

Full Length Research Paper

Purism: Desire as the Ultimate Value, Part One – An Appeal to Logical Reason

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This article aims to demonstrate that a special category of desire – a state which is sought unconditionally, as an end (sought in and of itself) – is the only ultimate value that logical observers can conceive upon consideration of sufficient conceptual depth. This demonstration appeals to logical reasoning, and ultimately, the reader’s inability to conceive alternate conclusions which are logically consistent.

Key words: A Priori, Beings, Desire, Objectivity, Ultimate value, Logicity, Morality, Moral-rationalism, Purism, Moral-realism, Realism.

An Appeal to Logical Reason

Logic – whose authority is derived from the inconceivability of any alternative, despite continued consideration of appropriate depth – is logically the only non-arbitrary arbiter.

The discovery of an ultimate value – a state¹ that logical observers,² by virtue of them possessing a logical system of valuation, value more than any other state – is a vital component in the quest for an objective, realist account of morality. Such a discovery implicitly answers two of the most important questions in moral philosophy: ‘What is morality’ and ‘why be moral?’ (Taylor, 1978; Sidgwick, 1981; Darwall, 2009; Hills, 2010; Parfit, 2013; Loudon, 2015). The answers follow effortlessly once we identify a state – or *the* state – that is universally

the most valuable type of state. In the wake of the discovery of an ultimate value, whose ultimate nature appears to be an objective (independently-existing and discoverable) feature of reality – by which any alternative is inconceivable, given appropriate and continued consideration – a plausible answer to the question of ‘what is morality?’ is as follows: Morality is the state (condition) which maximally realizes the ultimate value wherever, and in whatever specific nature, it is sought (Primus, 2020, 2021). Maximizing the realization of (pre-existing) states of ultimate value (e.g., actualizing pre-existing desires that had previously only existed within peoples’ minds) is not to be confused with the creation of (new) states of ultimate value for the purpose of efficiently maximizing its realization (e.g., using AI to generate an abundance of simple desires that are easily satisfied, in order to efficiently maximize desire). The creation of arbitrariness (whether a desire or otherwise) is conceivably unethical unless said creation is itself desired (Primus, 2021). John Searle (1964) cogently offers that it is a tautology to assert that a promise should be honored. The moral duty to honor a promise is, Searle

¹ A state is defined herein as *any entity, whether a structure, thought, emotion, sensation, or action, and whether real (i.e., purely physical), digital, or purely conceptual* (Primus, 2021, p.2).

² Logical observers are defined herein, consistent with my previous (Primus, 2021) morally-centred use of the term. This definition is congruent with, and derivable from, a broader, more general (epistemologically/ontologically-centred) definition of the term (see Primus, *forthcoming*).

views, implicitly, if not explicitly, contained within the definition of promise. The same tautology applies to the question of ‘why we should be moral?’: Using the same rationale that Searle (1964) employs to cross the ‘is-ought’ gap, the perceived need (the *ought* or *should*) to realize and preserve states which are valuable is contained within the definition of value. In this light, the concept of morality is an instrument whose states are instrumentally valuable (whereas states of immorality are instrumentally worthless, or worse, damaging to those states which are valuable). States of morality are sought as a means of realizing and protecting those states which are intrinsically valuable (whereas states of immorality either serve as a poor means of realizing and protecting, or actively damage the means or ability by which a society strives to realize and protect, the sought ends of its citizens). We *need* morality only so far as to obtain and preserve what we ultimately value. If the world were perfect – and everyone instantly received everything that they ultimately valued for as long as they valued it – we would conceivably have no *need* for the concept of morality. The questions of ‘what is morality?’ and ‘why should we be moral?’ then merge and acquiesce into higher questions of ‘why is the ultimate value of *one* particular nature (rather than pluralistic or relativistic), and why is it of *that* particular nature (as opposed to some other nature)?’ These questions and their answers are of a metaethical nature and, although I propose a solution elsewhere (*Primus, forthcoming*), they are beyond the scope of this article.

This article aims to demonstrate that *desire* conceivably must be an ultimate value – *the* ultimate value. This includes desire for yet apparently unrealized forms (e.g., that which one desires to be yet is not, an object that one desires to possess and yet does not, and the people one desires to associate with or an activity that one desires to do and yet does not). It also encompasses desire for apparently realized forms (e.g., the aspects of oneself that one desires to preserve and maintain, the objects one does (appear to) possess and desires to keep, the people one desires to continue associating with, the activities that one desires to keep doing). I offer that – to logical observers (discussed below) – the value of desire is universally and intrinsically greater than, and fundamentally and categorically different to, any other type of value. Its realization should be prioritized and preserved above all other states by all observers and agents. In this first part of a two-article series, I aim to demonstrate this claim via an appeal to the reader’s logical reasoning.

The second article of this series attempts to further demonstrate this claim through the engagement of the reader’s moral intuition. I will begin by defining some key terms employed herein.

I have defined ‘logical observers’ elsewhere (Primus, 2021, *forthcoming*) as essentially observers possessing consistent beliefs. Specifically, in the context of this article, a logical observer is an observer possessing a logical system of (e)valuating categories of states. I posit (2021) that it is logical to value sought end(s) beyond the respective means to said end(s) – those states that will probably most efficiently realize (bring about) said end(s). A logical observer, therefore, would intrinsically value sought ends beyond the respective means to those ends. Any set of means, by definition as being sought merely as a means, will be sought contingently (conditionally). As such, any means will possess instrumental value to an observer, to the degree, and on the condition, that the means will conceivably contribute to the realization of the end for which they are sought. Any state which is sought exclusively as a means cannot logically be considered to be of equal or greater preciousness (value) than the end for which it is sought – lest it too be sought as an end. As will be discussed shortly, it is in my definition of those states which constitute an end that I depart from other prominent theories of persons and their moral entitlement to be treated as ends, notably Immanuel Kant (1785), Robert Nozick (1974, 1989), Alan Gewirth (1978, 1996), and Christine Korsgaard (2004, 2009, 2018). Specifically, I claim that the nature of desire described herein is *exclusively* a state that (logical) readers will consider to be an end, *by definition*.

