Dominic McIver Lopes. *Being for Beauty: Aesthetic Agency and Value*. **New York and London: Oxford University Press, 2018, xvi + 266 pp. ISBN 978-0-19-882721-4**

Dominic McIver Lopes's *Being for Beauty* is a superb book. It is the most important Anglophone contribution to the general theory of aesthetic value in the last decade, at least since Alexander Nehamas's *Only a Promise of Happiness* (2007) and possibly even since Alan Goldman's *Aesthetic Value* (1995).[1] Lopes aims to reorient our thinking about aesthetic value away from the overtheorized phenomenon of aesthetic judgement and toward a wider class of aesthetic acts. These acts include not just the familiar work of aesthetic creation, performance, and appreciation, but the more mundane but no less aesthetic activities of daily life: planting a garden, attending a book club, playing a computer game, or choosing a hand soap. Lopes wants to claim that these acts embed the normativity of achievement, which is distinct from the currently dominant approach that sources aesthetic value in the normativity of pleasure. And by beauty, Lopes means not the narrow aesthetic property – that which pleases the senses, say – but the broader property of the aesthetically good, where the garish and the ugly can, in the right circumstances, be aesthetically good. So, a more accurate title for his book might have been *Acting on Aesthetic Value*. But since my alternative is significantly less graceful, Lopes had aesthetic reason, as we shall see, to opt for the current alternative.

Michael Tanner once observed that when aestheticians discuss works of art, they tend to think of arresting masterworks, while moral philosophers have in mind commonplace acts (J. L. Austin gives the striking example of helping oneself to two portions at High Table when there are only enough for one apiece).[2] In fact, according to Tanner, much 'art' is constructed according to a recipe, and the keeping of promises should be compared with the making of B-movies.[3] Lopes inherits the spirit of Tanner's suggestion and develops it, across twelve philosophically rich and yet breezily written chapters, into an explanatorily powerful new theory of aesthetic normativity.

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[1]   Alexander Nehamas, *Only a Promise of Happiness: The Place of Beauty in a World of Art* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007); Alan H. Goldman, *Aesthetic Value* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1995).

[2]   J. L. Austin, 'A Plea for Excuses: The Presidential Address', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 57 (1956): 24n13. The case is further discussed in R. M. Hare, *Moral Thinking: Its Levels, Method, and Point* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 57.

[3]   Michael Tanner, 'Ethics and Aesthetics Are – ?', in *Art and Morality*, ed. José Luis Bermúdez and Sebastian Gardner (New York: Routledge, 2003), 27.

After a short introduction outlining this network theory, elaborated below, Chapter 1 presents six case studies: a Canadian gardener; her grandson, who restored the garden and expanded its public-facing mission; an American photographer, who herself championed the work of an earlier French photographer; the American talk show host Oprah Winfrey, who started a wildly popular book club; a teenager who conserves video game source code; and a dance school director in a rural area. These case studies yield a variety of explananda for a theory of aesthetic normativity: each of these agents is an expert, specializing by both activity (for example, curating vs. teaching) and domain (for example, landscape gardening vs. ballet). They come from all walks of life, jointly cover the whole aesthetic universe, and are relatively stable in their expertise. Already we are widening our lens from its restrictive focus on the single aesthetic act of judgement: these six experts aren't merely attempting to issue a verdict as to whether some item is aesthetically good or bad. They have practical problems to solve.

But what makes their acts aesthetic? A sceptic might claim that Winfrey's book club choices were driven by narrow commercialism: rather than (mistakenly) attributing aesthetic goodness to Jonathan Franzen's *The Corrections*, Winfrey picked based only on expected sales value, which is not an aesthetic property of the novel. But, as Chapter 2 plausibly explains, an aesthetic act is one which counterfactually depends on the content of an aesthetic evaluation, which is itself a mental representation – though not necessarily an explicit or conscious representation – of some item as having some aesthetic value. Suppose I need a new pair of winter boots. If I simply pick the least expensive pair in my size, my act is not aesthetic; but if my choice is sensitive to properties like colour and design, then my act counterfactually depends on my attribution of those properties, and is therefore aesthetic. Similarly, Winfrey's act of picking Franzen's novel for her book club is aesthetic only if, had the relevant aesthetic properties of the novel been different, Winfrey would not have chosen it. Lopes does not offer a full answer to the question of what makes an aesthetic value aesthetic – a topic of much controversy – but points to lists such as Frank Sibley's to establish some paradigm aesthetic values: 'unified, balanced, integrated, lifeless, serene, sombre, dynamic, powerful, vivid, delicate, moving, trite, sentimental, tragic'.[4] Even without agreement on exactly which values count as aesthetic, we can make progress on the normative question of what makes an aesthetic value valuable, in the sense of reason-giving.

