states. They can extend throughout the body and affect more parts of the lived body. The most immediate example Scheler uses is pain, but he also includes forms of sensible agreeableness in eating, drinking, touching and lust among his other examples. Sensible feelings are never objectless, but we cannot adjust our ray of regard to them. The objects can change from location to location. If I am pricked in my arm with a pin, I will experience pain, but the same would be true if I had pricked my toe. In this way, they do not occur at the level of intentionality, and therefore are outside the realm of phenomenological attention. In his words, "Purely sensible feelings therefore lack even the most primitive form of intentionality." (F, 333)

Given that sensible feeling is non-intentional, it cannot be given to the person. Instead, Scheler observes that sensible feelings only relate "to the *ego* in a *doubly indirect* manner." (F, 334) Instead sensible feelings are only relative to life, but not persons.[9] Sensible feelings are not attached to the ego as, say, sadness, grief or woe. Moreover, these feelings do not fill out the psychophysical union of the body-ego. They do not relate to the lived-body as an emotional shade. Instead, sensible feelings are given as founded on some part of the lived-body. They are passive in this respect. Though I experience sensible feelings where they occur like all lifeforms, all organisms for Scheler prefer pleasure and comfort over and against pain and discomfort.[10]

Finally, these are the lowest feelings since they are exclusively factual. They are undergone, but do not point to any emotive remembering or re-feeling as the higher feelings require. In Scheler, the love I have for a person is re-felt or re-experienced in someone else as a mutual understanding, and it is the very basis of the intersubjectivity of value. Here, however, the sensible feelings are not constituted in this way. It is possible to call up from memory a sensible feeling by remembering the stimuli that gave rise to that sensible feeling. Yet, this is a new sensible feeling. Only the sensations I experienced relate to their object present to them, even if it is recalled.

Sensible feelings are causally determined as states that they are not disturbed by attention to them, nor do they have any continuity of sense. To have a continuity of sense, sensible feelings would have to occur at an intentional level. "There are no interconnections of fulfillment among them." (F, 335) In addition, no matter how much I focus on the experience of the pin prick pain, it will be the same. Likewise, sensible feelings are subjected to the changes of the environment upon us. They are the most contingent and only admit of some control. For instance, I will always encounter some objects in sensible states as agreeable, but I cannot control the fact that they will occur. I can, however, change the conditions under which I experience agreeable pleasure.

Next, I posit the feelings of self-interest and disinterest. These are separate from the agreeable and disagreeable, sensible feelings that intend values of pleasure and displeasure. The feelings of self-interest give rise to

8) Again, the secondary Scheler scholarship posits five levels of feeling.

9) Frings, *The Mind of Max Scheler*, 26.

10) Ibid., 31.

values of utility and its absence by suggesting that these feelings only understand the immediate instrumentality of some good or person as it relates to my immediate interest and self-preservation. Unlike vital feeling, then, the feelings of self-interest provide no depth and no understanding about the conditions under which such feelings are sated. In his *Ressentiment,* Scheler provides a description of the "ethos of industrialism" and its "utility values" are exalted over vital values.[11] This modality of affective intentionality, then, renders every useful thing – even people – as objects of immediate use.

Vital feelings concern the lived-body, but Scheler observes that vital feeling participates "in the total extension of the lived body but has no special extension in it." (F, 338) Sensible feelings take place within a specific organ unit. Vital feelings, however, involve the whole lived-body. Vital feelings include comfort, discomfort, health, illness, fatigue and vigor just to name a few. They involve the lived-body at a deeper level than simply pleasure. Vital feelings exhibit a unitary character "that does not possess the manifold form of extensionality belonging to sensible feelings." (F, 339) It should also be said that vital feelings may still be present in an experience while we are paying attention to sensible feeling. I may feel incredibly vigorous after a run even though I periodically experience a muscle spasm. I might not even notice the lingering sensation of pain due to the more enduring vital feeling.

Thus, the striking difference is that sensible feelings are what Scheler calls "dead states" whereas vital feeling is always functional and intentional in character. The dead states of sensible feelings only can hint at or symbolize certain states in organs and tissues of the body. This is remarkably different than vital feeling itself. Within vital feeling, we have access to so much more due to the functional and intentional character of these feelings. As Scheler puts it,

> In a vital feeling, on the other hand, we feel our life itself, its "growth," its "decline," its "illness," its "health," and its "future"; i.e. something is given to us in this feeling. And this holds for both the vital feeling that is directed toward our own life and the vital feeling that is directed toward the outer world and other living beings through post-feeling and fellow feeling through vital sympathy. (F, 340)

In a very real concrete way, vital feeling is the site in which values start to be intended in feeling. We come to know a more holistic picture of our orientation in a very bodily way in relation to the physical world. Moreover, we can also pick up on the value-content of the surrounding environment. We pick up on the "freshness of the forest" and come to know "the living power of the trees" – or the nurturing power of rolling fields of wheat in Southern Illinois. It is also the start of the foundation of feelings of community. Scheler provides the example of passionate love. This differs from lust as a sensible feeling, and it is the start of love in which we start to help bring others to their own enhancement and fruition.

