

## **The Intentionality and Intelligibility of Moods**

*Dr. Jonathan Mitchell (final pre-print version – please do not quote without permission)*

*Abstract:* This article offers an account of moods as distinctive kinds of personal level affective-evaluative states, which are both intentional and rationally intelligible in specific ways. The account contrasts with those who claim moods are non-intentional, and so also arational. Section 1 provides a conception of intentionality and distinguishes moods, as occurrent experiential states, from other states in the affective domain. Section 2 argues moods target the subject's total environment presented in a specific evaluative light through felt valenced attitudes (the Mood-Intentionality thesis). Section 3 argues some moods are experienced as rationally intelligible responses, and so epistemically appropriate, to the way 'the world' presents itself (the Mood-Intelligibility thesis). Finally, section 4 discusses the epistemology of moods.

### **Introduction**

It is commonplace to think typical emotions are intentional states in at least the minimal sense that they have objects at which they are directed. For example, in an episode of anger, there is typically something I am angry about, such as the inconsiderate individual who just barged into me. Moreover, emotions have a first-personal qualitative character (what-it-is-likeness). Again, in an episode of anger, I typically experience a strong feeling of disfavour along with characteristic bodily sensations, such as muscle tensing and increased heart rate. In many cases, this affective phenomenology is experienced as caused by – as an apparent effect of – the object the emotion is directed towards. In philosophical discussion of affective states, moods are often distinguished from emotions in that they are said to lack intentionality, while still possessing a felt phenomenology. So, although moods have a first-personal qualitative character, it is claimed this type of affective state is not directed towards an object.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, moods might also be arational, insofar as there is no object to which the mood is experienced as a rational response, and so they do not admit of rational assessment.

In this article, I present an alternative view of some moods as personal level affective-evaluative states which are both intentional and rationally intelligible in specific ways. The personal level caveat is necessary to distinguish the phenomenological account provided here from functional or computational accounts, which are framed at the subpersonal level.<sup>2</sup> I argue moods have a distinctive

object, namely, the subject's total environment presented in a specific evaluative light, and also are sometimes experienced as rationally intelligible responses to that evaluative character. Further, I consider the sceptical view that moods necessarily lack positive epistemic standing, and its alternative, that some moods can be epistemically justified, suggesting a mixed position, which holds open the possibility of justified moods.

Section 1 provides a conception of intentionality and distinguishes moods, as occurrent experiential states, from other states in the affective domain. Section 2 argues moods are directed toward the subject's total environment presented in a specific evaluative light through felt valenced attitudes. I call this the Mood-Intentionality thesis. Building on this, Section 3 argues some moods are experienced as rationally intelligible responses, and so epistemically appropriate, to the way 'the world' presents itself. I call this the Mood-Intelligibility thesis. Finally, section 4 provides reflections on the epistemology of moods.

### **1. Homing in on Intentionality and Moods**

To understand the claim that moods are intentional states we need an account of what is required for a personal level mental state to be intentional. The personal level caveat is important to distinguish between the intentionality typical of conscious mental states in contrast to subpersonal mental states, or non-mental functional states.<sup>3</sup> Much philosophy of mind thinks about personal level intentionality in terms of mental states about-ness or of-ness, where these terms are shorthand for a state having representational content.<sup>4</sup> As we shall see later, about-ness or of-ness is a misleading criterion when it comes to the intentionality of moods. A paradigmatic example of a personal level intentional state is a belief, where this can be expressed in the form "S believes that P". The representational content would be the proposition <that P>, where the intentional attitude (or psychological mode), in this case belief, specifies how that content is entertained – in the case of believing *as true*. Moreover, in having representational content intentional states have conditions of satisfaction, and so their content, as specified in terms of those conditions, can be assessed according to whether those conditions are satisfied. For example, S's belief <that P> is correct *iff* what it represents as the case *really is* the case. Note, the class of personal level intentional states is not exhausted by propositional attitudes, like

belief or judgement, which have a proposition as their content, since the intentional content of many perceptions and emotions (*S sees  $p$* ; *S fears  $p$* ) are arguably not propositionally structured.<sup>5</sup>

It is also sometimes thought that for *X* to be an intentional object for a subject it should satisfy the following conditions: (a) *X* is presented to *S* through an intentional experience; (b) *S* has the ability, at the time, to re-identify *X* as the same across temporally distinct intentional experiences; (c) it should be possible for *S* to entertain *X* under different intentional attitudes, without modifying the content; and (d) *S* possesses the ability to form corresponding judgements where *X* (so identified), can figure as the subject of predication (judging that *X* is thus and so). So framed, conditions on intentional objectivity are equivalent to some specifications of what is required for the content of an intentional experience to be conceptually structured.<sup>6</sup>

However, there is a danger of running together a more minimal conception of intentionality, which just involves *X* being presented to *S* through an intentional experience, and object intentionality in this more demanding sense – as also satisfying (b), (c) and (d). Not all intentionality is object intentionality in this demanding sense, since states which arguably have intentional contents fail (for whatever reason) to satisfy (b), (c) or (d). For my purposes, I talk about intentional states and their objects in the less demanding sense, as only necessitating satisfying condition (a). I remain non-committal on whether the intentional contents of moods meet these further conditions, and whether their content is conceptually structured. As such the intentionality of moods will not turn on satisfying further conditions for intentional objectivity.

Now we have a conception of intentionality it is necessary to specify what a mood is. An important distinction is between moods as a class of states which are a common feature of most people's affective psychology, and a narrower sense of the term associated with what, on clinical definitions, are called mood disorders.<sup>7</sup> Although it is difficult to specify any definitive principle to distinguish what counts as a normal mood as contrasted with pathological cases – especially given that many of the states folk psychology identifies as moods are experienced along a spectrum of mild to severe, with severe moods often being candidates for the pathological designation – the distinction is nonetheless important. One can be depressed without meeting (at least some of) the diagnostic criteria for clinical depression, or be elated without meeting the diagnostic criteria for mania. Given

this, the account of moods offered here is a theorizing of our folk psychological sense of the term, and so of a type of affective state not pathological by nature; most people have experienced ‘positive’ moods of joy, elation, optimism, calmness, serenity, and ‘negative’ moods of depression, anxiety, irascibility, irritability, and boredom.

That certain moods are intentional states is trivially true where we can specify a physical particular, person (including features or character traits), event, or state of affairs, which the state is about – what in philosophy of emotion is called a particular object.<sup>8</sup> For example, subjects often report they are depressed or joyous about X, where X could be (in principle) any particular object. Given this, moods expressible in the general form ‘S is M about particular object X’ are intentional states. However, in these cases we have a mood-term (M) playing the same role as usually played by an emotion-term, and therefore such reports specify occurrent emotional experiences which target particular objects. We can see this insofar as when mood-terms stand in for emotion-terms we have – like for standard emotions – a one-to-many variable relation to the particular object; I can be anxious about my exam results, Bill’s illness, the state of the environment (etc.). This might be overlooked if the particular object is unreported, say in contexts where the intentional information is assumed. For example, someone who says ‘I’m irritated’, where the particular object, ‘by your behavior’, is implicit. A similar analysis can be extended to cases where mood-terms stand in for emotion-terms in experiences reported with demonstratives, for example, ‘*that* was elating’ or ‘*this* is depressing’, where the demonstrative picks out a particular object.