I emphasize that within this article I am attempting to highlight the possibility of the unsurpassed value of desire and that its ultimate value is conceivably objectively so – desires are conceivably objectively more valuable than any other state from the perspective of all logical observers. I deem this to be theoretically possible without the reader having to accept (arbitrary) axioms, including axioms of logic, on the basis of the inconceivability of any alternative, despite continued consideration of the necessary conceptual depth (Primus, 2019, 2020). The scope of this article series, therefore, is limited to the demonstration amongst logical observers that desire is conceivably the most valuable state that they can *conceive* – both intuitively and in terms of logical reasoning. In the following discussion, I will briefly extend the work of Anthony W. Price (1983) in an attempt to demonstrate that observations which are logically or “rationally” (to use Price’s terminology) derived from the

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objective aspects of reality are conceivably objective in terms of their ontological nature – desire, and the nature of values in general, being an example of said observations. Price (1983) identifies five types of objectivity in relation to values, though he refrains from providing an overall definition. The nuance of Price's distinctions is unnecessary for the purposes of my argument on the basis that they deal with types of observation specific to the human condition. I am not concerned with *contemporary*, a posteriori variables in relation to how an objective state might be objectively accessed (observed) by various observers. There will always be epistemological limitations that mediate any experience of reality (Plato, *The Republic*, 2000). Whether or not there is the (biological or synthetic) technology available to an observer to render them an 'accurate enough' account of an objective state, such that it qualifies as 'knowing' or 'observing' said state, conceivably does not influence the objectivity – the universal 'knowability' (discoverability) – of said state. As technology continues to advance, objective states will foreseeably continually become more accessible to observers. The standard of objectivity with which I am concerned is in relation to whether or not the nature of any state is, in *theory*, universally knowable. I have previously (2021) defined logicity (consistency) – the property of a state (e.g., a purpose) embodying purely logical (consistent) properties – as the absence of arbitrary, if any, difference (variance and/or limitation) (Primus, 2021, p.14). The clause 'if any' affirms that if there is a (literal) difference within any logical state, then such difference will be (figuratively) consistent, rather than arbitrary. For example, a vat of molten gold is literally consistent if it is free of impurities, whereas a government is figuratively consistent if it treats its citizens fairly (e.g., without favoritism or undue interference) and in the absence of any arbitrary rules or laws (all laws should strive to maximize the realization of the ultimate value – desire). Accordingly, logicity exists as a synonym for (literal or figurative) consistency (uniformity), and, through this property, embodies objectivity (universality, impartiality, discoverability, mind-independence), while serving as the residual state that exists in the absence of subjectivity (arbitrariness). Prior to their discussion in the context of value, objectivity and its antonym, arbitrariness (subjectivity), must each be viewed in the context of their apparent ontological and epistemological foundations and limitations. I first ask the reader to consider, a priori, that the *conceivable* ontology of reality – given consideration of necessary depth – is as follows. The term 'reality' is defined herein in the broadest possible sense to include any and every state that is, was, and will be. I suggest that the reader does not become too preoccupied with understanding each point

that I summarily list below, as I will expand on them subsequently:

1. There is necessarily a singular, objective version of reality – extending indefinitely across space and times. Reality exists independently of observation (conception and/or perception), while potentially also, yet not exclusively, possessing aspects whose existence is dependent on the process of observation itself;
2. The aspect of reality which exists independently of observation – let us call it independent reality – *necessarily* consists of a single, indefinite *continuous* aspect³ (a continuity or a continuum) whilst apparently also, superveniently (and thus simultaneously), possessing *discrete* aspects,⁴ and yet;
3. There is no possibility of a locally (that is, direct, independent, ungrounded) objective observation of the continuous aspect of reality, and this impossibility is conceivably due to the continuous ontological nature of independent reality itself, and not due to any (con)temporary epistemological limitations of any observer, and yet;
4. There is the possibility of objective observation of (the discrete and/or continuous aspects of) reality via the grounding of any observation with the discrete aspects of reality which supervene its continuum, bringing the possibility for reality to be objectively (and/or subjectively) valued.

I will briefly explain this position. Foremost, the reader will note that, in line with Aristotle's (*Metaphysics*, 2015) law of identity, each aspect of reality exists as only itself (what is, was or will be) and does not concurrently exist as both itself and not-itself (what is not, was not and will not be). Aristotle offered that this law needs no justification or proof – that it is self-evident in nature. I have argued previously (Primus, 2019, 2020) that the *conception* of a state existing as multiple different states within a singular portion of space in any moment (e.g., to exist and not-exist) is not possible, a priori (that is, it is universally *inconceivable*). David Hume (1740) posited that observers may create *beliefs* about the nature of what lies beyond their direct experience, though he denied that observers could obtain *knowledge* about its nature. However, as I have offered previously (Primus, 2019, 2020), we are limited to believing what we are forced to conceive in the absence of any apparent alternative, given *continued consideration of necessary*

³ This aspect is verifiable, a priori, with pure reason (Primus, 2019, 2020).