Vitality is the expressive givenness of life itself and the relation such givenness manifests in our experience with particular relevance to our bodies – this is what Scheler calls the intentional character of vital feelings. The intentional character of vital feelings is of "special importance in that vital feelings can evidentially indicate the vital *meaning of value* of events and processes within and outside my body." (F, 341) Vital feelings can indicate the sense of an event or process, and as Scheler notes, this is quite distinct from epistemic moments of comprehension and representation. Vital feelings can reveal anticipated dangers, disadvantages or advantages in the environment, and this also further distances them from sensible feelings. Sensible feelings, as we

11) Max Scheler, *Ressentiment* trans. Lewis B. Coser and William W. Holdheim (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2010), 115–116.

know, require the presence of the stimuli to engender them. Vital feelings can anticipate these dangers, for instance, since the value of the stimuli, event or process is given prior to its arrival. In this way, Scheler finds this value-giving quality in vital feelings present in anxiety, disgust, shame, appetite, aversion, vital sympathy and vital aversion.[12] In this way, vital feelings in their anticipatory orientation share in a futural sense. They are concerned with and point to "the value of what is *coming*." (F, 342)

As we proceed up from the lower to higher modes of affective intentionality, Scheler can draw more and more upon phenomenology. Affective feelings take on more givenness and meaning as they approach the height of the person. In ascending the stratified layers, the mode of givenness becomes more independent from the lived-body of both sensible and vital feelings. In this way, the givenness of psychic feelings is originally an "ego-quality." There is no necessity on the part of the givenness to enter through the lived-body, nor do psychic feelings become states by entering through the lived-body.[13] For example, "a deep feeling of sorrow in no way participates in extension" (F, 342) as ill-feeling suggests participating in the lived-body on the part of its being a vital feeling. What is more, psychic feelings can only be felt at the level of being a person.[14] However, Scheler does remind us that the variety of the strata to which certain ego qualities are connected shares little with those lived-body connections. Likewise, ego-qualities can be affected by different feelings of the lived-body. I can feel sorrow about someone's sickness if I acquire it or a similar condition. Moreover, Scheler reminds us that psychic feelings in their lawfulness are "subjected to their own laws of oscillation as are different types of feelings in general." (F, 342) In other words, though there may be some connections between the vital and the psychic, we should not forget that the psychic realm of feeling [like its spiritual counterpart to be discussed shortly] shares in its own irreducibly complex givenness independent from the other strata.

Finally, Scheler describes *spiritual feelings*. These feelings can never be states. In his words, spiritual feelings, "seem to stream forth, as it were, from the very source of spiritual acts. The light or darkness of these feelings appears to bathe everything given in the inner and outer world in these acts. They 'permeate' all special contents of experience." (F, 343) In other words, spiritual feelings are candidate experiences that color everything in one's field of experience on the level of being a person.[15] Scheler has in mind experiences like bliss, despair, serenity and peace of mind. These feelings are given to us without mediation in much the same way that Heidegger describes the fundamental mood (*Befindlichkeit*) of anxiety (*Angst*). These feelings take possession of our whole being, and other nexus of feelings or values can steer us away from experiencing our whole being. This is why we must have no other motivating nexuses of sense to feel them, and in a direct way we cannot feel bliss or despair. One can only *be* blissful for instance. These feelings can only be given to us when we are in absolute possession of ourselves as ourselves. They can only be given when "we ourselves as selves" can be given to ourselves with no mediation between how the self manifests back upon the self. This is the core experience of a phenomenological conception of human life, a conception very much purged of the natural attitude, and an experience that is the fullest realization of phenomenological description. For Scheler, this is the core of the person; only as a person can I fully be revealed to myself as myself. In this way, bliss and

12) I find it interesting that Scheler puts anxiety in the vital sphere whereas Heidegger has no delineated typology other than fundamental and ordinary moods to which some are more primordial than others, e.g. fear is an abstraction of anxiety as the primordial mood of human existence. Scheler does mention what the translators have called "despair" in spiritual feelings, and this is closer, if not identical, to Heideggerian anxiety.

13) Scheler describes spiritual feelings as being independent in their givenness. It is a confusing feature of psychic and spiritual feelings that the body is less relevant to valuing. "In the kind of their *givenness*, spiritual values have a peculiar detachment from the independence of the spheres of the lived body and the environment." (F, 107)

14) Frings, *The Mind of Max Scheler*, 26.

15) Ibid.

despair are feelings revealing personal being. These feelings have no other source than the person herself that is the foundation of these feelings. Thus, spiritual feelings and the values of the absolute singularity of a person, and the values of holiness are not produced by or emanate from God, but have their origin in a person's affective intentionality.

Scheler's brief treatment of both psychic and spiritual feelings leaves much to be desired. Both types of feeling receive only one paragraph each, and Scheler's presentation of that content leaves much to be desired in terms of content. Concealed within, Scheler seems committed to the fact that persons are spontaneous and creative. They can shift their attitude phenomenologically in the higher forms of psychic and spiritual feelings, but cannot control the fact that their being and world are thoroughly saturated in feeling. In fact, this is a consequence that we might want to explain or draw out. We can only participate in this world so saturated in feeling, and a developed ontology of value must take to heart this penultimate truth.[16] We cannot step outside of the thoroughly saturated condition of feeling. For these reasons, personal existence is value-laden because of the affective intentionality at the heart of life.