However, there are strong reasons for avoiding assimilating moods to occurrent emotions in a way that would have them inherit this aspect of emotions’ intentionality. We are acquainted with contexts in which to questions like ‘what are you anxious about’, a typical response could be ‘everything’, and/or ‘nothing in particular’. Likewise, the subject of a joyous mood might report their experience as one in which everything is imbued with positive value. While such linguistic data is only suggestive – I consider more of it and provide a theoretical framework which explains it in section 2 – it provides *prima facie* motivation for supposing moods *proper* constitute a distinctive class of affective states. I unpack this supposition below.

It is helpful to distinguish between dispositional and occurrent affective states.<sup>9</sup> Some mark the distinction between emotions and moods in this way, where moods are dispositions to enter into occurrent emotions.<sup>10</sup> For example, consider an irritable person, who has a tendency to enter into episodes of anger which target particular objects. This could be thought as the actualization of a mood – dispositionally understood – in an occurrent emotion. However, conceptualizing moods as essentially dispositions to enter into occurrent emotions struggles to make sense of important features of affective experience. First, moods often influence behavior without the mediation of being actualized in an emotion. For example, someone in an irritable mood could trudge up the stairs, without necessarily having entered into the occurrent emotion of anger.<sup>11</sup> Second, even if moods dispose one to occurrent emotions, they typically do so with respect to a range of emotions, rather than one in particular. For example, reports of depression highlight emotions of anger, diminished sexual arousal, and sadness, as that to which depression disposes one.

The dispositional view could respond by arguing moods are multi-track emotional dispositions. Yet, importantly, even a multi-track dispositional view overlooks the felt phenomenology of moods – there is something it occurrently feels like to experience a mood. Anxiety, depression, melancholy, serenity, and elation (and arguably all moods) have a what-it-is-likeness, and so an experiential manifestation in phenomenal consciousness, that cannot be captured by an exclusively dispositional specification. We are familiar with occurrent moods in cases where people report they are presently anxious, or joyous, such that they are in a mood.<sup>12</sup> Such reports are not fundamentally about dispositions, but presently occurring experiential states (the former are better termed temperaments rather than moods *proper*).<sup>13</sup> Given this, we should distinguish a dispositional understanding of moods – and whatever intentionality that involves – from occurrent moods. It is moods so understood which are the focus from here on.<sup>14</sup>

This distinction helps us understand the *prima facie*, although untenable, plausibility to distinguishing between moods as long-lived affective states, in contrast to emotions as short-lived. Uncontestably, people struggle with forms of depression or anxiety for prolonged periods, and in such cases, have a tendency to be depressed – their temperament is depressive. Yet moods *proper* – like

emotions – are neither necessarily long-lived or short-lived.<sup>15</sup> We can experience a fleeting mood of joy, be melancholic for an afternoon, or be depressed for weeks on end.

Note, these distinctions are made for theoretical clarity. I do not deny affective experience often blurs them, involving complex oscillations between them.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, nothing said above rules out that in virtue of being in a mood – understood as an occurrent experiential state – one might be more disposed to certain emotions than one otherwise would be. This can be correct without moods being, at least fundamentally or essentially, dispositional states.

## 2. The Mood-Intentionality Thesis

### 2.1 *The argument from about-ness*

Are moods, understood as occurrent experiential states, intentional? We could answer no by running the following argument:

(P1) Define intentionality in terms of about-ness or of-ness

(P2) For any candidate intentional state we should be able to say what it is an experience about or of

(P3) Moods are not of or about anything in particular

(C) Therefore, moods are not intentional states

This argument is found in John Searle, who writes ‘my nervousness and undirected anxiety need not...be *about* anything’, and therefore ‘there are forms of nervousness, elation and undirected anxiety that are not intentional’ (Searle, 1983: 1).<sup>17</sup>

Aside from the circularity – it is not surprising something called undirected anxiety turns out to be non-intentional – the interesting assumption of the argument is that intentionality is defined as exclusively directedness towards particular objects (i.e. physical particulars, persons, events or state of affairs). Naturally, a mood of joy, for example, is not about any particular object, on pain of becoming an occurrent emotion (e.g. joy about my recent promotion). Yet, it does not therefore follow that it is not about anything – that it does not have a more general kind of directedness. If it is

responded that we can only make sense of about-ness or of-ness in reference to particular objects, we can revise this aspect of our conception of intentionality, and alternatively talk of ‘something’ being given to the mind.<sup>18</sup> So, something as mooded, analogous to something emoted or perceived; that is, something as presented through a mood. This revision could only be blocked given an independent argument showing intentionality is exhausted by directedness towards particular objects, such that all that can even be given to the mind, in this sense, is a particular object.<sup>19</sup>

However, even if the above argument can be rebutted by modifying this aspect of our conception of intentionality – in that of-ness or about-ness is too restrictive a criterion – we face two problems. First, we need a substantive characterization of this ‘something’ given to the mind in a mood. We cannot appeal to any particular object, without assimilating moods to occurrent emotions, yet we need more than the placeholder ‘something’. Second, for paradigmatic intentional experiences we can specify the mode of presentation, that is, the way the object is (re)presented as determinately ‘thus and so’ (its aspectual shape). Given this, we need to say what is distinctive about the intentional attitude of ‘mooding’.

## 2.2 *The Somatic Feeling View*

One view is that the object of a mood is a somatic state of the subject (i.e. bodily changes). Note, a somatic state *simpliciter* would not suffice, since intentionality requires an experience which is directed toward something. If I possessed no interoceptive awareness of the somatic state we have a non-intentional mental state, in this case raw mood feel (akin to a Reidian sensation). So, a somatic feeling view should claim moods are constituted by interoceptive awareness (an ‘inner perception’) of the relevant somatic state (this would be the ‘something’ given to the mind). This view is close to that of Michael Tye, who calls moods ‘sensory representations’ of our ‘bodily landscape’ (Tye, 1995: 1), and is an extension of the Jamesian theory of emotion to moods (30).<sup>20</sup> The view seems able to capture aspects of the affective phenomenology of moods. For example, reports of negative moods in particular frequently highlight somatic aspects. Depressed subjects often report feeling drained, heavy, logy, and sluggish, and anxious subjects report feelings of tension which affect the whole body.<sup>21</sup>

However, the somatic feeling view encounters problems. First, it makes the intentionality of moods too similar to that which strong intentionalists – those who claim there are no non-object involving features of conscious experience – give of bodily sensations as constituted by interoceptive awareness.<sup>22</sup> For example, if depression is constituted by awareness of feeling drained, heavy, logy, and sluggish, how is this experience distinct from states of illness, or somatic symptom (somatoform) disorders, also described in similar terms? Furthermore, it is unclear how the view could distinguish between the somatic states involved in moods compared to those which the parallel theory of emotion claims to be constitutive of emotions. To allay these worries, we need a principled way of distinguishing the somatic states constitutive of moods, compared with bodily perturbations in general. Absent this, interoceptive awareness of somatic states is an insufficiently distinguishing criterion for being in a mood.