⁴ These aspects, where and when they exist, can only be verified empirically (a posteriori).

conceptual depth. An example of an a priori claim about the necessarily conceived nature of reality is the claim that reality must extend infinitely in all directions across space, across times. Benedict de Spinoza (1677) appropriately labelled the thought of any alternative 'absurd.' I (Primus, 2019, 2020) deem its alternative to be inconceivable, *upon appropriate consideration.* The limitation of reality would be arbitrary and – beyond an inability to justify why the “anti-reality” that remains in place of reality would not also be considered a part of reality itself – is inconceivable for reasons I have discussed previously (Primus, 2019, 2020): We cannot imagine the point(s) in space where multiple differences could coexist (e.g., where reality would cease and anti-reality would begin). At these points – where one ceases and the other begins – we would be attempting to imagine two or more entities (e.g., reality and anti-reality) as singular entities in the same moment. This would necessitate the conception of difference within the fabric of reality, and such arbitrariness is inconceivable, a priori – again, *granted consideration of the necessary conceptual depth.*

On the basis of our inability to conceive of how a difference might exist *within* the fabric of reality, we are forced to conceive that the nature of independent reality – the aspect of reality which underlies our observations and which conceivably must exist whether or not it is observed – exists, necessarily, and as a single, infinite *continuum.* There is not the space in this article to restate this argument (2019, 2020). The reader should note, however, that even if they can, perhaps at this moment, *superficially* conceive of the aspects above that I claim cannot be conceived – e.g., the conception of difference (arbitrariness) within the fabric of reality, such that its fabric itself could consist of discrete parts – this conception is only permissible on the basis that they are not considering the nature of how we must conceive reality to the necessary extent – hence my afore- and frequently-mentioned clause: *Upon consideration of the necessary conceptual depth.* Anything appears possible if one considers the nature of possibility superficially enough (Primus, 2019, 2020). The analogy that I use (2020) to demonstrate this is the conception of a Penrose Impossible triangle – a triangle which is possible when realized in two dimensions (e.g., as drawn on a page) and yet which is impossible to realize (e.g., construct) in three dimensions. It is, however, conceivable that such a triangle could be realized in three dimensions when one considers it superficially (e.g., by considering each vertex of the triangle, one at a time). It is only upon appropriate consideration (e.g., of how each of its vertices would fit together if they were to be simultaneously realized in three dimensions) that one realizes that its realization in three dimensions is impossible (that is, inconceivable, a priori; Primus, 2020).

An important and necessary consequence of the notion that we must conceive of independent reality as an infinite continuum is that any *difference* which exists concurrently with this continuum – the differences that we observe in our daily lives (e.g., we note that blue skies are different from grey skies) – must conceivably exist *across* space and times *continuously*, rather than *discretely.* Upon consideration of the necessary conceptual depth, I observe a priori (Primus, 2019, 2020) that the a posteriori differences we observe must exist continuously *across* (but never *within*) said continuity, and that this is the ontological nature of the fabric of reality, a priori. Peter Lynds (2003) arrives at a similar conclusion in relation to how we must conceive, a priori, the nature of motion: Real objects in motion cannot be conceived to occupy a finite position in space in any moment. This limitation is conceivably drawn from the ontological basis, that is, the metaphysical 'fabric,' which underlies reality: If considered appropriately, any observed discreteness (e.g., grey skies appearing different from blue skies) can only be conceived to be abstracted from a non-contingent continuum of difference, whose specific differences – whether observed (e.g., as 'blueness' and 'greyness') or not – exist contingently and continuously *across* space – supervening its fabric – rather than existing at any singular point(s) *within* the fabric of space itself (Primus, 2019, 2020). That is, any observed (conceived or perceived) differences must, given appropriate consideration, be *conceived* to be derived from a *continuous mind-independence* – extending indefinitely beyond any (limited) appearance, even if they *appear* to exist discretely. This conclusion incidentally supports metaphysical realism: We cannot conceive that reality as a whole could be contingent (that is, whether consisting of something, nothing, or something in between, reality is a radically-inclusive concept; Benedict de Spinoza, 1677). Nor can we conceive that the properties of any mind or its products – or *any* property or product other than absolute *consistency* – could exist absolutely within the fabric of reality (that is, omnipresent within space and non-contingently across times; Primus, 2019, 2020). On the basis that we cannot conceive that 'consciousness' or 'mind' (or any property or product other than consistency) could be absolute in nature (that is, exist intrinsically, with omnipresence, extending to all aspects of reality), we must conceive that minds (and their products) are 'created' or 'grown' from pre-existing, elementary difference(s). Each mind is conceivably only able to possess its relatively complex products – e.g., conception and perception – through the existence of appropriately complex properties (e.g., intricate structures for generating conception and perception), rather than said properties or products existing intrinsically, in and of themselves. Each relatively complex structure (e.g., a mind) conceivably supervenes

simple structures of the continuum of difference, which itself ultimately supervenes a purely consistent, immutable fabric. We must imagine that this continuum of difference (as a whole) has always existed and yet we cannot conceive that any specific entity or type of difference (e.g., a mind) could spontaneously exist prior to, and wholly account for (e.g., bring into reality), said continuity of difference – such would necessitate the conception of difference within points of space. More specifically, we cannot conceive of how points in space could contain nothing (e.g., no mind or consciousness or reality) and also something (e.g., a mind or consciousness or reality) at the same point in time, as one moment (continuously) transitions into the next. In other words, we cannot imagine a discrete point in between where reality (or any particular thing) does and doesn't exist, and rather only that anything that does exist beyond and above the fabric of reality itself must fade into (and out of) its various states as a continuum. We must imagine that said entities (e.g., a mind or consciousness) could be created (and destroyed) through cause-and-effect interactions occurring gradually (across time) within the continuum of difference, and which supervene (that is, occur across, not within) the fabric of reality. Accordingly, both the anti-realist and the realist who have each sufficiently considered my argument will view that continuous differences – or, more accurately, *the* continuity of difference – can be partially (though not wholly) observed as seemingly discrete resolutions (that is, conceptions and perceptions) and that the remainder of this infinite, singular continuity of difference is externally located and exists independently of any mind. It is irrelevant whether the observed differences are thought to be located within a single mind or by multiple mind(s) – the latter being as our empirical senses suggest if we accept the appearance of our observations at face value. Either conception is inconsequential for the purposes of my argument herein and, specifically, does not conceivably alter the objectivity of any state. Realist or anti-realist, the same conclusion is necessary: A continuum which extends infinitely across space and times and exists with or without conscious observation, is a conceptual necessity; and, if an observer observes differences (e.g., that grey skies are different to blue skies), these differences must necessarily be conceived to exist continuously across space, concurrently to any discrete conceptual representations of their nature (Primus, 2019, 2020).