In this section, I have explicated the layers of phenomenological description Scheler offered in his *Formalism*. Going into the next section, I will show the implications concerning these layers.

1.2 Implications of Affective Intentionality

One may understand now that only persons can be the "bearer of moral values." Values have their origination in affective intentionality, and it is because of this preceding order of intentionality that makes possible that we understand how goods and deeds appear as valuable. For Scheler, goods like knowledge or art are never identified with value. Instead, they appear as valuable. Paintings are given as beautiful and are valued because the field of personal subjectivity is conditioned by affective intentionality to feel and apprehend the reality of values everywhere. A pressing deed or the inexhaustible nonobjectifiability of the person are seen as moral, or infinitely valuable.

When all the layers of affective intentionality are put on the table, the complexity of the value rankings are seen. For Scheler, these value-contents within these modes of affective intentionality possess a pull to higher values; this is the pre-rational order of preferencing inherent in the values and their felt reality. When two values of various layers are manifest in an experience, one value will be placed higher than the lower one. We feel the attraction of higher values and the repulsion of lower ones. Persons are called in our own circumstance to prefer and realize the higher. Living a valuable life involves sacrificing one value for the sake of the higher, but this sacrifice is built into the very fabric of moral life. Put in a more Schelerian way, the moral life comes at the expense of non-moral values, and this value commensurability is in the very givenness of the experience of two or more possible valuations. In this way, love is the ascension upward in the affective mode of intentionality and the correlative value-contents. Scheler describes this as ascension and movement. Hence, the call to realize higher values is individuated and particular to the life situation of the one who is feeling these values. One value is higher in the sense that it is not divisible as the lower values. Instead, the higher values endure and are less transient than their lower counterparts. The values of immediate use or pleasure pale in comparison to the everlasting joys of the values of the mind in psychic feeling.

16) I have developed an account for the ontology of value through interpreting Scheler's works in my most recent book. See J. Edward Hackett, *Persons and Values in Pragmatic Phenomenology: An Exploration of Moral Metaphysics* (Malaga, Spain: Vernon Press, 2018). In that work, this account is called participatory realism.

2. Brightman and Value-Rankings

In this section, it is necessary to tease out the various methodological assumptions behind Edgar Sheffield Brightman's philosophy before addressing the central differences between Scheler and Brightman's various value-rankings. This is where I first turn my efforts.

2.1 Brightman's Assumptions: Rational Empiricism and Its Tenets

Like Scheler, Edgar S. Brightman thinks there is a *logos* that permeates the universe. For Brightman, the universe is experienced as intelligible. It is given in terms of its rational structure, and Brightman's affinity for the value-rankings rests on this very same assumption. For this reason, I think of Brightman's efforts resembling phenomenology, if not his *rational empiricism* is a proto-phenomenology. However, reading Brightman through phenomenology can be limiting given his own complexity.[17] What makes Brightman different is that the given, which he calls, the *shining present*, is not described as a peeling away of presuppositions that taint our initial encounter with what is given, as Husserl's reduction instructs, but rather the given is received and then tested rationally to see if it coheres with the overall "unity of experience." This unity of experience is engaged in discovering the real. Brightman's conception of philosophy is, then, an elucidation of experience that cuts across simple divisions into epistemic and metaphysical moments concerned in describing *the real*. In his words, "*philosophy is an attempt to discover a coherent and unified definition of the real.* Or, alternatively, *philosophy is an attempt to give a reasoned account of experience as a whole*."[18]

Given his definition of philosophy, Brightman has affinities for philosophies that centrally thematize experience.[19] For this reason, William James's radical empiricism seemingly is embraced, as much as one finds friendly remarks to phenomenology in his works. In the same work above, Brightman says, "the empirical method of the present work owes much to both Dewey and James." (PR, 126) However, Brightman regarded pragmatism as an opening, but charged it with one central flaw, "there is one central difficulty in pragmatism which makes it hard to apply. That difficulty is the ambiguity of its fundamental criterion of practical results." (PR, 127) Brightman thinks an added test of coherence might rescue the pragmatist. "In other words, when taken thoroughly the pragmatist's criterion turns into coherence." (PR, 128)

As such, Brightman suggests five criteria on how to determine a proposition as true. These are necessary to grasp how we might regard the various ideals as true in our later discussion. A proposition is coherent (and true) if and only if: (1) It is self-consistent; (2) It is consistent with all known facts of experience; (3) It is consistent with all other propositions held as true by the mind that is applying this criterion; (4) It establishes explanatory and interpretative relations between various parts of experience; (5) These relations include all known aspects of experience and all known problems about experience in its details and as a whole. (PR, 128)

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17) The strongest criticism of Brightman is a simultaneous criticism of both Husserlian phenomenology and Brightman's idealism. See: Errol E. Harris's Chapter 12 in *Personalism Revisited: Its Proponents and Critics*, ed. Thomas O. Buford and Harold H. Oliver (New York: Rodopi, 2002). Harris's claim is that both approaches end up in solipsism. In Chapter 10 of the same book, Leroy Loemker criticizes personalism for its construction of personal categories without attention to systematic description of lived-experience one finds in phenomenology, so Loemker prescribes that Brightmanian personalists should engage in phenomenology. This article is the closest in spirit to my work reading Scheler and Brightman side-by-side.