Second, it is questionable whether there are qualitatively distinct somatic states for different moods. Note, there are two separable issues. (1) Does empirical psychology tell us moods can be individuated exclusively in somatic terms, and (2) can subjects, in favourable circumstances, type-identify their moods in terms of felt bodily changes at the personal level. With respect to (1), the relevant empirical psychological research primarily focuses on pathological cases, which for reasons outlined below might skew the importance of somatic states.<sup>23</sup> Focusing on (2), although positive moods like joy and elation might be experienced as having a somatic profile distinct from negative moods like anxiety or irritability, it is an open question whether the fine-grained distinctions we make between joy and ecstasy, or melancholy and depression, are based on a personal level experience of a distinct somatic profile for each mood.<sup>24</sup> This is reflected in first-personal reports of moods, which often highlight the same somatic aspects as consciously present, for example, sluggish or heavy body in depression, boredom, and apathy, and a tense body in irritable mood, anxiety, and nervousness.<sup>25</sup>

Third, the appeal of the somatic view is perhaps the effect of a generalization from pathological cases. For example, anxiety disorders are frequently thought, by both psychologists and clinicians, to be caused by hyper-analytic (often exclusive) attention to somatic states, which in certain cases leads to anxiety or panic attacks.<sup>26</sup> Contrastingly, non-pathological moods, especially those which are ‘cool’ rather than ‘hot’ – for example, serenity, boredom, or listlessness – arguably have a phenomenology



that need not essentially involve explicit conscious awareness of bodily feelings. Even taking the difficult case of anxiety, we can distinguish between a folk psychological understanding which is non-pathological, and anxiety disorders in which somatic states become the central object of awareness. Moreover, when somatic states do become the focus of attention, arguably the bodily feelings are first experienced as caused by – as apparent effects of – something else moods are about.<sup>27</sup>

However, the strongest objection to the somatic feeling view is that it cannot be the whole story. As will become clear in the following discussion, we overlook something distinctive about moods if we cash out their intentionality exclusively in interoceptive terms. Note, rejecting this view need not involve denying moods often involve somatic states as accompaniments, and one could even hold that in certain (perhaps pathological) cases moods may involve, as acts of second-order attention, interoceptive awareness of somatic states. Moreover, we can distinguish between the correct claim that moods involve the body in that they are experienced by embodied, spatio-temporal subjects, and the somatic feeling view's claim that they are fundamentally about the body.

It might, however, be claimed moods present 'the self' to oneself; the 'something' of the intentionality of moods would be 'the self' (under some specification). For example, depression might present oneself as unable to act, or useless. However, it is an open question whether typical, non-pathological moods necessarily involve such self-presentations. For example, in what sense is an irritable or joyful mood, at least first and foremost, necessarily experienced as *about me*? There is an important phenomenological distinction between representing myself as joyous and pre-reflectively being in a joyous mood.<sup>28</sup> Note, in reflection moods might 'reveal something about the subject', but since we are trying to capture their pre-reflective phenomenology this would be beside the point. Moreover, when such self-presentations are salient in the experience, in many cases they seem to be given as responses to 'the world' as already represented as having a specific character; in non-pathological depression, it is because 'the world' seems bleak and hostile that it does not afford opportunities for meaningful action or engagement. In this sense, the self-presentations that figure in moods which have these aspects might be dependent on the world-directed aspects of their content. Making sense of this latter dimension will concern me in the rest of this article.

### *2.3 The Mood Intentionality Thesis*

Prefiguring a detailed account below, the ‘something’ which principally figures in the intentionality of moods is not a state of oneself, but ‘the world’. Philosophers and psychologists have expressed this idea as follows: in moods, the ‘world as a whole’ is presented in a certain way; moods are ‘global’ and ‘diffuse’.<sup>29</sup> In joy, for example, ‘the world’ is presented as imbued with positive value. Or in irritability, as Jesse Prinz claims, we are presented with the ‘general offensiveness of the world’.<sup>30</sup> Folk psychological reports also employ similar terms. For example, in Joel R. Davitz (1969) study, 42% of subjects reported depression as involving a sense that ‘everything seems useless, absurd, meaningless’, 34% reported anxiety as involving an experience that ‘everything seems out of proportion’. On the positive side, 66% of subjects reported cheerfulness and contentment as involving a sense that ‘the world seems basically good and beautiful’, and 62% reported serenity as involving ‘peace with the world’.<sup>31</sup>

Although these remarks point toward something important about the exteroceptive intentionality of moods they fall short of a systematic account. The idea that the ‘whole world’ is presented needs clarifying, and talk of a ‘certain way’ the world is presented is vague, since we need to specify what is distinctive of the mood-specific mode of intentional presentation.

The following formulation is more precise:

**Mood-Intentionality Thesis:** The object of a mood for S is their total environment presented in a specific evaluative light through a felt valenced intentional attitude towards it (as a felt response).

Note, this captures not just that moods involve exteroceptive intentionality – as world-directed in a sense that contrasts with being internally-directed (as about states of the subject) – but are also world-directed in targeting the subject’s total environment, rather than any particular object (i.e. physical particular, person, event or state of affairs) in that environment. The thesis also tells us how that total environment is presented, namely in a specific evaluative light. As such, the intentional content of

moods is evaluative. This is a theoretical reflection of the way evaluative terms figure in the above reports of moods.

That the Mood-Intentionality thesis captures these features is important because it allows us to theorize moods as a class of affective intentional states which are unified by sharing something essential in common, and yet be able to identify and discriminate different moods. After all, both joy and depression are arguably about the subject's total environment, but it is (at least in part) the evaluative light – or 'formal object' as an evaluative specification – which is different, and therefore allows us for discrimination between them. We can synthesize these points by saying moods have a suitably general, but type-specific evaluative representational or presentational content.<sup>32</sup> However, the Mood-Intentionality thesis also claims this type-specific evaluative content is (re)presented through a felt valenced intentional attitude (a felt response). Before I unpack this aspect, I address two objections that arise from the foregoing analysis.

It might be objected that on the picture being recommended, moods are too similar to how many philosophers think about occurrent emotional experiences, as evaluative presentations of some sort, and so having evaluative intentional content.<sup>33</sup> There is indeed a similarity between emotions (so understood) and moods on the picture being recommended. Yet, arguably a plausible account of moods should support, rather than undermine, the pre-theoretical intuition that emotions and moods are importantly connected. More specifically, it should be able to explain the following distinctive feature of affective psychology: it is possible for a mood to develop into an emotion, and an emotion to develop into a mood.<sup>34</sup> The Mood-Intentionality thesis provides materials for explaining this: fear about a particular object can diffuse into generalized anxiety which targets the subject's total environment, and generalized anxiety of this kind can become definite fear by taking a particular object. Moreover, by emphasizing the evaluative dimension of moods we can explain how, in cases of affective transition, the evaluative presentation often retains a similar character. Minimally, this could be a matter of both the emotion and mood being a 'negative' evaluative presentation, as dangerous (emotion), as depressing (mood), or 'positive' evaluative presentation, as admirable (emotion), as joyous (mood). So, that emotions and moods involve evaluative presentations is not a disadvantage of the Mood-Intentionality thesis, but an advantage.

A second objection is that the way the Mood-Intentionality thesis aims to capture the exteroceptive intentionality of moods – as about one’s total environment presented in a specific evaluative light – fails to distinguish occurrent emotions from moods. Consider the following case: an individual feels angry about the institution where they live and work, and of which they are a part. As such, the institution constitutes their ‘total environment’, and is the particular object of their emotion of anger. Yet, if one’s total environment can unproblematically figure as a particular object of an emotion, then the appeal to the ‘total environment’ will not differentiate the intentional target of moods from that of emotions. To respond to this objection, we need to clarify the notion of one’s total environment in the Mood-Intentionality thesis and contrast it with the sense deployed in this example.