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[4]   Frank Sibley, 'Aesthetic Concepts', *Philosophical Review* 68 (1959): 421.

To accompany this broadened view of aesthetic acts, Lopes introduces some further elements to scaffold the view that aesthetic reasons are practical reasons. Following the familiar analysis on which practical reasons are considerations that count in favour of something, Lopes proposes the following principle:

> REASON: the fact that x is V is an aesthetic reason for A to φ in C = the fact that x is V lends weight to the proposition that A aesthetically should φ in C.

To get from reasons to values, Lopes adds another principle to the effect that something is a value only if it is a reason for some agent to act in some circumstance. Although not everyone would agree with this, because some hold that aesthetic reasons are reasons only for critical judgements, it should not be especially controversial. Even those who have focused on aesthetic judgement have tended to admit that judgement is typically part and parcel of appreciation, which everyone agrees is one genuinely aesthetic act. So, this puts pressure on the opponent of the principle to accept that aesthetic reasons really are practical – reasons for acts, not merely judgements. Conjoining REASON with this principle, we get:

> VALUE: necessarily, V is an aesthetic value only if the fact that x is V lends weight to the proposition that A aesthetically should φ in C.

Neither principle says much of substance about the nature or source of aesthetic normativity; they're intended to be common ground. But already much has been achieved: not only an expanded diet of examples for philosophers to consider, but a clear and nearly theory-neutral framework for thinking about aesthetic normativity. From here, Lopes begins the main event: a bold argument against aesthetic hedonism – the view that all aesthetic reasons are grounded in pleasure, broadly construed – and for the network theory: the view that all aesthetic reasons are grounded in achievement, suitably qualified. The overall strategy is a limited contrastive argument to the best explanation. The network theory, Lopes argues, is better able to account for the explananda arising from his six case studies. Why is the argument limited? Because we lack a fuller menu of options: aesthetic hedonism has been dominant for at least half a century, and only in recent years have philosophers begun to seriously challenge it. Lopes aims at nothing less than a full-dress alternative, but he modestly recognizes that others may yet be forthcoming.

Chapters 3 and 4 respectively present and argue against aesthetic hedonism. How do aesthetic values bear on what I have reason to do aesthetically? The dominant account, inspired by a reading of Hume's classic 'On the Standard of Taste', answers roughly as follows: there are some masterworks – items that appeal across historical and cultural boundaries, having stood the 'test of time'. They are masterworks because they have high aesthetic value, meaning they maximize aesthetic pleasure for anyone who understands these masterworks correctly. Further, there's a group of 'true judges' – ideal aesthetic agents, equipped with exquisite sensibilities, impeccable taste, and probably unlimited material resources – who set the standard of taste and identify these masterworks for us ordinary agents. But, since anyone has reason, though not always decisive reason, to maximize pleasure – that's the normative source claim – then anyone has reason to do as the true judges do. As Lopes nicely describes his opponent's position, 'Just by virtue of wanting pleasure, we all want to be our best aesthetic selves and to live up to the standard set by the joint verdict of the true judges' (p. 70).