The requirement to conceive of reality (and any difference within reality) as a singular continuum limits our ability to conceive that it would possess *discrete* aspects *within* this continuum (that is, within the fabric of reality itself). However, observers *can* conceivably objectively observe (conceive or perceive) *discrete* aspects of reality which

may (co)exist *across* said continuum, supervening reality's fabric. An appropriate analogy to demonstrate how states of continuousness and discreteness can conceivably coexist in a physical context – thus allowing reality to be concurrently observed both as a continuum and as possessing discrete properties – is as follows: Consider a line on a two-dimensional chart, extended indefinitely at both of its ends and containing various peaks and troughs. The line represents reality. Each peak represents a continuously-existing difference – a difference that has the potential to be observed (discretely) as a particle, an atom, a grey sky, or any type of discrete concept. The line and its peaks and troughs objectively exist. However, the continuousness of the line necessitates a *subjective* assessment of its peaks and troughs whenever any observer *locally* decides what constitutes the limits of each entity (e.g., as one's contemporary mind, consciously or subconsciously, determines the edges of a particle, an atom, a grey sky, or any concept drawn from independent reality). I use the term *locally* to describe an observation which is a direct attempt to quantify the differences within the continuum itself without reference to its discrete superstructures. At no point in the continuous and indefinite curve itself is there a discrete end to each peak or trough. Each localized observation must subjectively – perhaps subconsciously and automatically, via the observer's sensory organs – select the point(s) at which any entity is considered to end as an observer renders said entity into a discrete concept which is separate from its environment (the remainder of the line). This subjectivity will necessarily be present at a local level, irrespective of how advanced the observer's observation methods are or what shape the curve takes (that is, irrespective of what aspect of the continuum of independent reality is being observed) – the problem irrevocably lies with one's attempt to capture a *discrete* portion of the *continuous* nature of the curve. This a priori assessment is conceivably how we must always view the continuous aspect of reality, meaning that this view conceivably will not ever be advanced as we become more epistemologically aware of reality's ontological nature through technological advancement: Objectivity, as I have offered, is a state which conceivably requires an absence of arbitrariness – any attempt by an observer to draw discreteness from the continuum itself will necessarily be arbitrary. Concurrent to this necessity, however, I assert that there are conceivably also discrete objectively-knowable aspects (properties) of the continuum, whereby the supervening nature of these aspects does *not* negate the continuousness of the continuum in which they supervene. There *is* an objective and knowable quantity of particles, or atoms, or any other difference that might be present *across* reality in any moment. Independent of any observer,

a (discrete and objective) quantity of peaks and troughs exists across the line's continuum – both in any moment and across times. There is also an objective nature to their properties, such as the distance between the heights of the line's highest and lowest points, and between its peaks and troughs – there is an objective difference in the magnitude of their properties and positions in space if we measure from point to point across space. That is, even if an observer can reconcile that at no point in the continuum of independent reality does a grey sky (discretely) cease and a blue sky (discretely) begin – even if this appears as such, due to the (discrete) symbolic resolutions of the continuity which occur during the process of observation – the observer knows that there is an objective difference between the 'greyest' point of what appears as the grey sky and the 'bluest' point of what appears as the blue sky. Realists and anti-realists alike would agree that this difference is objective – at least in the mind of the observer at that moment. Contrary to the subjective aspects of this difference (e.g., the determination of where the blue sky ends and the grey sky begins), these objective properties (e.g., the underlying nature of the structures that produce greyness and blueness) are subject to being known with greater fidelity via advances in epistemological techniques. More advanced technology will foreseeably allow for the detection of smaller peaks and troughs and more accurate measurements between points (e.g., the ability to detect more shades of 'blueness' and 'greyness' and measure the differences between their properties which contribute to their respective appearances of 'blue' and 'grey').

The presence of objective, discrete aspects within reality conceivably allows for objective observations of its continuum. I join Price (1983) in asserting that an observed state is objective if it is a "rational" representation of reality. Price's concept of rationality appears to align with my concept of logicity (consistency) and the definition of objectivity adopted herein – a state which is void of arbitrariness (subjectivity), such as opinion, culture or any other type of personal bias. Accordingly, if an observer's representation (that is, symbolization) of reality is constructed using a logical technology (whether biological or synthetic) and occurs towards a portion of reality and in a manner that is considered to be for a logical purpose, we might consider that the use of technology to represent that particular portion of reality is an objective state. Returning to the above analogy of reality as an infinite line: We know that when observed locally – without reference to supervening, discrete aspects – the edges of each peak and trough can conceivably only be determined subjectively – and this limitation is unassailable, a priori. However, an observer can foreseeably objectively determine where each peak and trough starts and ends through reference

to these supervening, discrete aspects. They may, for example, determine – through repeated measurements and perhaps in consultation and in general consensus with other observers ('strength in numbers') – the left and right edge – and thus the limit of each – by superimposing a theoretical, horizontal (straight) line over the line that represents reality. This line might be placed at a height that is the average distance between all observed peaks and troughs. The observers may then consider that the point at which the line of each peak or trough intersects the horizontal line (if it does so) is a logical (non-subjective) method of universally determining the edges (and limit) of each entity. I entertain the possibility of objective observation which is derived from objective features of reality – as I state at the beginning of this article – while considering the universality of the *existence* of any state's objectivity itself, rather than the ease or fidelity by which contemporary observers can access said state. In other words, I am only endorsing the theoretical *possibility* of an objective observation here, without consideration for the nature of how one might verify the logicity of their observations. I appreciate that the exact nature of how logicity (or "rationality") might be represented within any particular state is not always, nor often, very clear to observers in this contemporary era. However, as I have offered, the a posteriori observability of any state conceivably does not affect the objectivity of any state itself. We must look past this era and consider that technology of the future potentially will – or should – provide very clear and precise guidance to agents in any moment – in both a descriptive sense, concerning knowledge of their environment, and in a prescriptive sense, in relation to their logical path, from moment to moment.