An important consideration is that the particular object of an emotion can be a specific state of affairs. This might be relatively simple, say anger about the coffee vendor closing early, but in other cases may be more complex, such as anger about the current political situation, which may involve complex determinations of that situation (e.g. the corrupt leader, lack of a credible alternative, rigged voting system etc.). In the example above, our individual is not just angry about his institution *simpliciter*. Rather, to make sense of his anger we need to say it is about a specific state of affairs with respect to that institution. If asked why he is angry he might, hyperbolically say ‘it’s everything’, but this would be imprecise if he is experiencing an occurrent emotion. Rather, it is ‘everything’ about the institution, and his anger reposes on specific determinations of that institution and his relation to it. For example, the poor working conditions, low pay, lack of promotion opportunities etc. In this sense, he would not say he was angry at ‘nothing in particular’ with respect to this institution, as his ‘total environment’. So, the sense in which his ‘total environment’ figures as the object of his emotion of anger – if it does – is as a highly determinate, albeit complex and perhaps conjunctively specifiable, state of affairs.

Yet, unless this institution exhausts all of this individual’s worldly-relations, including modal relations to future and past – and it is difficult to see how it could – then the sense of one’s ‘total environment’ employed in this example is different from how it figures in the Mood-Intentionality thesis. While our individual might hyperbolically say the institution is at present ‘his world’, we understand that all his worldly-relations, including his modal relations, outstrip this more limited

sense of 'total environment'. To see the cogency of the distinction we can imagine our subject, angry at his institution, and so experiencing his 'total environment' as offensive in the complex state of affairs sense, nonetheless slipping into a mood of irritability towards his total environment in the more all-encompassing worldly-relations sense. Intuitively, the target becomes different, in that the mood is about his total environment in a sense not co-extensive with his institution.

So, the sense of one's total environment in the Mood-Intentionality thesis does not just concern the perceptual environment of spatio-temporal particulars, but also encompasses both present but also modal relations, and also one's current projects, values, aims (one's evaluative horizons). In this sense, it is not of a particular object, and certainly not a highly determinate state of affairs, with specific determinations of different aspects. Rather, it is one's total environment, understood as encompassing the broadest set of relations (and potential relations) between self and world, and so as necessarily open-ended, which is presented in an evaluative light. It is a sense of one's total environment which lacks the specificity reference to particular objects makes possible, even complex conjunctively specified states of affairs.<sup>35</sup> It would be in this sense that moods could be described, in Nico Frijda's words, as 'experiences of situational meaning with the characteristic of globality' (Frijda, 1987: 252). This understanding is a plausible theorizing of contexts in which to questions like 'what are you anxious about', a reasonable and unsurprising response might be 'everything', and/or 'nothing in particular'. Moreover, it can capture familiar modal dimensions to moods, such as the sense in depression of one's future as hopeless or empty, or in joy of one's future as full of possibility.

With these objections met, we can turn to the final dimension of the thesis, namely the claim that the type-specific evaluative content of moods is taken up through a felt valenced intentional attitude, as a felt response. To capture the distinctive intentionality of moods, we need to be clear not just about *what* they represent but *how* they do so – that is, the personal level vehicle for their distinctive content, where we understand the idea of a vehicle as the mental state that does representational work or carries the relevant information.

The contention of the Mood-Intentionality thesis is that moods (re)present through distinctive kinds of feelings. Yet the feelings involved should not be understood by reference to somatic states, but by reference to an exteroceptive kind of felt intentionality. As such moods would involve a

distinctive kind of phenomenal intentionality. The notion of phenomenal intentionality is, minimally, that some personal level mental states have the intentional properties they do in virtue of having the phenomenal character they do.<sup>36</sup> This might sound confused to those who make a sharp distinction between non-intentional felt qualities and intentional states.<sup>37</sup> Yet, in what follows I explain how moods involve a distinctive kind of exteroceptive phenomenal intentionality.

In the affective domain, we can frame the notion of phenomenal intentionality by looking to Goldie's notion of feeling towards – his term for the felt component of emotional experience, which is also claimed to capture their intentionality. Goldie's feelings towards can be thought of (initially) as occurrent, pre-reflective (i.e. not cognitively mediated), affective experiences of value, which are neither reducible to belief, desire or bodily feeling, nor some cognitive evaluative component, say an evaluative judgement, plus some non-intentional felt component (Goldie, 2000: 58-61). Goldie's feelings towards, so construed, fall within the category of what Michael Stocker calls psychic feelings, two senses of which involve being interested in 'the world' and seeing 'the world' to be interesting (Stocker, 1983: 5-26). If we take 'interest' as affective salience, Goldie's feelings towards combine these two attitudes. One is 'interested' in the world, that is to say one has a certain feeling towards it, insofar as one 'sees it' to be 'interesting', that is as possessing evaluative characteristics which are experienced as causally motivating those feelings towards.

Transposing these considerations over to moods, and unpacking the notion of feelings towards, we get the following. Feelings towards, in moods, can be understood as feelings of favour or disfavour towards the subject's total environment, which are experienced by the subject as a felt response to, and so seemingly causally motivated by, the evaluative light in which that total environment is presented (this causal dimension is explored in detail in section 3).<sup>38</sup> These positively or negatively charged feelings of favour or disfavour can be generally specified as felt valenced intentional attitudes, which are experienced as registering, and so representing, the relevant evaluative light of the subject's total environment.<sup>39</sup> Moods would therefore involve a distinctive type of phenomenal intentionality: the evaluative character of the subject's total environment is (re)presented through a felt valenced intentional attitude towards it. The Mood-Intentionality thesis therefore captures not only what moods (re)present, but how they do so, and so the vehicular properties of those

experiences. It is in this sense that the feelings towards in moods are essential to their exteroceptive phenomenal intentionality, and also explains the experiential valence of moods – that the majority of mood experience is positively or negatively charged.

Note, there is a globalism to these feelings of favour or disfavour, which reflects the global quality of what is presented through a mood. The intentional attitudes are not local – they do not target particular objects, under specific determinations. Rather, they are felt conscious orientations (stances) toward or away from one's total environment as presented in a specific evaluative light, as a charged positive or negative felt comportment which connects us with, and makes us aware of, the way that total environment seems meaningful – as an affective uptake, and so a response to, its evaluative significance.

This understanding of the phenomenal intentionality of moods is borne out in our ability to identify and distinguish mood-types on the basis of felt evaluative differences in the way one's total environment appears. Depression and joy do not merely feel different in terms of a somatic state, but 'the world', one's total environment, feels different because it is presented in a different evaluative light through a different felt valenced intentional attitude towards it. Depression, on this picture involves, at least in significant part, a global attitude of felt disfavour towards one's total environment as depressing; joy involves a global attitude of felt favour towards one's total environment as joyous. Considering other examples, the mood of wonder – rather than the non-affective attitude of cognitive speculation, e.g. 'wondering what will be for lunch today' – can be understood as involving a felt global attitude of favour toward one's total environment presented as wonderful.