This argument has come in for quite a bit of scrutiny in recent years, and Lopes rehearses the major objections to explain why it's mistaken. Given the malleability of pleasure, it's not clear why committed pleasure-maximizing hedonists shouldn't lower their threshold to enjoy just about everything, rather than raise it to enjoy only the masterworks identified by true judges.[5] Given the fallacy of approximation, it's not clear that we will produce more pleasure by trying and failing to appreciate masterworks than if we contentedly continue to enjoy our reliable lower aesthetic pleasures.[6] Given that advice is personal, it's not clear that true judges, who are ignorant of our psychological and sociological background, will really be able to successfully tell us what to appreciate.[7] And so forth. But while sophisticated aesthetic hedonists have responses, Lopes's official strategy, recall, consists in pointing out the explanatory limitations of hedonism. As aesthetic analogues of ethical ideal observers, true judges lack a determinate social context and, while they have generalist expertise, lack any specialized knowledge. This makes them ill-equipped to explain the six case studies above. A teenage source code conservationist just doesn't look like a Humean true judge; she can't identify all

5   See also James Shelley, 'Hume and the Value of the Beautiful', *British Journal of Aesthetics* 51 (2011): 213–22.
6   See also Adam Morton, *Bounded Thinking: Intellectual Virtues for Limited Agents* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).
7   See also Matthew Kieran, 'Why Ideal Critics Are Not Ideal: Aesthetic Character, Motivation and Value', *British Journal of Aesthetics* 48 (2008): 278–94.

the masterworks across time, space, and medium, just the video games whose code is worth preserving.

On this point Lopes is surely correct. The argument he's running can be seen as part of a broader trend in recent normative theorizing toward non-ideal theory: theory that can successfully guide action in the real world. The fact is that true judges don't exist, but local aesthetic experts do. Even if we acquired all the Humean aesthetic virtues – strong sense, delicate sentiment, practice, and so on – no one should imagine that anyone we know could become a true judge in the ambitious sense required by aesthetic hedonism. Idealization has many uses in theorizing. But when it comes to telling us what we ought to do now, in non-ideal circumstances, we're better off with a theory that's appropriately sensitive to those actual circumstances. Here on the ground, we do manage to learn from each other and improve our aesthetic actions and attitudes. The question, then, is how local experts can serve as normative standards for non-experts.

The negative argument completed, the next chapters introduce the positive alternative as an answer to that question: the network theory. Lopes introduces the theory's building blocks in stages: Chapter 5 concerns aesthetic achievements, Chapter 6 aesthetic practices, and Chapter 7 aesthetic profiles. These come together in his final formulation:

> NETWORK THEORY: an aesthetic value, V, is reason-giving = the fact that x is V lends weight to the proposition that it would be an aesthetic achievement for some A to φ in C, where x is an item in an aesthetic practice, K, and A's competence to φ is aligned upon an aesthetic profile that is constitutive of K.

There's a lot to unpack there. The normative source claim is that anyone who has reason to act at all has reason to act *well*: to achieve. Borrowing a general account of expert agency from recent Aristotelian views, Lopes holds that an agent achieves when she acts successfully out of competence.[8] She doesn't just get lucky: her hitting the target on this occasion is explained by her regularities in performance. When I perform Chopin's 'Minute Waltz', I don't just hold my breath, close my eyes, and hope for the best; I put in long hours of practice so that I raise my chances of playing the piece with few errors and rich feeling. Lopes argues further that, for aesthetic expertise, there's a core competence that makes it likely that we achieve in any given situation. This core

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8   Consider, for example, Ernest Sosa, *A Virtue Epistemology: Apt Belief and Reflective Knowledge* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007) in epistemology, and Judith Jarvis Thomson, *Normativity* (Chicago: Open Court, 2008) in ethics.

competence is aesthetic *evaluation*: our ability to attribute aesthetic values correctly, which includes a sensitivity to the modal profile of an item's value-realizing properties. The expert pianist thinks: if I played this passage just a bit faster, then I could actually create a smoother *legato*, and thus give a better performance. To return to a point made earlier, whereas hedonists tend to think this is the end of the story – render a judgment and then pat yourself on the back – the network theorist, while recognizing its centrality as a core competence, sees evaluation as the start of a process that, when all goes well, culminates in achievement.

The second step is to restrict what counts as an aesthetic achievement. After all, 'Some people are experts at crooked nails, or burnt toast, or invalid arguments' (p. 108)! The right move is to go social, and to understand social practices as configuring aesthetic agency. While it's true that social practices constrain our thought and action – happily, there is no extant social norm that promotes burnt toast – they also make certain actions possible, or at least much more salient: the social media site Instagram, for some reason, motivates agents to improve their avocado toast. And in general, we cover more ground collectively when we divide our labours: I'm really good at a fork technique that spreads the avocado in Zen garden-like patterns, and you're really good at finding the right lighting for a picture. Working together, we get more likes, and achieve in the practice of Instagram photography.