18) Edgar Sheffield Brightman, *A Philosophy of Religion* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1940), 21. Italics belong to Brightman. Hereafter this work will be cited as PR in the main text.

19) For the best and most concise source on what persons are in Boston Personalism, see: Thomas O. Buford, "Persons in the Boston Personalist Tradition," *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 20, no. 3 (2006): 214–218. https://doi.org/10.1353/jsp.2007.0000.

When Brightman applies 1–5, we must reference the whole of experience. Experience is growing and expanding, so these truths are considered revisable in pragmatic spirit – that is the fact that there's no fixed and static results to which philosophy can ever know. Brightman will readily accept, and even embrace the pluralistic spirit to which his Jamesian radical empiricist methodology guides, and to which you and I may be guided by our insight into what exactly is given. Yet unlike phenomenology (and more specifically unlike Scheler), Brightman allows these (nearly pragmatic) coherentist tests to be applied to any proposition. In that way, the intuitively given is then reflected upon and subjected to verification or falsification. By contrast, the Schelerian phenomenology only describes the immediate apprehension of phenomenological intuition of essences.

2.2 Preliminary Definitions of Brightman's Ethics

According to Brightman, value means "whatever is liked, prized, esteemed, desired, approved, or enjoyed by anyone at any time." (PR, 88) In this way, Brightman starts in an almost subjective register without indicating anything like Scheler's affective intentionality. "Hence, value is an existing realization of desire." (PR, 88) In this way, Brightman resonates more with the modernist moral psychologies of Hobbes and Hume on the surface. Moreover, we find almost these very same passages in his posthumously published *Persons and Reality* (1958). In that text, Brightman on value claims, "It is high time for a definition of the word *value* which we have been using so freely." He continues, "in the most elementary sense, values means whatever is liked, prized, esteemed, desired, approved, or enjoyed by anyone at any time. It is the actual experience of enjoying a desired object or activity. Hence, value is an existing realization of desire!"[20] In *Persons and Reality*, then, there are two realities for values simultaneously. First, values are identified in relation to undergoing experiences of them in desires and also the realization of values in the activity of the objects of desire. In this way, values are both realized by desiring intentional acts and realized in action, and beyond the surface we could interpret Brightman as implicitly assuming a structure very much like Scheler's affective intentionality. Within the experience of value, there are levels of experience since not all value-as-experienced are equal, and when we analyze value experiences in relation to "their place in the whole spectrum of experience" value claims are judged to be true or false "in light of this larger context."[21] This is not so apparent in Brightman's fundamental definitions in *A Philosophy of Religion*.

From his engagement with values, we can glean several insights about values. First, values originate in the subjectivity of their bearers. Second, desires always take an object. Third, persons can choose to pursue that object against other objects of desire. Forth, if two desires exist simultaneously, and the person is between two options (objects of desire), then the person should choose the truer desire because there are higher desires – the moral laws deduced out of moral experience. Fifth, values embody a type of public knowledge that is either true or false and so Brightman is a cognitivist concerning moral judgments, but the generality of moral principles is more contextually open than stringent truthmakers might provide. In this way, value is a more subjective term for Brightman, and the desires that are true for everyone become what he calls *norms*. The moral life, then, consists of reliably true principles about what regulative norms (or what we call ideals) we should follow.

In his *A Philosophy of Religion,* the implicit commitment to affective intentionality can be further evinced by the fact that both intrinsic values and instrumental values are mutually reinforcing terms. Values are immediate consummatory ends – these are what he calls intrinsic values. Instrumental values are, then, the *means* to which intrinsic values are realized. In this way, it is as if intrinsic is the recognition of the intentional feeling act that is attached in constant relation to the object of desire (and offers a way of reading Scheler into Brightman

20) Edgar Sheffield Brightman, *Persons and Reality*, ed. Peter Bertocci (New York: Ronald Press Company, 1958), 283.

21) Ibid., 284.

to enhance his position), the realized desire becoming an instrumental value. Brightman offers textual support for this view. "As a matter of experience all intrinsic values are also instrumental for the simple reason that every experienced value must be the cause of some effect [realized by persons who Scheler calls value-bearers]." (PR, 89) With that said, the terminological commitments do not entirely map on.

Brightman's name for those value-qualities, which illuminate Schelerian goods-as-valuable, is an ideal, and ideals possess two functions. We have already discussed the instrumental function of ideals; the fact that what is intrinsically valuable calls for us to realize it. This is what Brightman calls the causal function of ideals. The second function is logical, and this is what Brightman refers to as the reflective deliberation on our desires. For instance, if we experience a movie and were moved by the movie, the logical function of our ideals enables us to ask about the experienced content. We consult our ideals and judge our values in that experience. Our ideals might contradict our experience. For instance, perhaps we find guilt in enjoying *Forrest Gump* because it seems that our enjoyment comes with the price of ableism, and we experience tension in between our commitments to fight against ableism while enjoying the movie.