Importantly, the Mood-Intentionality thesis does not rule out mixed or ambiguous moods, as involving different and perhaps competing feelings of favour and disfavour toward presentations of one's environment that are evaluatively ambiguous. In fact, the thesis provides more philosophical purchase than its non-intentional alternatives on ambiguous moods, since in such cases there is plausibly indeterminacy in the evaluative light through which one's total environment is affectively presented. Moreover, if it is suggested all moods exhibit a degree of indeterminacy then we can appeal to the target of moods, as about one's total environment rather than particular objects. Nevertheless, if there is no affectively charged intentional attitude present, it is doubtful whether we

are dealing with a mood, or affective state at all. So, while a mood like serenity involves a felt favour towards one's total environment as manifestly serene (as involving a sense of being 'in tune with the world'),<sup>40</sup> there will be borderline cases such as indifference and curiosity. In their non-affective, and non-valenced versions such states would be doubtful candidates for counting as moods according to the Mood-Intentionality thesis.

In line with this understanding, we need not assume that moods, in virtue of having (re)presentational evaluative content, involve evaluative judgements.<sup>41</sup> Moods do not plausibly involve entertaining a proposition in which the evaluative light would figure (e.g. 'that the world is depressing'); although subjects may go on to make corresponding evaluative judgements on the basis of their moods, the personal level vehicle for the evaluative content is, as stated, a felt valenced global attitude. Moods are, therefore, a non-propositional affective apprehension of value – they are experienced as affectively detecting rather than describing the total environments' evaluative light.<sup>42</sup> It is also worth noting the thesis does not necessitate that the moody subject is always able to clearly articulate, either to oneself or others, the evaluative light in which their total environment is affectively presented. The way we sometimes experience moods might involve a fineness of grain (or ineffability) which outstrips our ability to describe those states in terms of a codified mood typology employing the relevant affective and evaluative terms. Yet, this poses no barrier to accepting the Mood-Intentionality thesis, since possession of the relevant linguistic competences is not a necessary condition for ascribing intentional content to experiences.

#### *2.4 A final argument*

A final argument against the Mood-Intentionality thesis goes as follows. For paradigmatic intentional states if we do not specify their objects then ascription of that state to a subject is significantly incomplete, to the extent of unintelligibility. For example, say someone was to tell you they are afraid. Given the particular object is not implicit by way of context (e.g. you are both standing on a precipice), a reasonable question would be 'about what?'. If they answer 'about someone I've seen following me', then the emotion becomes intelligible in a way it was not when originally expressed. Alternatively, if their response to your question was 'I'm just afraid', you might accuse them of not



making sense. It could be argued moods are different from paradigmatic intentional states because a report that ‘Mary is grumpy’ is sufficiently intelligible without specifying any ‘something’ about which she is grumpy. So, intentional specifications are not required to make ascriptions of moods complete or intelligible. One explanation of this asymmetry is that moods are not intentional states.<sup>43</sup>

However, we should question whether we sufficiently understand the ascription of a mood without implicitly granting that, for the subject, there is something more than a non-intentional state. If we examine a report like ‘Mary is grumpy’ it arguably embeds an unstated but implicit intentional content, namely how things are with Mary, which can be specified in terms of how her total environment is showing up. As such, mood ascriptions are unintelligible and incomplete if we do not implicitly grant that, in virtue of being in that mood, the subject stands in some intentional relation to their total environment. By learning ‘Mary is grumpy’ we expect her to respond to her total environment in ways she otherwise might not, for example through paradigmatic behaviors, and forming certain attitudes or making certain assessments. Of course, the intelligibility afforded is more global, and therefore less determinate than for paradigmatic intentional states which target particular objects. Yet, we should only be persuaded of the above argument if we have independent reasons for thinking the kind of intelligibility the specification of objects provides can only be achieved by reference to particular objects, and there are no overriding reasons to accept this restriction.

### **3. The Rational Intelligibility of Moods**

In this section I argue there is a distinctive way moods can be experienced as immediately (without cognitive mediation) rationally intelligible, which is connected to their nature as affective presentations of value. I call this the Mood-Intelligibility thesis:

Mood-Intelligibility thesis: some moods are experienced as immediately rationally intelligible responses, insofar as they are experienced as *epistemically appropriate* to the evaluative light in which their total environment is affectively presented.

The kind of rational intelligibility which this thesis claims some moods admit of is non-doxastic: it is not a matter of having or pointing to certain beliefs or judgements about the experience which could ground it and so which might render it intelligible – what Goldie calls a ‘very thin notion’ of intelligibility’ (Goldie, 2000: 22-3). In that sense, it is not a kind of rational intelligibility that comes with giving reasons in the sense of providing rationalizing explanations *after the fact*, or having certain beliefs as part of the experience. Rather, it is an immediate rational intelligibility the experience has from the inside.<sup>44</sup> Unpacking this notion of immediate experiential rational intelligibility, as applied to moods, is the goal of this section. However, it first helps to distinguish between different types of rational intelligibility for moods.

Consider the following. Often in diagnoses of clinical depression a neurochemical imbalance of serotonin levels in the brain, due to a neurotransmitter deficit, is offered as a third-personal causal explanation of why the subject has been experiencing persistently ‘low mood’.<sup>45</sup> In reflective consultation with the patient such explanations could make their persistent ‘low mood’ rationally intelligible to them, in that it now ‘makes sense’ in a way it previously did not. Or consider an analogous case. Say, without my knowledge, my drink was spiked with a low dosage of ecstasy, enough to positively alter my mood, but not to the extent I become explicitly aware anything is out of the ordinary. Then sometime after the drug wears off I find out my drink had been spiked. In such cases, my mood is made rationally intelligible insofar as I possess a third-personal causal story, which is gained *post facto*, about why I felt the way I did. In both cases, we have a kind of rational intelligibility that is (a) reflective and (b) causal. Call this reflective-causal rational intelligibility.

Consider a second case. Say it is getting toward the end of the working day, and I buy another double espresso. A short while after drinking the coffee I become irritable, and I am explicitly aware that my unpleasant mood is a result of caffeine over-consumption. Alternatively, say I take a mood-altering drug, and when the drug kicks in I am explicitly aware that my euphoric mood is being caused by the effects of the drug on neural pathways and neurotransmitters in my brain. In these cases, I enjoy an immediate (i.e. non-reflective) awareness of why I am in the mood. Call this non-reflective causal rational intelligibility.

In both sets of cases, there is rational intelligibility on offer, understood in the minimal sense that something is made sense of for the subject. In the first set of cases this is a matter of *post facto* third-personal reflective, causal explanation (paradigmatically in judgements); in the second set, a matter of prior causal information which cognitively penetrates the subject's attitude within the experience, and so affects its phenomenal character. Yet, any claim that my mood is experienced as an immediately rationally intelligible response to the way my total environment is presented in a specific evaluative light, is either (a) reflectively disavowed, in the first set of cases, or (b) not applicable, in the second set (the defeater for such a claim is arguably embedded in the experience).

Given this, we need to distinguish between the way causal explanations can be given for being in a certain mood, and even arguably embedded in the experience, which in one sense make being (or having been) in the relevant mood rationally intelligible, and the stronger claim of the Mood-Intelligibility thesis. To mark this distinction, we can think of the above cases as *merely* causal.<sup>46</sup> If merely causal explanations were the only ways moods could be rationally intelligible then the Mood-Intelligibility thesis would be false. However, there are two further ways we can think about the rational intelligibility of moods, the first of which is expressed by the Mood-Intelligibility thesis. In what follows I unpack its claims.