The third step is to explain what it is to be a member of one aesthetic practice rather than another. The answer is that the agents within a given practice align on the same aesthetic profile. Lopes is right to say that practices can't be individuated by the set of agents who participate in them – suppose that all poodle-fanciers are also Madonna-worshippers – or by the items on which their members operate: *Regietheater* and traditional staging are two distinct practices for displaying the same canon of operas. What makes them different is a different 'pattern of correlations that obtains between the aesthetic value properties of items in the practice and some other properties they have' (p. 130). The basic idea abstracts from Kendall Walton's insight that the same object can have a different aesthetic valence when it falls under a different category: what counts as aesthetically good in one practice might be aesthetically bad in another.[9] Setting Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in a seedy modern brothel can be an aesthetic merit in a practice of *Regietheater*, where political critique is the order of the day, but an aesthetic demerit in a practice of traditional staging. Crucially, agents within a practice take this

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[9]   Kendall Walton, 'Categories of Art', *Philosophical Review* 79 (1970): 334–67.

pattern of correlations as normative for them – they jointly take the same aesthetic properties to be reasons to act. They exercise their core aesthetic competence in order both to get the object right and to get the practice right. And in doing so, they achieve within their chosen practices. It's not that their reasons to achieve *per se* are aesthetic reasons; their aesthetic reasons just are various aesthetic value facts (which show up in the profiles of practices). But their reasons to achieve explain why those aesthetic value facts are aesthetic reasons for them to act. Local experts can serve as normative standards for non-experts because they exercise their core aesthetic competence to make correct aesthetic evaluations in their actions. In a nutshell, that's the network theory's answer to the question of what makes aesthetic value normative.

There's much more to be said about Lopes's notion of aesthetic merit, and the aesthetic value pluralism he takes to be implied by his view, but with this fuller sketch of the network theory we are at least in a position to understand why it better accounts for his starting explananda than hedonism can. The network theory isn't merely consistent with, but actually predicts, the observed facts about local experts: they come from all walks of life, jointly inhabit the known aesthetic universe, specialize by domain and activity, and can be relied upon to act well. As such, Lopes concludes, and in the absence of further theoretical options, 'We should infer its truth' (p. 143).

Although the main argument ends here, in five further chapters Lopes offers 'five bonus arguments' (p. 11) intended to demonstrate the explanatory power, and thus the enhanced appeal, of the network theory. Chapter 8 is about our aesthetic psychologies and argues *contra* hedonism that we do not need to be motivated by a desire for pleasure in order to act aesthetically; it also includes an argument for aesthetic reasons externalism.[10] Chapter 9 addresses aesthetic discourse, arguing for a perspectivist as opposed to relativist semantics. The strength of relativism is supposed to be its ability to explain faultless disagreement; but Lopes argues that, within an aesthetic practice, disagreement isn't always faultless. The point of aesthetic discourse is not merely to self-attribute one's own aesthetic sensibility – to say, 'I know what I like and that's that' – but to work out, together, precisely which aesthetic properties to attribute to objects, which is why it often bothers us when we disagree with co-practitioners; we want some measure of consensus. Chapter 10 turns to the metaphysics of aesthetic value, which in many circles is *the* interesting debate in aesthetics. Are aesthetic values objective/response-independent, or subjective/response-dependent? Lopes's discussion here is

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[10] See also Alex King, 'The Amoralist and the Anaesthetic', *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 99 (2018): 632–63.

particularly intricate, as he works out a plausible form of aesthetic value naturalism that sidesteps that hoary debate. Briefly, he distinguishes the (response-independent) grounding relation, which relates aesthetic value facts to natural facts about a practice, from the (response-dependent) anchoring relation, which relates facts about a practice to facts about the agents whose responses explain what brings the practice into existence at all. Which aesthetic practices there are depends on (biological, psychological, sociological, and historical) facts about creatures like us, but once those practices are around, then aesthetic value facts are perfectly response-independent.