One central defect of Scheler is discerning what it means to have true knowledge of values beyond appealing to the existence of *extra mente* essences. While this issue is too large to touch upon fully, Brightman's addition of the functioning of ideals in testing value claims in verification would enhance Scheler's position. Brightman writes,

> Verification is a process of relating experiences and of building up a coherent rational system of thought and experience. Realists would achieve this by emphasis on logical analysis, pragmatists by emphasis on practical consequences and adjustments, and idealists by emphasis on the wholeness of experience. Each one of these methods sheds light on truth and each is applicable, as logical positivism is not, to the process of distinguishing true form apparent or false values. When value-claims conflict with other value claims, error about value is present. When value-claims are consistent and coherent with each other and with other facts of experience, then claims are verified; such value claims are true values. (PR, 93)

In the above passage, Brightman explains many possibilities for the verification of value claims, though his talk of coherentism embraces a position that becomes a personal idealism. In the text above, Brightman is ambiguous about exactly what procedure we use to test consistency since his position does not explain the reasons why some values are true though he provides clear conceptions about what it means to be consistent. In other words in light of criterion (3) just mentioned, Brightman does not give us reasons why a proposition is "consistent with all other propositions held as true." Recall that my thesis is that Scheler's order of preferencing and affective intentionality illuminate why it is that some values are truer in relation to other values and would help ameliorate the ambiguous tensions in Brightman's value rankings in his adopted table of values.

2.3 Brightman's Adopted Table of Values

Classifications and definitions aside, in his *Moral Laws* (1933), Brightman analyzed moral experience in order to arrive at the rational structure of moral principles that constitute and structure our values. In his *A Philosophy of Religion* (1940), Brightman borrowed W.G. Everett's table of values, as outlined in *Moral Values* (1918).[22] In addi-

22) As Everett's book is now in common usage, one can access W. G. Everett, *Moral Laws* (New York: Holt and Company, 1918) from the Internet archive at the following URL. See: 182–183: https://archive.org/details/moralvaluesstudy00ever/page/182

tion, *A Philosophy of Religion* serves as a complementary text to his *Moral Laws* because the analysis of religion is defined in two senses. First, "religion is a choice of value, a commitment to it." (PR, 85) For this reason, religion is a source of value, and in the second sense, religious faith is "a faith in the friendliness of the universe of value." (PR, 86) Like Scheler's phenomenologically grounded ethical personalism, the question of value in Brightman ultimately finds its highest expression in the experience of the Holy, and as our moral experience confirms for both, this universe is one of values. In personalism, the universe is friendly to the existence of values.

In his adopted table of values, Brightman desires "to give a brief account of the fundamental types of valuation to be found in experience." (PR, 94) In this way, Brightman's table looks to provide an initial sketch of all types of value – both moral and non-moral values – just as much as Scheler's moral phenomenology attempts to encompass values in its description. However, unlike Scheler, Brightman thinks it "almost self-evident that the variety of experiences of value is so great that no one classification of them would be final and hardly any classification of them, except a formal one, would be inclusive." (PR, 94) Scheler and I would disagree since it is the formalism in moral theory, and its commitment to delineate almost a priori what the moral life consists in without paying attention to the irreducible content to which Brightman actually describes, which is the heart and soul of the problem. So, Brightman's admission should not be taken seriously on this score. The conceptual resources in his proto-phenomenological rational empiricism are more than enough to capture the complexity of the type of values, with some added clarification on those points that conflict with his overall moral law system. Before I explain these tensions in this section, let us review the various table levels.

First, the table names eight groups to Scheler's five. These are: economic values, bodily values, values of recreation, values of association, character values, aesthetic values, intellectual values, and religious values. Second, Brightman warns, however, that "the table is not based on a consistent principle." (PR, 95) For instance, Brightman says that the economic values are purely instrumental (much in common with Scheler on this point), yet all other rankings are both intrinsic and instrumental. For this reason, Brightman divides these values into a more subtle classification by rightly putting "purely instrumental values" on the bottom, the "lower intrinsic values" in the mid-range, and the "higher intrinsic values" at the top. Just as before, I will explicate the structures of value from the lowest to the highest.

In the *purely instrumental values,* Brightman includes both natural values and economic values. First, natural values are atypical. These are the natural forces like life, gravity, and light that "operate causally and are accessible to all." (PR, 95) Brightman should abandon this talk since the existence of space and time are conditions of possibility for experiencing value, but not valuable in-itself. These are not values, but the conditions of being an embodied and embedded social animal that give rise to value experience. We may find them instrumentally valuable in much the same way that some degree of color perception is instrumental to movie watching.

The *lower intrinsic values* are considered much narrower. These values are "more dependent on other values for their own worth." (PR, 96) Brightman also claims these are more "partial," and it is unclear whether he means they allow for more partially motivated judgments or if they are more dependent upon the parts of other values. While I do think the latter is what he means, I cannot rule out exclusively the ambiguity present in the phrasing. The values in this grouping consist of *bodily values, recreational values,* and *work values*. One fatal flaw of the following level is that if we had two cases of value in the same situation – say one bodily value versus one work value – how should we then commensurate them? A similar question also plagues *higher values* as we will see in our explication of each level.