A similar objectivity can foreseeably be extended to the valuation of particular states and the exclusion of worth of others. That is, an observer might (conceive and/or perceive that they) value a particular state for logical reason(s), as a logical means of achieving a goal. An observer who has been charged to select which color of emergency lights to install on a police vehicle might value the color of blue above and beyond other colors, as a logical means of identifying it as a police vehicle to members of the public. Their valuation of blue as a logical choice may be based on observations of the color's prior use in society to designate police vehicles and the probable previous associations that it has with police in the minds of public observers. Without needing to access the minds of citizens to evaluate if the overwhelming majority of citizens did strongly associate blue emergency lights with police, an observer could simply assess the quantity of colors that currently exist in use to designate police vehicles. This would conceivably serve as a logical, and thus, objective, choice for an observer selecting a color of light for the purpose of efficient

identification by the public, noting that an objective quantity of colored emergency lights exists in any moment – a supervenient, *discrete* aspect from which logical determination can be drawn. Of course, the selection of blue (and the exclusion of other colors) could only be an arbitrary (subjective) choice if valued *locally*, without reference to other observations that bear a logical resemblance to broader reality.

If it has not already become apparent by the frequency with which I have stated the clause *if considered with the appropriate conceptual depth*, the conceivable nature of reality is both objective and subjective in ways which are not necessarily intuitive to our everyday experiences.

Accounting for the discussion thus far, upon appropriate consideration, we are forced to conceive (and concede) that multiple observers can view a singular event, at the same moment, and possess multiple, different and accurate accounts of independent reality – each of which are conceivably objective in two senses: In the sense that the overall condition, which contains both the observers and the event can be considered to exist as a singular reality that objectively is what it is and is objectively not any other state (as rudimentary and obvious as this sounds); and in the sense that each observer's (perhaps differing) account of the singular event can be considered objective to the extent that they each logically quantify (that is, make discrete) the continuous aspect of reality via them grounding or 'anchoring' their observations to objective aspects of reality (e.g., the quantity of, and distance between, the differences, or 'peaks' and 'troughs,' within reality is objective in any moment). The price for this objectivity is that any object or event in space – whose properties of difference must conceivably exist along a continuum, rather than as discrete portions – must be viewed as *either* a finite entity, occupying a finite position in space, across a continuous interval of time and possessing no other properties of time (e.g., momentum), *or* it may be viewed to possess finite properties of time (including existing at a finite time) in the absence of being viewed to exist as, or in, a finite position across space (that is, it must be viewed to exist across a continuum of spatial difference, similar to how a blurred photograph may be viewed; Lynds, 2003; Primus, 2019, 2020). This view, of course, aligns with Einstein's theory of special relativity and contemporary observers' emerging understanding of quantum mechanics.

Similarly, the same conceptual obscuration applies to the coexistence of subjective and objective value. Readers may not find it intuitively obvious that states of desire, as defined herein, could be both subjectively and objectively valuable at the same time. As I offer above, the concept of desire as the ultimate value conceivably answers the aforementioned normative questions – “what is morality” and “why be moral?” – and produces a further metaethical question: Why is desire the ultimate value?

These questions, I assert, have objective answers. However, they bring about a further metaethical question: Why does any particular individual desire the particular state(s) that they do (and not other states or possess no desire at all)? I hope to demonstrate within this series of articles that this question has no logical (objective, impartial, universal) answer if the desire under consideration is sought as an end, in and of itself (as I define all states of desire to exclusively be). That is, if reason(s) exist(s) for seeking states that are sought in and of themselves, these reasons will necessarily be (by definition) subjectively selected and thus arbitrary in their nature. Hume perhaps at least implicitly realized as much with his assertion that reason is a “slave” to “passion” (Hume, 1740; Árdal, 1966; Buckle, 2012).⁵ At the same time, the aim and purpose of this article is to demonstrate through the reader's use of reason that *all* states of desire, as a general ontological category, are conceivably objectively more valuable than any other category of state. As I will further attempt to demonstrate in the second part of this article, the subjectivity for which specific desires are sought by their persons does *not* detract from the objectivity of their value as a general category of entity and as a (mind-independent) feature of reality. The necessarily-subjective nature of the reason(s) for why any particular state of desire is desired – if any such reason(s) exist(s) at all – potentially contributed to Hume (1740) overlooking their collective, objective, ultimate value, and consequently, his dismissal of the possibility of an objective, realist morality.

The reader may then challenge: If we cannot trust our intuition regarding our notions of how objectivity and subjectivity might coexist in an ontological context – noting that values, whether subjective and mind-dependent, or objective and mind-independent, are a part of this ontology – how can we trust our intuition to navigate our moral considerations, such as the thought experiments I offer in part two of this series? I answer that it is in the *specific* and *various* path(s) to our conclusions, and in the *nuance* of how our conclusion(s) might exist, in which our daily intuitions defy us. And yet it is our overall, *general* conclusion(s) of reality in which we can trust. Logical observers – and most famously Einstein – possess a general intuition that the world is

⁵ I use the phrase *implicitly realized* to emphasize that Hume's concept of 'passions' is not neatly (a priori) defined, and, therefore, nor is it neatly aligned with the a priori category of value which I refer to as desire: States that are sought in and of themselves. Accordingly, Hume's passions, each empirically defined by their degree of emotivity, *may* incorporate states which are sought as ends in and of themselves (e.g., the desire to be fearful, expressed through the enjoyment of watching a horror movie). Equally, however, Hume's passions may consist of emotional states which are sought merely as a means to our ends (e.g., the need to be fearful, as a logical means of protecting oneself from danger, expressed as a fear of heights) or unsought altogether (e.g., unfounded or unproductive hatred towards others).