Chapter 11 addresses the pre-theoretical question that drives philosophical investigation into this topic at all: what is the place of aesthetic value in the good life? And Chapter 12 considers this question at not the individual but the collective level: what reasons do we have to maintain the social infrastructure of aesthetic practices, even when we personally do not participate in them? Each of these five final chapters is worthy of further attention; I could imagine teaching one a week in a graduate or advanced undergraduate seminar, in tandem with other relevant papers from the literature. Rather than go into the details of those chapters here, in the interest of space I instead want to motivate two sets of objections to the core components of the network theory.

The first set of objections relates to the notion of a practice. On the network theory, what I have aesthetic reason to do depends on which practices I am part of; I should correctly attribute aesthetic values, based on the profile of the practice, so as to raise my chance of achievement within the practice. Clearly this requires knowing which practice I'm participating in, which raises thorny questions about the individuation of practices. A variant of this question is familiar from discussions of genre classification within the philosophy of art. Does cubist painting belong to the same practice as post-Impressionist painting? On the one hand, it adopts a new style of representing pictorial space; on the other hand, it continues to render its subject in familiar genres such as still life, portraiture, and landscape.[11] On Lopes's account, this question has even greater urgency, because an answer is required not merely for assessing the correctness of critical judgement, but of determining the success conditions of all aesthetic acts. Since the aesthetic universe is larger than the artistic universe, comprising an enormous array of extant social practices, there's even more room for gerrymandering. Ed Wood, the writer, producer, director, and editor of the discussed-to-death D-movie *Plan 9 from Outer Space*

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[11] For one discussion of this point, see Jonathan Gilmore, 'Criticism', in *the Routledge Companion to Aesthetics*, 3rd ed., ed. Berys Gaut and Dominic McIver Lopes (New York: Routledge, 2013), 375–83.

(1959), reportedly changed his mind about which practice it belonged to: he didn't intend to make a serious film, as originally reported, but knowingly produced a campy, technically flawed mess. Even if we set aside issues of artistic intention, the film is arguably now a masterpiece in the practice of 'so-bad-it's-good' cinema. A certain kind of hedonist can insist that appreciators have good reason to experience the film under the latter category, since it heightens the pleasure we can derive from the film. But what does the network theory say about assessing Wood's act? Is there a fact of the matter about which practice it falls under, and thus whether it counts as an achievement or not? It's not obvious what a local cinephile expert would say about this, though admittedly it's also not obvious whether this is an especially serious worry for Lopes's account. After all, practices are messy, with several dimensions of vagueness, so maybe the theory just needs to get the paradigm cases right.

A related, but more pressing, issue concerns practice-change, and whether the network theory can make sense of practice-reform. I am a proud dog parent of a Cavapoochon, a triple-cross between a Toy Poodle, a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, and a Bichon Frise. Although this kind of designer breed is not recognized by the American Kennel Club, there is a practice of creating these dogs, and something like a breed standard. On the network theory, I have aesthetic reason to keep my dog's ears long so that he maintains the teddy-bear face characteristic of this breed standard. I achieve, or his groomer does, when my dog gets this kind of haircut. As this anecdote already illustrates, though, practices change: breeds can diverge, and breed standards themselves can change. The King Charles Spaniel, familiar from seventeenth-century English, Dutch, and Spanish painting, had a flatter, more snub-nosed face, which was transformed over time into the longer snout favoured in the Cavalier King Charles Spaniel today. The question is: did breeders have aesthetic reasons for this change?[12] This is distinct from the problem, familiar from the philosophy of art, of judging novel works of art, and whether they create radically new standards *ex post*. The question is rather whether practitioners have *ex ante* reasons to change their practices. Clearly, Lopes's network theory, which emphasizes the path-dependence of social practices, implies that we have aesthetic reason to continue to achieve based on the current norms of the practice; Cavalier breeders should continue to produce dogs who most closely approximate the snub-nosed face given by the breed standard. But are there reasons to change the norms of the practice itself? If not, can we make sense of aesthetic progress? Hedonism can give an answer, though it might not

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[12] Arguably, there were moral reasons for the change, since the shorter-nosed Cavaliers are brachycephalic, meaning they often have trouble breathing and live shorter lives.

be a good answer: norm-change within a practice is progressive just when it increases the expected pleasure afforded by the items in that practice. Lopes is explicit that the network theory 'provides no tool for ranking the aesthetic values of items in a perfectly general way' (p. 204); there is no view from aesthetic nowhere. But the question is not whether we can rank all the practices, but whether we can assess whether a norm-change to a particular practice is progressive or regressive. Maybe we shouldn't believe in aesthetic progress, but it's unclear whether the network theory would have any practice-external resources by which to offer such an assessment.