Bodily values closely resemble the vital values of Scheler, but are vastly different in other ways. First, bodily values should not be confused with purely causal values that we also find in the lowest value feeling in Scheler's sensible feeling. Like Scheler's sensible feeling, Brightman does not include "the actual state of the body as a physiological organism," and includes the "enjoyment of the in consciousness of the well-being resulting

from bodily functioning." (PR, 96) In fact, his conception of body functioning resonates with a phenomenological conception of a lived-body, especially in Scheler, since "the feeling of good health, the joy of living, the pleasures of sex, and delight of successful athletic endeavor all belong in this group" (PR, 96), as they do in Scheler's vital sphere. Divorced from intentional feeling, however, Brightman's bodily values do not seem as if they can anticipate aspects of the environing world around oneself.

Recreational values are the values we find important in child development, but also have a lasting function on us as adults – whether we admit it or not. These include "the satisfactions that come from play, humor, or mere amusement." (PR, 96) For Brightman, these are limited, though he thinks they are extremely narrow.

Work values come across as almost too Protestant in the Weberian sense here. For Brightman, "the mere fact of being employed is itself a satisfaction." (PR, 96) Brightman may be imposing himself at this point of his analysis, and like many Protestants linked to the social order of ruling elites, the projection of one's own value-estimations may be contaminating the analysis of experience here.[23] Though to his credit, Brightman thinks that the satisfaction one is judging here is "a very slender value by itself," and satisfaction is the completion of value experience in Brightman since he has no other word but the realization of desire (aka satisfaction) as the hallmark of finding something valuable. The justification of one's satisfaction, however, lies beyond the activity in the "intrinsic worth of what is being produced" as the work values enjoyed in working in a munitions plant pales in comparison "to those enjoyed by a cast of actors rehearsing Hamlet." (PR, 97) However, again, Brightman is ambiguous as to why this is the case beyond the assertion of the high culture of Shakespeare against the working man's enjoyment in a munitions plant.

Proceeding upward in the scale of values, we reach his last level, *the higher intrinsic values,* and this level is divided into *social values, character values, aesthetic values, intellectual values,* and *religious values.* As before, if one is given two opposing values in a situation – say aesthetic values pitted against intellectual values – then Brightman has no resources to say that we should pursue one at the expense of the other. They are both at the same level. In other words, there are no resources for commensurability in Brightman's account of the same level when a subdivision of types is within that level. There are exceptions according to Brightman. Let us describe each in stride.

Social values refers to "the special value of association, cooperation, or sharing." (PR, 97) According to Brightman, these values are of a special class. The most intrinsically valuable and highest experiences are structured in such a way that they can only be experienced socially. Moreover, according to Brightman, "every true value is enhanced when experienced as a social value, and these values are the lowest of all the *higher values* since "mere association with others is almost utterly devoid of worth unless some other value besides the social is being sought." (PR, 97) Our social relations, in other words, are instrumental in connecting to the other values of truth, goodness, beauty, or religion. This is the one exception of a criteria offered for commensurability within the same level. In fact, along Brightman's thinking, social values depend upon these other values. In relation to Scheler, then, the *higher values* exclusively refer to those values of culture correlated to psychic feeling in which a person is as they are most fully.

Character values refer to "the experience of a good will." (PR, 97) For Brightman, the moral life is not merely just a good will, and for this reason, he avoids employing the term. Instead, the moral life consists in the "actual organization of the whole experience of value by the will." (PR, 97) The key feature for Brightman is that a good will exercises restraint and control, but he also allows for other goods to be good without qualification.

Aesthetic values refer, namely, not only to just the beautiful, but also "the beautiful, the tragic, the comic, and many other gradations." (PR, 98) In this way, Brightman tries to account for the entire spectrum of possible

23) Scheler's criticism of contemporary values as an inversion of capitalist society's privileging utility values over life values is apt here.

cultural configuration of aesthetic works insofar as it stirs feeling and achieves harmony in its expression. Chiefly all art should be "the conformity of expression to purpose" with the understanding that purpose is wide open to "what is chosen." (PR, 98) Unlike character values, art's success depends upon what is chosen, but there's no delimitation of that freedom.[24]

Intellectual values refer to "the experiences of truth-loving and truth-finding." (PR, 98) Like Brightman, I do think truth is a value. It makes what is said and claimed worthwhile, and it is a value that is a precondition for many other values.

Religious values are the highest expression of values, just as they are for Scheler. Both are influenced in part by Rudolf Otto's claim that a core emotional experience lies at the heart of all world religions. He called this emotional experience "the numinous".[25] In the *Formalism,* Scheler does not legitimize any specific conception of holiness. In fact, he's rather contextualist about value-experience in their calling us and in their immediate appeal. The same applies here. According to Brightman, religious values are: "the values which are experienced when man takes an attitude toward value experience as a whole and toward its dependence on powers beyond man. Insight into this dependence elicits feelings of reverence and acts of worship." (PR, 98)

In Scheler, this reverential attitude is called love, and love can have more modalities than simply Brightman's Abrahamic-centeredness of reverence. More specifically, I find this talk of a reverential attitude reminiscent of a non-prescriptive love that Brightman then articulates in an Abrahamic-centric way with the term *worship*. Though I do not think he means to be so Abrahamic-centered in his concrete examples, it is clear that he favors monotheistic expressions of what he noncommittally labels "the objective cosmic source."