generally objective in nature – it is the *details* of how, when and where it is objective that we are unfamiliar with. Similarly, my assertion that all states of desire – the ultimate value that I will subsequently define herein – are necessarily and objectively amoral (that is, completely void of moral value – neither good, nor bad; neither moral, nor immoral) may challenge the logical reader's moral intuition. This intuition is apparently built from daily associations between desires and the material states that accompany or underlie their realization. I have discussed what I purport to be the fundamental differences between 'material' states and states of desire previously (Primus, 2020, 2021). For the purposes of this article, readers should consider that material states are essentially the states that we perceive we *need* whereas desires are the states that we *want*. The distinction between states of desire and the materials that necessarily realize them is explicitly highlighted in the second thought experiment of part two of this article series. As I briefly detail herein, it is the material states that underly and realize any desire – and only these states – that we should consider to possess moral values – not the desires themselves. As per my offering that morality serves merely an instrumental purpose, material states, by definition, serve as merely a means to our sought ends, whereas desires, by definition, are sought as ends in and of themselves. Accordingly, it may seem counterintuitive to consider that a person's desire to assault another person against their will is amoral – neither 'good,' nor 'bad'; it may defy intuition to consider that it is the *materials* which enact the desire (e.g., a particular person's human body) rather than the desire itself that is either moral or immoral (e.g., if the desire is indeed enacted without consideration for the victim's desire and the (material) needs of broader society). The concept that *all* desires – even the ones that we might subjectively despise or rebuke, whether as individuals or collectively as a society – are still necessarily more valuable than any other state we can consider may initially defy our moral intuitions. Despite this defiance, and even in an absence of the *nuance* of how desires can amorally (neither rightly, nor wrongly) exist, the overall, *general* intuition of the logical reader will lead them to the conclusion that our desires, as a general category of entity, are the most valuable characteristic that one can conceive – whether present in their own person or others: We intuitively recognize desires as true and exclusive ends, and we recognize ends as insurmountably valuable states.

I expect that neither my definition of objectivity, nor the requirement for logicity within an observer as a prerequisite for recognizing the objective nature of the ultimate value (and the moral realism which follows), will be controversial among readers – irrespective of whether the reader tends towards realism or subjective idealism. I assert that even the most fervent antirealist must

concede that any state of reality, including any observation (conception and/or perception), *exists* objectively for the duration and with the properties by which it exists – irrespective of whatever other subjective or objective properties can be attributed to said state. Of course, states which are purely mind-dependant (that is, existing solely within the mind of at least one observer) may present difficulty for other observers to objectively observe. However, I reiterate that the difficulty for, or absence of, observation of objective properties conceivably does not render those properties to be any less objective. I emphasise that the objectivity of any state conceivably relies on neither the logicity of an observer nor the presence of an observer. The expression '3 + 4 = 7' is objectively true when paired with appropriate caveats (Primus, 2019), irrespective of whether there is an observer there to realize it or not, and irrespective of whether that observer is logical. It is only that such requirements are necessary in order to *recognize* or *discover* said objectivity.

Within this series, I adopt an ultra-broad, and thus radically inclusive, metaethical concept of morality, simply being *the* outcome that *objectively ought* or *should* occur in any particular condition. This aligns with Deryck Beyleveld's assertion that "[m]orality is commonly characterized as a system of rules governed by a categorically binding impartial imperative" (2015, p.1). If readers resist my attempt to bridge the is-ought gap, I suspect it will be with my assertion that the purview of morality – the *should* or *ought* – extends to all universalized instances of should and ought. Hume (1740) is generally credited with the argument that the *is-ought* 'gap' could not be bridged. However, the importance of Hume's recognition was perhaps to implicitly highlight that there is a fundamental problem with contemporary observers' generally narrow view of the purview of morality – as a state which is generally confined to conscious actions of the Anthropocene within contemporary literature (Oriel, 2014; Riddle, 2014). There is no logical basis to assume that the notion of morality should be limited to apply to the actions of humans or agents operating under specific conditions (e.g., consciousness, or the requirement to be 'rational') – as it is so often automatically and implicitly confined. As I hope this series will demonstrate, this association assumes a far narrower view of morality – what objectively should or should not occur in any moment – than is logically justified. I offer that overcoming anthropocentric views of morality is necessary for the discovery of the objective basis which underpins moral intuition. Searle (1964) has already demonstrated that Hume's gap can be crossed – by virtue of what a promise *is*, he argues, a *should* arises, by definition. I draw upon a similar line of argument herein: The notion of value is implicitly contained within the notion of ought or should, and the notion of ought or

should is – at least implicitly – contained within any notion of morality. The reader should not find it difficult to accept that the concept of should (prescription), by definition, presupposes the valuation of selected states to the exclusion or devaluation of other states. If observers are to determine and prescribe how the states of the world *should be*, they logically need a method of differentiating value amidst the various observed states of the world – some states must necessarily be considered more valuable (e.g., precious or important) than other states. I ask the reader to conceive of a type or nature of value that does not inherently invoke a ‘should,’ either by definition or intuition, or vice versa – readers may similarly attempt to conceive of a type of ‘should’ that does not necessitate a valuation of states. If all observed states – those perceived to be real and those conceived to be possible – were considered to be of equal value, then it would matter not which states exist and which states do not – there would be no *should* or *ought*. The moral intuition of the reader will confirm that this is not our reality. We intuitively believe that the states we value the most *should be* preserved and supported. If readers can accept that all instances of *should* and *should not* necessarily and exclusively invoke the nature of comparing value against value, it then simply becomes a matter of determining, in a logical manner, which value is universally the most valuable in nature.

I will not treat moral nihilism with greater discussion than it deserves. As Nathan Nobis (2020) observes, this position cannot be cogently maintained while accepting the validity of knowledge in general. And even then, Nobis is too kind. Moral nihilists, if they are true to their doctrine – by the same nature of inconceivability discussed earlier – cannot technically even conceive of the positions that they claim to occupy if they extend them to their logical conclusions and *consider them with sufficient conceptual depth*.