First, remember the Mood-Intentionality thesis has the consequence that my mood is experienced as a felt response to, and so (seemingly) causally motivated by, my total environment as presented in a specific evaluative light. One helpful way of understanding this claim of experienced causation is to consider that while moods have *mind-to-world* direction of fit – they are affective presentations of the subject's total environment in a specific evaluative light – they have *world-to-mind* direction of intentional causation, insofar as one's felt valenced attitude is experienced as caused by that total environment, as cast in a specific evaluative light.<sup>47</sup> Note, the claim is about experienced intentional causation *not* reflective knowledge of what is in fact the cause – as Frijda puts it, 'known causation...is different from experienced motivation' (Frijda, 1987: 252-3). If moods sometimes involve an experience of this kind of intentional causation, then the mood would be experienced as *not merely caused* but as *appropriate* to the way the total environment evaluatively appears. However, we need to say more about what is involved in such an experience.

Taking a step back from moods, there is a sense of rationally intelligible explanations that are of a distinctively normative kind, that contrasts with merely causal explanations. Distinctively normative explanations make reference to normative reasons, as considerations which count in favor of something from the subject's point of view.<sup>48</sup> In the affective-evaluative domain the idea of normative reasons in this sense is sometimes understood – by those who are broadly value realists – by saying those reasons repose on the (apparent) evaluative properties of the object.

Bringing these considerations to bear on the rational intelligibility of moods, in this normative sense, we get the following. In cases where one's mood is experienced as a felt response to, and so (seemingly) causally motivated by, the way my total environment is presented in a specific evaluative light, it will appear to the subject as if their mood is responsive to normative reasons, as considerations which count in favor of being in a certain mood. Given the Mood-Intentionality thesis, those reasons repose on one's total environment's specific evaluative character (e.g. as depressing, hostile, imbued with positive value, imbued with possibilities). Rational intelligibility of this normative kind could be expressed as follows: 'it is because the world is hostile that my anxious mood is an appropriate response to it'; or 'it is because the world is joyous, that my joyful mood is an appropriate response to it'. Note, subjects of moods so characterized would not be entertaining propositions, but such statements would approximate the experiential content of those experiences. In these cases, we capture both the *mind-to-world* direction of fit and *world-to-mind* direction of intentional causation specified above.

However, the notion of appropriateness needs spelling out in detail. Whatever appropriateness is present in mood experience is not plausibly a moral sort. Moreover, we should resist the idea that moods are rationally required to be felt in virtue of one's total environment being presented in a certain evaluative light. For example, it seems too demanding to say one *ought* to feel anxious if one experiences one's environment as *hostile*. After all, someone might respond differently to a similar evaluative apprehension. So, the notion of appropriateness in play will have to be less narrow than the deontic sense of 'ought'.<sup>49</sup>

We can appeal to a different sense of the term in the context of the intentionality and intelligibility of moods, namely epistemic appropriateness.<sup>50</sup> Moods, in virtue of having the intentionality, and

intentional causality, they do, present a subject's environment as a certain evaluative way through felt valenced attitudes, and the subject's environment being that evaluative way is experienced as causing the relevant felt valenced attitude. When we are not in an epistemically defeating context we are aware of – say, having knowingly taken a mood-altering drug – we do not question how moods present that environment. As psychologists Anthony Marcel and John Lambie put it, the distinction between 'is' and 'seems' does not typically arise in first-order (i.e., pre-reflective) affective-evaluative phenomenology (Marcel and Lambie, 2002: 237).

In this sense moods are, in certain cases, experienced by their subjects as a presentation of evaluative truth, and therefore as epistemically appropriate responses to the way their total environment evaluatively is experienced. More specifically, what is experienced as epistemically appropriate is one's felt response – one's felt valenced global attitude of favour or disfavour – which is experienced as immediately (with no cognitive mediation) and intrinsically (as part of the experience) epistemically appropriate to the way one's total environment is experienced as evaluatively being. To reemphasize, this notion of experiential epistemic appropriateness is different from reflectively judged appropriateness, the latter being largely a matter of separately thinking that the relevant affective state is 'fitting' to the situation.<sup>51</sup>

So, some moods are immediately rationally intelligible in the following sense: they are pre-reflectively experienced by their subjects as a felt presentation of the way things evaluatively are, as an affective presentation of evaluative truth, on the basis of which being in a certain mood – responding affectively in terms of the relevant felt valenced global attitude – seems epistemically appropriate. And this is possible because one experiences that affective response as causally motivated by how one's environment is. It is in this sense that there is an important connection between the intentional causality of moods and their being experienced as reasons-responsive (as seeming to repose on normative reasons), that is, their possessing a normative kind of rational intelligibility framed in terms of epistemic appropriateness.

However, a further question is whether we are justified in taking our total environment as a mood presents it. There is a doxastic kind of rational intelligibility connected with rational attitudes like belief and judgement. Rational intelligibility of this sort would amount to the reflective endorsement

of what was pre-reflectively experienced as epistemically appropriate. We would be claiming one's total environment is as the mood presents it, such that experienced epistemic appropriateness would graduate to judged, reflective epistemic appropriateness.

#### 4. The Epistemology of Moods

When considering whether moods could be epistemically justified we face a problem. Moods often serve as *post-facto* explanations, excusing the subject of what are assumed to be falsidical (re)presentations. Note, we can distinguish excusing explanations of the kind "I snapped at him because I was in a bad mood" – where the mood serves as a mitigating factor for acting inappropriately – and reflective disavowals of the apparent evaluative character of one's total environment, as affectively presented in a mood. For example, reports of the form 'it seemed that way to me, but I was in a mood', speak more directly against their epistemic credentials. In this final section I provide reflections on the epistemology of moods, considering the sceptical view that moods cannot be justified, and the alternative view that some moods enjoy epistemic justification. Overall I suggest a mixed view: while there are considerations in favour of the sceptical view, they are not conclusive, and we should hold open the possibility that moods could, in specific cases, be justified.

To understand how moods misrepresent we can begin by considering what is required for them to be veridical. Given the Mood-Intentionality thesis the answer seems straightforward, since intentional states have conditions of satisfaction specified in terms of their content (see section 1). For moods, this would be the way the mood presents the subject's total environment in a specific evaluative light through felt valenced attitudes. A mood experience is veridical *iff* one's total environment is *in fact* as the mood affectively (re)presents it. Yet, despite the fact we can ostensibly formulate conditions of satisfaction for moods, there are considerations which motivate a sceptical position regarding their epistemic standing.

First, one might appeal to metaphysical scepticism about value properties. Why assume there is anything which metaphysically fits moods personal level phenomenology of value? Pressing this line of thought leads to the following picture: moods would be one type of affective-evaluative state, along with emotions (on certain views), which make projective errors, since they involve the registering of (apparent) value properties that do not figure in a metaphysically hygienic account of the 'fabric of

the world'.<sup>52</sup> However, this approach will only carry weight for those already convinced by metaphysical anti-realism about value, and given there are various types of value-realism set up in opposition, then it is likely to be contentious. More importantly, such concern with the metaphysical status of values is not obviously part of folk psychological mood scepticism. Rather, when we say 'it seemed that way, but I was just in a mood' we express a scepticism which points to something distinctive about moods.