2.4 Problems and Solutions with the Table of Values about the Coalescence of Intrinsic Values

For Brightman, like Scheler, the levels are not reducible to the other levels. Each value sphere is from its own particular standpoint and frame of reference. As he says, "no value has sovereignty in its national territory [it is relative in terms of its level in the table of values]; only the league of values is sovereign." (PR, 101) The fact is, as a part of experience, we experience values, and accordingly persons experience values only from standpoints in Brightman's thought. Hence, Brightman abandons a scalar notion intended in feeling for a systematic whole. "We must give up the idea of a scale for that of a system." (PR, 101)

The really interesting feature that differs from Scheler substantively is the phenomenological observation that values "coalesce with the others." (PR, 100) In this way, they interpenetrate, as the claim goes. However, this talk of coalescence is a terminological confusion that gets in the way of how values are experienced phenomenologically. Values are felt in the marrow of intentional feeling. For this reason, talking of values as realizations of desire is phenomenologically insufficient. When compared together, values are experienced in the order of preferencing. To put it more boldly and against Brightman, the very manner of the interpenetration of value is not described, nor is it clear why this coalescence is a positive feature of the values in question. This ambiguity undermines much of Brightman's reliance upon Everett's table. Brightman is operating here with a phenomenologically inadequate description of value experience, in terms of lacking an account of Scheler's affective intentionality and his order of preferencing.

Perhaps there might be a way out for Brightman from my objection. In one reading, the more values coalesce, the more, higher values are produced. However, this way of understanding values brings with it a consequential focus that would ignore the actual organization of realizing value by the will. Brightman's moral law

24) For Brightman, art mirrors life, and thus, it seems, he is working with a mimetic conception of art in mind.

25) For more information, see: Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, trans. John W. Harvey (London: Oxford University Press, 1958).

system tends to be a holistic realization of value that skates along largely deontological lines (though there's a pluralism built into all the principles), but, largely, it is more precise than Scheler and his lack of a prescriptive ethic.[26] If Scheler's prescriptive ethic is anything, then it is given in the order of preference. We ought to realize the highest value possible in all we do, which can be restated as simply realizing more love into the world. More formally, every value sphere that experiences value-content in intentional feeling corresponds to a definite ethical system, "in which the laws of preference corresponding to respective value-contents are to be established." (F, 26) These laws are:

I.
1. The existence of a positive value is itself a positive value.
2. The non-existence of a positive value is itself a negative value.
3. The existence of a negative value is itself a negative value.
4. The non-existence of a negative value is itself a positive value.

II.
1. Good is the value that is attached to the realization of a positive value in the sphere of willing.
2. Evil is the value that is attached to the realization of a negative value in the sphere of willing.
3. Good is the value that is attached to the realization of a higher (or the highest) value in the sphere of willing.
4. Evil is the value that is attached to the realization of a lower (or the lowest) value in the sphere of willing. (F, 26)[27]

In these laws of preferencing, realizing love into the world is positive. Love's absence is hate, and is, therefore, a negative value. In fact, hatred is a closing off of having insight (or more particularly being able to feel) into these phenomenological laws of experience that govern value-cognition. These value-qualities attach themselves to goods. Good are not concepts of evaluation but are the irreducible configurations of possibility that are evaluated as beautiful, as right, as holy. Knowledge and friendship are goods, and these are felt-as-value-quality: felt-as-truthful (in the case of knowledge) or felt-as-the-Holy (in the case of a friend making you better). The realities of good and evil belong to the sphere of the person since only persons can realize value-contents into the world. This apprehension of felt-value-qualities is pre-cognitive, pre-reflective, and further constitute those goods in the capacity of other people to re-feel the same value contents and the same intentional feeling. They are felt as valuable either in the presence of the actual good, or felt in the absence of the related value in a concrete situation.

Values must have three characteristics to be higher. Values may be said to be higher, "the *more* they *endure* and the *less* they partake in '*extension*' and *divisibility*." (F, 90) The same value holism in Brightman can be read in Scheler at this moment. There is a caveat. This endurance is not to be understood in objective clock time. The enduring value quality of freedom is valuable in times when none are free, some are free, and all are free. Endurance therefore easily correlates to the enduring quality of the whole value. The more whole a value is, the less divisibility, and therefore transience, it possesses. Lakesha's desires for fries and Walter's

26) One way that Brightman can help Scheler is Brightman's more comprehensive outline of moral laws, rather than the lack of precision of value-contents in intentional feeling we receive in Scheler's analysis. In other words, there is more prescriptive possibility about what principles may give us action-guidance in Brightman than in Scheler's system.

27) The parts I and II given above appear in Scheler's *Formalism*.

desire for cinnamon buns are valuable in the moment, but as pleasurable appetites, they pale in comparison to writing philosophy.

Given the dearth of his Schelerian resources, Brightman cannot adequately handle value conflicts that occur in several instances at the same level. In cases of value conflict, a person might see which option coalesces the most intrinsic value, or to a more pertinent solution, a test of consistency with the eleven moral principles as a whole. In fact, this is what, I think, Brightman means when he says: "the degree of value would be measured by the extent to which the particular value in question mirrors or expresses the nature of the whole system of value." (PR, 102) The sense of *more* is telling. In Schelerian terms, the more enduring and the more whole a value is, the more we are to realize it. The less enduring and more divisible a value is, the less we are to realize it. These points are missing in Brightman's point of view.