Finally, what about aesthetic acts outside of social practices? Lopes's theory seems to imply that there are none, that all aesthetic acts have an irreducible social element. But some acts are both genuinely aesthetic and essentially private. In Proust's novel *Swann's Way*, the narrator Marcel makes an extraordinary promise, to a cluster of hawthorn flowers, to return each spring to the countryside and appreciate their beauty, observing them like masterpieces of painting. Marcel's language makes clear that this is a distinctively aesthetic act: the flowers fill him with 'the joy we feel when we see a work by our favorite painter'.[13] But the act is also private, even isolating: in returning each year, he will 'not let [his] life be like the senseless lives of other men'.[14] Even if the normativity of this act – the obligation to return to appreciate the hawthorns – is not grounded in pleasure, as the hedonist would have it, neither does it seem grounded in any kind of social practice, let alone in the normativity of achievement.[15]

That last concern blurs into the second set of objections, which address the normativity of achievement directly. In Chapter 11, Lopes considers what reasons we have to take part in any particular aesthetic practice. After all, given that aesthetic agents specialize by domain and activity, each of us is what Lopes calls an 'outsider sceptic' with respect to at least some aesthetic practices. I simply cannot understand the appeal of collecting Hummel figurines, for instance. The answer to outsider scepticism, according to Lopes, requires 'ordinal rankings from personal points of view' (p. 205): we want to give an account of which practices individual aesthetic agents, with their distinctive social backgrounds and skills, have most reason to opt into. Hedonism gives a clear answer, of course, though it's far too general and applies to all agents

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13   Marcel Proust, *Swann's Way*, trans. Lydia Davis (New York: Penguin, 2002), 142.
14   Ibid., 148.
15   For a fuller discussion of this case, see Robbie Kubala, 'Grounding Aesthetic Obligations', *British Journal of Aesthetics* 58 (2018): 271–85, where I argue that the normativity of the act is ultimately grounded in the significance of Marcel's practical identity.

regardless of background: we should opt into the practices that true judges identify as giving us the most pleasure. The network theory, by contrast, takes our aesthetic positionality seriously. But it ranks practices, for individual agents, based on whether or not they would achieve if they were to opt into a practice. To take Lopes's example, 'Aaron, who is good at making North Indian curries, has strong derived aesthetic reason to learn to make Goan curries. Not so Rosalina, who does not cook' (p. 206).

One might well ask who is let down if Aaron fails to respond to this reason – Himself? Others? Goan curry? – and to what extent that failure matters. But I want to raise an even more basic worry: what if Aaron doesn't want to achieve? Should that even count as a failure of responsiveness? Lopes suggests that it 'court[s] incoherence' (p. 202), since agents who have reason to act at all have reason to act well, but I am sceptical whether this is so. Take another culinary example, offered in a different argumentative context but relevant here, from Sarah Paul and Jennifer Morton:

> Consider the agent who values cooking and fine cuisine even though his palate is indiscriminate, his execution sloppy and his knowledge of cooking techniques limited. This agent is in a relatively bad position to engage with the activity of cooking, yet he eagerly watches cooking shows, subscribes to cooking magazines and eats at trendy restaurants. It seems that in virtue of his love for cooking, he has more reason to take classes and spend time experimenting with cooking than someone else whom cooking leaves completely cold. This cannot be explained by his superior relation to cooking, since he is by hypothesis in a worse position than many others. One might argue […] that his love of cooking indicates that he will enjoy this activity and that one has additional reason to engage with valuable activities if one will enjoy them. […] But it is far from clear that the balance of pleasures and pains will always work out in favour of this suggestion; after all, our bumbling chef might get incredibly frustrated and disappointed as he pursues his beloved hobby. We suggest that this example lends support to an alternative view: perhaps the valuing itself is what gives rise to the additional reasons in question.[16]