So, what motivates this mood-specific epistemic scepticism? One idea is that although we can specify a formal condition of satisfaction – the mood is veridical *iff* what it affectively (re)presents *really is* the case – we have no clear sense of the criteria we could appeal to in order to correctly judge that our total environment was in fact depressing, or joyous (and these are the simpler cases where we can identify the relevant evaluative character). Remember, the sense in which the Mood-Intentionality thesis specifies our total environment being cast in a specific evaluative light was not as a complex state of affairs, but rather as a necessarily open ended set of actual and possible worldly (including modal) relations, encompassing one's evaluative horizons. It is unclear, for instance, how we could build the modal sense of a meaningless future and a joyless past, as is characteristic of certain depressive moods, into a statement of its conditions of satisfaction. So, arguably there is something ineffable about certain moods that resists simply reading off their conditions of satisfaction from their experiential intentional content.

A different strand of criticism could claim one way affective-evaluative states meet their conditions of satisfaction, namely in virtue of supervenience relations holding between the relevant evaluative properties and non-evaluative natural properties, is not available for moods. For example, consider an episode of fear, which on certain theories presents its particular object as disagreeably dangerous. Given a supervenience relation holds between natural properties and higher-order evaluative properties – the danger supervenes on the dog's sharp teeth, aggressive behavior, powerful jaw – arguably the emotion is justified *iff* the object of the emotion instantiates the relevant evaluative property and the subject is aware of the relevant subtending conjunction of non-evaluative properties (the 'cognitive base'), as a content apt to justify it.<sup>53</sup> Arguably, saying something similar for moods is

difficult. What possible complex conjunction of co-instantiated natural properties does one's total environment being joyous, or depressing supervene on?<sup>54</sup>

However, arguably not all evaluative properties that affective states pick up on have specifiable supervenience bases. For example, what complex conjunction of co-instantiated non-evaluative properties is sufficient for constituting brutality or kindness, and so guaranteeing its presence and preserving its sense? If, in some cases evaluative specifications are the only fully sense preserving specifications of the relevant personal level evaluative content, then justification of the relevant affective-evaluative state will not depend on identifying the relevant non-evaluative basal properties. Rather, it could depend on possessing the relevant affective sensibility, as constituting knowledge (by acquaintance) of that property. Indeed, the value-realism associated with John McDowell,<sup>55</sup> posits such a knowledge-constituting emotional sensitivity. It is a complex question whether moods could be accounted for in similar terms, but these considerations qualify the worry that lack of a specifiable supervenience base rules in favour of the sceptical position.

Finally, a more familiar route to epistemic scepticism comes from the prevalence of those *merely causal* explanations from section 3. In the first set of cases I considered there, individuals attained *post facto* causal explanations of why one's current environment possessed the relevant evaluative light (e.g. pharmacological agents). Folk psychological scepticism concerning the epistemic standing of moods may be less a matter of complex philosophical considerations, but rather a reflection that defeating explanations (of this kind) are a prevalent feature of mood discourse. Reflective assessments of the elicitors of moods often lead to a separation between what is said to be 'known cause', which is usually specified in relation to organismic conditions, and what was experienced as motivating the mood.

Given the above discussion, there are some grounds for a sceptical position, although the considerations are not conclusive. Note, even if we accept this sceptical view, it does not motivate giving up the Mood-Intentionality or Intelligibility theses.<sup>56</sup> Moods could be affective-evaluative states which although possessing a distinctive personal level intentionality, and also sometimes being experienced as epistemically appropriate, systematically fail to meet their satisfaction conditions in



reflective assessments.<sup>57</sup> I now turn to additional considerations which further qualify the sceptical view, and suggest where more work would need to be done to argue for a positive view.

Many moods present our total environment in a negative evaluative light. For example, consider the mood of existential nausea described by Jean-Paul Sartre, in which radical contingency infects my projects, desires, and values, such that what I previously found interesting seems valueless (Sartre, 2000). Now, I might reflectively disavow that ‘the world’ was as existential nausea presented it; I could come to think there are good reasons for me to pursue my projects, desire what I do, and value what I do. Yet, in reflective assessment and disavowal we are not living through those moods. As such, there is the possibility of self-deception. After all, the mood is unpleasant, since what it ostensibly is revelatory of is psychologically perturbing. Given this, reflective disavowals of what moods (re)present are not always, and indeed will typically not be, free from psychological self-interest, especially in the negative cases. Note, this is not a consideration in favour of a positive epistemic view of moods. Rather, it just highlights that we should not assume reflective assessments of moods are made from an entirely neutral standpoint.

A more positive view of moods epistemic standing could draw on epistemic relations to other affective states. For example, moods stand in complex relations to emotions, which usually enjoy better epistemic standing. Yet, it is difficult to mark the point at which positive epistemic standing supposedly goes missing as we move from justified emotions to unjustified moods. What is it about moving from an episode of justified fear, which targets a particular object that is in fact dangerous, to a mood of generalized anxiety which makes the latter unjustified? The sceptical view would have to offer an explanation of this. Moreover, is it not possible certain moods might inherit a degree of truthfulness in relation to justified emotions, just as emotions which are related to unjustified moods inherit some of that negative epistemic standing? The sceptical view would be committed to an asymmetry here. A satisfactory answer to these questions would have to specify in more detail the epistemic relation between emotions and moods.

Yet, the sceptical position will be the default view until it can be shown that some moods could be justified. I now consider two cases where there are reasons for thinking one’s mood justified. Consider an individual living in a warzone, where there is the ever-present threat of bomb attacks,

house raids, evacuations etc. Aside from experiencing a range of occurrent emotions directed at particular objects, say our individual also finds herself in a mood of generalized anxiety. Their total environment is experienced as hostile and so anxiety-inducing, as evaluatively presented so as to causally motivate strong feelings of disfavour towards it. Yet, are they justified in affectively responding as they do? It is difficult to see what the relevant defeating explanation would be – it seems they have good reason to be anxious. Their total environment is pervasively threatening and hostile, and their modal relations (especially to the future) are genuinely in flux. In this sense, the general environmental conditions seem like those which justify an anxious mood.

Consider, contrastingly, an individual on the first morning of their summer holiday, who finds herself in a joyful mood. Their total environment is evaluatively presented as full of undetermined opportunities, of choices yet to be made, such that their evaluative horizons seem open and unlimited. As such, their total environment is joyfully presented so as to causally motivate feelings of favour towards it. Yet, are they justified in affectively responding as they do? Again, their comportment seems justified. Their evaluative horizons are indeed open in such a way that is supported by their general environmental conditions. Their joyful optimism can make a good claim to reflect a relation that obtains between herself and ‘the world’. While these kinds of examples would need developing in more detail, they suggest that some moods, in certain instances, could be justified.<sup>58</sup>

As a final consideration, we might hold open the possibility of justified moods because if moods were never justified, it becomes difficult to explain what natural function they might serve. Note, this is not a problem with respect to pathological moods, which are by definition dysfunctional. However, if moods were systematically falsidical that would create problems for explaining why non-pathological moods have developed as prevalent states within our affective psychology – they would be selectionally disadvantageous, distracting us from more pressing, potentially justified, affective concerns with particular objects. While a detailed account of the natural function of moods is beyond the scope of this paper, the Mood-Intentionality and Intelligibility theses point towards a personal level information carrying role, which tracks organismic-environmental relations at a global level. If one’s mood, on occasion, causally co-varies with some actual and possible general environmental

conditions, a subject possessed of the ability to affectively represent ‘the world’ in this way, and gain a specific kind of evaluative knowledge, would accrue certain benefits.

### Conclusion

In this article, I have argued for the Mood-Intentionality and Intelligibility theses, such that once correctly conceptualized we can think of moods as intentional and rationally intelligible in specific ways. I have also provided reflections on the epistemology of moods. At present the most parsimonious position is a mixed one, although more work is required on the epistemic dimension of our understanding of moods.