Persons in their feeling acts manifest a core value experience that exists separately from other parts of experience and *we experience the height of those values in a systematic way* BECAUSE OF *their relative endurance and organic wholeness*. We need not give up the commensurability and the systematicity of experience since those elements come together in a fully fleshed out moral phenomenology. Put another way, values are experienced and exist in relation to other modes of possibility given a person's freedom, and when evaluated, we can only manifest one intentional feeling act and its corresponding value-quality at a time. In the fullest and highest conception of a person, the feeling act emerges out of the heart center of the person and is wholly manifested as blissful or in despair in feeling, and as holy or agonistic in a value quality. One lives out reverence for nature in a Sundance of the Lakota Nation, or breathes a sigh of beauty of the Great Smoky Mountains in North Carolina at the level of fullness such feelings manifest. Such experiences are more enduring than the fleeting joys of shopping or eating fast food.

I am not so much resisting the fact that values all depend upon other values, or emerge out of the levels of values, as much as the fact that a person often pits other values against lesser values. In fact, in choosing wrongly one realizes lesser intrinsic values or completely instrumental values instead of higher values. We choose to realize more holiness rather than to pursue the pangs of rampant desire to own material goods, not because of the production of good outcomes (although that is certainly part of it), but because of the rightness involved in that realization of good. One should adopt reverence for hedonism every time because of the rational coherence of experience, as such value insights are given to us in our felt apprehension, and then in reflection upon the givenness of value itself. We can see this as clear as day in Brightman's levels.

In his *Moral Laws* (1933), as indicated previously, Brightman is fully skeptical that a determinate ranking can be formulated. He talks about "the impossibility of a list of values arranged in ascending order," and embraces rather "the 'interpenetration' of the values."[28] Brightman presupposes that scalar rankings cannot be systematic precisely because "the only strictly intrinsic value is the whole system of coherent values, or stated more empirically, that the highest intrinsic value is the experience of a person whose values are harmonious."[29] In Schelerian terms, the phenomenological fullness of holy values and spiritual feeling fill out the entire person. Givenness in Scheler is indicative of height. The highest values, those of the person, become rational wholeness in Brightman's system of moral laws. The highest values of the person are those that express the beauty and harmony of the full and infinite dignity of the person. In this way, we should understand person as the conception of human life purged from the natural attitude. This purging results in seamless unity and rational coherence being seen as the same entity in Brightman, the person. Brightman cannot see the transcendental affective intentionality that undergirds all value cognition. The person is a mode of being for all capable of

28) Edgar Sheffield Brightman, *Moral Laws* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1933),134.

29) Ibid.

intentional feeling, intuition, and the added element of rational reflection of that phenomenological reality we find in Brightman's writings. By seeing that the laws of preferencing and value-ception intuit the givenness, Brightman's table of values may be better equipped to more precisely acknowledge the givenness of value and the commensurability of values in that system.

Despite the denial that scalar values are impossible, the scalar is systematic coherence in phenomenological ethics, and this is precisely where Brightman can aid Scheler. Of this defect, Brightman is more precise. He writes,

> the so-called phenomenologists, notably Max Scheler, under the influence of Brentano and Husserl, find that value-experience contains "evident" (what we call self-evident) distinctions, which reveals that value *a* is higher than value *b.* While Scheler has done much to stimulate our interest in ethics, and his emphasis on our perception of distinctions is empirically a sound starting point for a theory of the best possible, nevertheless there is in his thought too much confidence in the finality of a value distinction which is once perceived [in preferencing and we might say the entire *ordo amoris*] and too little insight into the unity and wholeness of the system of values and laws by which every intuition must be judged.[30]

In the above passage, I have elicited why Scheler was confident in aiding Brightman's table of values, and consequently now I also list this passage as an end point to pick up on "the starting place" of Scheler. The starting place is that Scheler's phenomenological ethics is a basis too which more modifications can be added, specifically in relation to intuitions, and Brightman's move to generate a rational system of moral laws provides more specificity to the call to realize more love into the world in Scheler's system. Even in calling for more love to be realized, this is a bit vague to serve either a prescriptive or regulative function.

With respect to this essay, I can still bridge that gap by noting the rough similarities between the value rankings in Scheler and Brightman. Brightman largely agrees with the levels of Scheler. Holy values are on top, and it was only in his *A Philosophy of Religion* (1940) that a full articulation of how he saw value-rankings in relation to Everett was completed. Bodily values are lower than Religious values. Intellectual, aesthetic, and character values seemingly map onto Scheler's values of the true, the good, and the beautiful in psychic feeling.

This essay leaves untouched Brightman's improvement upon the lack of specificity of how love functions as an ascending order of value. More precisely, work must be done to look at how intuitions, rather than taken as self-evident reports of the phenomenological are the "data of ethics" and can subsequently be tested according to Brightman's standards. In negotiating the synthesis between Brightman and Scheler, we might conclude three things from my efforts herein:

(1) love is the process of coalescement in rough outlines;

(2) the *ordo amoris* should reflect the rational coherence of Brightman's more systematic laws;

(3) and the demand of coherence means that phenomenology in Scheler becomes a system of idealistic metaphysics concerning values, despite the fact that Brightman thinks the moral law system will hold phenomenologically regardless of which metaphysical interpretation of reality holds sway about values.

30) Ibid., 161

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