If the example is at all plausible, it's clear that what we have aesthetic reason to do is not explicable entirely in terms of pleasure (the bumbling chef is frequently frustrated in his aims); Lopes is right that we are clearly not always motivated by pleasure, and that many aesthetic acts can be unpleasant to carry out (do I really have to practice my scales again?). But the example also explicitly rules out the idea that the agent in question has achievement-based reasons, since *ex hypothesi* he is not likely to achieve. Rather, he simply wants to cook, and that (somehow) grounds the reasons he has in this case.

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[16]   Sarah K. Paul and Jennifer M. Morton, 'Critical Notice: *Of Reasons and Recognition*', *Analysis Reviews* 74 (2014): 341.

In Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Eve exhorts Adam: 'Let us divide our labours, thou where choice / Leads thee, or where most needs.'[17] For Lopes, the aesthetic division of labour is based entirely on the latter, on what we are collectively able to achieve by specializing and cooperating. But for Eve, the division of labour can also be based on choice, regardless of need. This seems right to me: aesthetic normativity should depend in part, if not on what we love or value in a full-blown way, on our preferences: what we like and dislike. (That line of thinking is what gave rise to the formerly dominant question of aesthetic normativity: if my aesthetic judgments are merely deliverances of my sensibility, then how could they aspire to any kind of objectivity? So, it's not without its problems, either.) At the beginning of *Reasons and Persons*, Derek Parfit famously distinguished three plausible theories about self-interest. One is hedonism: what's best for us is what gives most happiness. Another is the objective list theory: some things are good for us, even if we don't want them. But there's a third option, the desire-fulfilment theory: what's best for us is what best fulfils our desires.[18] Lopes has jumped from an aesthetic analogue of the first to the second – a version of the objective list theory with only one item, achievement, on it – without considering the possibility of a desire-fulfilment theory, a theory of aesthetic normativity that allows for at least some choice independently of what is most likely to lead us to achieve. There are many arguments against a desire-fulfilment theory of self-interest, but perhaps it might be made to work in aesthetics.

I think Lopes must be right that pleasure cannot be the only source of normativity in the aesthetic domain; the question is why it cannot be one source, along with desire-fulfilment and achievement. In a telling passage, Lopes writes: 'Having observed how being good at doing something often goes with loving to do it, we tend to reason that we must love what we are good at doing. But we reason fallaciously. We can sacrifice what we want on the altar of achievement' (p. 151). I don't have an argument against this claim (apart from the objections I've already raised) so much as a strong sense that it simply cannot be true of our aesthetic lives. If I were a Marxist, I might even comment that Lopes's theory is a recipe for alienated labour, and precisely in the domain that is supposed to be most free from commercial values and most amenable to the exercise of spontaneous agency. But working out the details of a hybrid-source theory, and assessing how well it fares against its rivals, would be a demanding task for another occasion.

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17   Milton, *Paradise Lost*, bk. 9, lines 214–15.
18   Derek Parfit, *Reasons and Persons* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 4.

I hope to have made it clear that this tremendously rich book is required reading for, frankly, anyone interested in normativity at all, aesthetic or otherwise. So, it's worth commenting, in closing, on two additional praiseworthy features. The first is that, amazingly, Lopes has no footnotes or endnotes. The eye can travel smoothly down the page without flitting to the lower margins or (worse) all the way to the back of the book. The second, even more astounding in light of the first, is that Lopes appears to have read and cited (in the main text!) nearly everything written on these topics. His 25-page, closely-set bibliography lists, if I have counted correctly, 579 distinct sources. (To compare: Goldman's *Aesthetic Value* cites 88, though admittedly this was before the topic of aesthetic value began to attract as much philosophical attention.) As Lopes exhorts us in the Acknowledgements, 'My fellow philosophers, please try this. Cite like scientists' (p. xi). These are only two more ways in which Lopes has, through this exemplary achievement, set the bar very high for everyone working on value and normativity.

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