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<sup>1</sup> See Deonna and Teroni 2012: 4; Mulligan 1998: 162; De Sousa 1987: 7, 68, 285; Lormand 1985: 385-407. A similar claim is found in Heidegger 1962: §29 (for discussion see Ratcliffe 2010: 349-373). In the psychological literature this is also a prevalent view, see Armon-Jones 1991; Russell 2003: 145-172.

<sup>2</sup> See Lormand 1985: 385-407; Davidson 1994: 51-55; Sizer 2000: 743-769; 2006: 108-135, Price 2006: 49-68, Wong 2016: 179-197. Among these accounts opinion is divided about whether moods are intentional states (on the positive side see Price 2006; on the negative Lormand 1985; Sizer 2000: 742-769).

<sup>3</sup> For the information-theoretic approach to intentionality see Dretske 1980: 354-362.

<sup>4</sup> See Searle 1983: Ch.1 and McGinn 1982: Ch.1.

<sup>5</sup> See Crane 2009: 452-469.

<sup>6</sup> This demanding conception of intentionality objectivity follows Poellner 2015: 222-223. Its main historical proponent is Husserl (see Husserl 1973: §13) and it also find expression in John McDowell’s Kantian conception of objectivity and conceptual content (see McDowell 1994: 46-65).

<sup>7</sup> See Power 2004.

<sup>8</sup> See Lyons 1980.

<sup>9</sup> See Lyons 1980: 53-7.

<sup>10</sup> See Lormand 1985: 385-407; Siemer 2009: 256-263.

<sup>11</sup> On moods motivational component see Goldie 2000: 147 and Price 2006: 55-58.

<sup>12</sup> See Prinz 2004: 184; Ryle 1949: 95-100.

<sup>13</sup> See Deonna and Teroni 2009: 359-377.

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<sup>14</sup> Cf. Sizer 2000: 743-769, 2006: 108-135. An answer to whether moods, dispositionally understood, are intentional states, would have to specify whether dispositional states are intentional. Lormand 1985: 385-407 thinks they are not.

<sup>15</sup> See Goldie 2000: 12-14.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid: 141-151.

<sup>17</sup> See also Deonna and Teroni 2012: 4; Lormand 1985: 385-407; Sizer 2006: 129.

<sup>18</sup> See Crane 1998: 238; Kind 2013: 113-134. This view is found in one of Kant's conceptions of objecthood; 'everything, every representation even, in so far as we are conscious of it, may be entitled object' (Kant 1998: A 189 / B 234).

<sup>19</sup> The prospects for such an argument seem poor, since some philosophers have thought it possible to have perceptions of universals, and perceptions are paradigmatic intentional states (see Church 2013: 139-185).

<sup>20</sup> See James 1884: 188-205. Bodily states also figure as a constitutive part of Matthew Ratcliffe's 'existential feelings' (Ratcliffe 2008).

<sup>21</sup> See respectively Davitz 1969: 46 and 36, 72.

<sup>22</sup> See Crane 1998: 232-238; Martin 1995: 267-289.

<sup>23</sup> See Kapfhammer 2006: 227-239.

<sup>24</sup> See Sizer 2006: 132.

<sup>25</sup> See Davitz 1969: 32-84.

<sup>26</sup> See Marcel and Lambie 2002: 239.

<sup>27</sup> See Soldati 2008: 257-280 for this claim for emotions.

<sup>28</sup> See Mendelovici 2013: 147.

<sup>29</sup> See Ryle 1949: 96; Solomon 1993: 17; Lyons 1980: 104; Lazarus 1994: 79-85; Crane 1998: 229-51; Goldie 2000: 141-151. In psychology, see Reisenzein and Schonpflug 1992: 34-45.

<sup>30</sup> Prinz 2004: 185.

<sup>31</sup> See Davitz 1969: 36-81. Similar results were reported in John Lambie's 2000 diary study (quoted in Marcel and Lambie 2002: 223).

<sup>32</sup> I include the disjunction to signal nothing in this article turns on whether the personal-level evaluative content of moods is (a) directly represented, where this involves no epistemic intermediary or (b) presented. See Kind 2013: 113-134 for an account of the relation between moods as intentional states and (strong) representationalism.

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<sup>33</sup> This is accepted by evaluative judgement (see Solomon 1993) and perceptual theories (see Poellner 2016: 1-28; Johnston 2001: 181-214).

<sup>34</sup> Goldie 2000: 18 and Prinz 2004: 188 makes similar points.

<sup>35</sup> This sense of one's total environment is close to what the phenomenologists, specifically Husserl, call the life-world (*Lebenswelt*) – of the world as the 'universal horizon' for the subject (see Husserl 1970 §37).

<sup>36</sup> See Kriegel 2013: Chap 1.

<sup>37</sup> See Block 1995: 227-287 for this distinction between the phenomenal and intentional (cf. Crane 1998: 251).

<sup>38</sup> Note, there is not an object-cause conflation here. As noted by Anthony Kenny (1963: 49-52), we can distinguish the object of an emotion from its cause. Yet, in many cases the affective state is experienced as caused by – as an apparent effect of – the object is directed towards. In certain cases, the actual cause of the emotion and its object can come apart, although this typically does not show up in the emotional episode, yet it might in reflective judgements about what caused the emotion (section 3 explores these issues in more depth).

<sup>39</sup> See Poellner 2016: 13-4 and Montague 2009: 187-188 for similar claims for emotions.

<sup>40</sup> See Davitz 1969: 81-82.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Solomon 1993.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Price 2006.

<sup>43</sup> See Deonna and Teroni 2012: 4.

<sup>44</sup> For a similar view for perceptual experience see Dorsch *forthcoming*.

<sup>45</sup> See SchidKraut 1965: 509-22.

<sup>46</sup> See Lormand 1985: 390.

<sup>47</sup> On intentional causality see Searle 1983: 112-140.

<sup>48</sup> See Scanlon 1998: 17.

<sup>49</sup> The idea of rational requirements on affective responses is found in neo-sentimentalist theories (see McDowell 1985: 210-226; Wiggins 1987).

<sup>50</sup> See Tappolet 2011: 117-134, who develops similar ideas about emotions.

<sup>51</sup> See Goldie 2002: 23,28 31. Goldie does not clearly distinguish between an emotion being justified, appropriate and proportionate – a fitting relation seems to capture what he is after. Although his claim that 'the right thing to say...as concerns an emotion's appropriateness and proportionateness is that they can be, to a large extent, culturally determined' (Ibid: 23), suggests the sense of appropriateness as fitting, and a strong sense of a justified (i.e. correct) emotion are separable for him.

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<sup>52</sup> See Mackie 1977: 38. See Mendelovici 2013: 135-57 for this view of moods.

<sup>53</sup> See Deonna and Teroni 2012: 49-51, 96-97.

<sup>54</sup> See Mulligan 1998: 162.

<sup>55</sup> See McDowell 1985: 210-226; Wiggins 1987.

<sup>56</sup> See Deonna and Teroni 2012: fn.2, 13.

<sup>57</sup> See Price 2006: 65.

<sup>58</sup> See Mulhall 1996: 191-210. It is unclear whether what Mulhall claims to be ‘revelatory of the way things are in reality’ is a mood, and not rather an emotion.

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