As should become apparent upon viewing the definition of desire offered herein, the intuitions of moral-subjectivist or relativist accounts of morality can be explained through an examination of states of desire themselves: As I mention, desires, by definition, exist as *subjectively* sought states – each state of desire is sought to possess subjective value to its respective desiring mind. And yet, concurrently, the collective nature of desire, as a fundamental category of value, conceivably intrinsically and *objectively* possesses greater value than any other state. It is this objective value which may be recognized by logical observers through intuition and logical reasoning in this two-part series.

I define desires, in general terms, as states which are unconditionally sought, irrespective of one’s contemporary environmental material conditions – those states that are sought for a purpose of *want*, but not *need*. I more

specifically define desires as states which are sought *for arbitrary, if any, purpose(s)* (Primus, 2021, p.2). These states are sought in and of themselves rather than being needed for the realization of any other (higher) purpose(s). This can be contrasted to states which are instrumentally sought (that is, needed) for logical purposes, as a logical means to achieve other goals. Accordingly, one who seeks to wear a coat solely on the basis that they are cold possesses a perceived need to do so, not a desire to do so – their goal is to remain warm. One who seeks to wear a coat purely because they seek to associate with its aesthetic properties (e.g., because they believe it expresses their identity), possesses a desire to wear that coat. The person who desires to wear a coat could potentially seek to wear it (or associate with it as part of their personal identity) indefinitely into the future – even if they were to enter a perfect world, where the temperature was permissive, such that they had no need for a coat’s thermal-retaining properties. I reiterate that my use of the term *desire* is narrower than its common use in contemporary literature (for discussion and examples of this, see Oddie, 2005). The term appears to be uniformly⁶ used, interchangeably and synonymously, to describe states which are conditionally or unconditionally sought (or any combination thereof, in cases where these states appear to be practically entangled with each other). That is, the concept of desire is elsewhere used to describe states that are desired (as I define desire) and/or needed (or believed to be needed), or both. Hence, the broader category of desire, currently in use (e.g., see Oddie, 2005), does not exclusively encompass states which are sought in and of themselves. In relation to conditionally-sought states (that is, material states, which are perceived to be *needed*), it is the environment, or the conditions, rather than the person’s intrinsic nature, that dictates the seeking of said entity. Consider any condition in which someone needs, but does not desire, a particular state (e.g., the requirement for a person to wear shoes solely for the sake of foot safety). It is only due to the absence of more-ideal conditions (e.g., an environment free of foot-hazards), or even a set of different conditions (e.g., if someone goes swimming rather than running), that the seeking of such a state (e.g., a pair of running shoes rather than a pair of swimming fins) would be rendered unnecessary and thus the particular state would be unsought.

Of course, in contemporary society, an individual might seek to wear a coat or a pair of shoes for a combination of reasons in any moment. I address the practical entanglement of desires and needs elsewhere – noting, for example, that contemporary human beings exist as

⁶ At the time of writing this I cannot find an exception across the relevant literature.

combinations of various, physically-entangled states that they need and desire (Primus, 2021). For now, the reader should note that a desire is always *conceptually* separable and distinct from all other states, if not also always *practically* so. Two elements are key to understanding this: Firstly, if a *state* is sought, it can logically only be sought for a combination of logical and/or arbitrary reasons – there is conceivably no further residual category (except being unsought). If a logical observer believes that they or another⁷ *need* a particular state, then that state is required to serve as a *logical* means of achieving the purpose that it is sought (needed) for. The runner selects shoes rather than swimming fins to enhance their foot safety while running on the basis that the fins would appear to probably not serve as a *logical* means to their purpose of running safely. The selection of an *arbitrary* means would not be sought – by a *logical* observer at least – as such means would probably not efficiently bring about their sought objectives. I reiterate that the system of morality discussed herein will only be recognized (validated) by an observer who possesses a logical system of valuation, though its objectivity exists independently of its discovery, even in the absence of such an observer.

Secondly, readers should note the difference between a *state* (whether real or purely conceptual) and the *purpose(s)* that may be assigned to a state in any moment. One may conceivably seek any *state* for any number of purposes, but each *purpose* will either be logical or arbitrary in nature and each purpose can and will exist independently of the other, on the basis that any aspect of reality (e.g., a purpose) cannot conceivably be both arbitrary and logical at the same moment. Any state which is sought for a *purpose* of desire is mutually exclusive to any state which is sought for a *purpose* of need (or unsought), on the basis that the arbitrarily-sought nature of a desire⁸ is, by definition, an antonym of the logically-sought purposes attributed to states that are (perceived to be) needed. Accordingly, each category of seeking is mutually exclusive to each other in the same aspect of space, in the same moment, by virtue of our inability to conceive of difference (that is, both arbitrariness and logicity) coexisting at individual points in space and times (Primus, 2019, 2020). Thus, these fundamentally different categories can always be *theoretically* distinguished from one another in any moment, as they exist *for* a distinct *purpose*, if not as a distinct *state*. One or more (multiple) observer(s) may seek a single particular *state* (e.g., to wear a coat or

shoes) for one or more *purposes* in any moment, though each purpose must logically *either* be for desire or for perceived need – not both.

It is not necessary for readers to accept that the label of ‘desire’ suits the content of my definition, for it is the content that is important in the context of these articles. I created the narrower definition of desire herein through a process of selecting the content prior to the selection of the label. I first identified, a priori, the natures of those states which necessarily must be conceived as an end (whenever their nature is considered with sufficient conceptual depth) and then retroactively considered, a posteriori (via grounding my definition with my empirical observations of reality), which label might best fit this description in congruence with the general lexicon of contemporary society. Accordingly, it is the content which I hold firm across (changing) times, not the label. Whilst I selected the term ‘desire’ as a label to represent value which is sought for arbitrary, if any, purposes, this label may obviously change or be debated – I welcome suggestions grounded in reality. It is irrelevant if the label changes or holds across times, for I hold the content of the definition firm over and beyond its contemporary label. This is important to note, lest it be considered that I attempted to bestow the title of ‘ends’ or ‘ultimate value’ upon the label of desire, rather than the other way around. Thus, my argument that desires *are* exclusively sought ends – essentially, by their very definition – is not to be confused with the argument that a particular type of state, such as the rational will of a free agent (e.g., Kant and Gewirth) should be *treated* or *regarded* as an end. It is on this basis that I assert that my use of the term holds gravity and poses an existential threat to other rationalist theorists who would impose (force) their own conception of what should be considered an end upon their (arbitrarily) selected values or characteristics. Kant’s notion of the ‘rational will’ and Gewirth and Korsgaard’s notion of ‘agency’ are each problematic for this reason. Each characteristic – agency and rational will – is not logically (that is, necessarily, intrinsically, universally) an end in and of itself – irrespective of these authors’ assertions that it should be *treated* as such. As the thought experiments in part two should reveal, there is no logical (universal, impartial) basis to consider notions such as ‘rational will,’ ‘consciousness’ or ‘agency’ as an ultimate value, and thus nor as a necessary component of personhood. In the second thought experiment of part two, I aim to demonstrate that a person can be wholly disembodied from concepts such as agency and will. Even if we assume that the overwhelming majority of people in this era desire ‘free agency,’ it is conceivable that other people – in this or future eras – may desire states for their personhood that are not of a conscious nature. People in this era already desire states that are non-agential in nature, such as their possessions. It is

⁷ Notably, a means may be sought on behalf of another’s ends – a person need not be aware that they need any particular means to their sought ends.

⁸ As per the definition provided earlier (Primus, 2021), a desire conceivably need not be sought for a purpose, though if it is, such purpose will necessarily be arbitrary in nature.

conceivable that someone might wholly desire that their person exists as a lifeless form (e.g., a statue). In part two I ask the question: Should we not honor that desire as per the desires of any living agent?

To be clear, I am claiming that desires, by their definition, logically *are* ends, by virtue of being sought in and of themselves, and that is the case irrespective of whether an observer recognizes and treats them as such. Accordingly, the mechanism by which states are appropriately categorized as means and ends is due to the nature of the purpose for which they are sought, rather than the chronological order in which they occur within a chain of cause-and-effect. That is to say, if one's means of arriving at one's holiday destination is a road-trip in a car, and if one's sought end is the enjoyment of one's holiday at the destination, it is not merely because the former occurs temporally prior to the latter that renders them each to be a means and an end, respectively. For the reasons that I will detail below, a state which serves as a means to an(other) end may be concurrently sought as an end in and of itself. The travel to one's holiday destination could be viewed as an end – in addition to, or instead of, serving as a means – if it is sought in and of itself (e.g., if one enjoys the road trip, or elements thereof). Similarly, nor does the perceived *need* for the continued existence of a particular state render it to be an end, even if it were to be universally (e.g., unanimously and indefinitely) sought by observers. As the second thought experiment in part two should demonstrate: Any moral law, or any agent enacting a moral law, will always necessarily serve as a *means* to the ends of society, rather than existing as an end itself – despite the fact that there will conceivably always be a need for said moral laws and moral agents to coexist at any moment across said society. Contrary to the aforementioned authors' (arbitrary) impositions concerning the nature of what should be *treated* as an end, the ends sought by society are *not* synonymous with the achievement of moral outcomes that may be *permanently* required by any individual or society. The most ultimate of moral outcomes are merely a means to the true ends of society. The ends of society are exclusively the states that each citizen desires themselves – these are true ends. Ultimately, the reason why states of desire and states whose sole purpose is to maximize the realization of states of desire should not both be considered as ends – even if they are both sought to exist indefinitely into the future, even as we approach a near-perfect world – is simple: It must always be remembered that the sole purpose of moral laws is to (logically) serve states that are desired in and of themselves; this is a directional, supervening relationship. Means must serve (and thus be subservient to) ends – never the other way around. This may seem obvious to many readers – especially in retrospect – though

consider the highly esteemed authors to the likes of those mentioned above, and especially Kant, who overlook this requirement in the context of their normative frameworks. Kant, whose moral 'imperative' appears to implicitly proclaim that a person may *never* lie, for example, is placing the preservation of a moral law (the 'imperative') above and beyond the people that moral laws exist to serve. In other words, Kant elevates his 'law' – itself merely a means of purportedly preserving morality, via the preservation of our ends – above all other acts. He does this irrespective of whether those acts (e.g., lying) are sought as an end – ends being the sole reason why moral laws are sought to exist and whose nature moral laws are supposed to protect – or merely as a means. We can conceive that on some occasions, lying would probably benefit the true ends of humanity (people's desires). That is, we can consider that there will be conditions in which deception may foreseeably lead to the maximization of the realization of known desire, across space and times. We obviously can consider other occasions in which it will not; on some occasions – and perhaps more often than not – it will be harmful. On other occasions it will be morally neutral (neither good nor bad). We can conceive of a hypothetical scenario – however unlikely – whereby the decision to tell the truth would lead to the permanent destruction of all humanity, or where it would make no difference to the material wellbeing of broader society at all. As I hope to demonstrate in part two of this series, it is a moral imperative to structure society in a logical manner so as to institutionally enforce the proper constraints and freedoms upon potentially nefarious means, such as deception or violence. As unintuitive as it may first appear to readers, a morally healthy society unconditionally permits deception as a sought end; deception, of course, may be desired and there can be no logical reason to deny its occurrence unconditionally. That is, in the near-perfect world that we are striving for, people can desire to deceive each other as much as they want (e.g., the use of deception in jokes and satire) and this is morally permissible because in such a (near-perfect) world there is no need for people to associate with each other if said deception is not mutually desired. Deception, of course, must be conditionally controlled and regulated as a *means* to the ends of society: In the course of any act that one believes one *needs* to enact, deliberate deception may be permitted or even essential, providing it occurs as a logical (that is, probably the most efficient) means to a peaceful purpose (maximizing the realization of desire; Primus, 2020, 2021).

The reader will note that my logical appeal for the ultimate value of desire does not rely on axioms, but rather rests on the a priori inconceivability of any alternative. There is no need for axioms to validate the

truth of the existence of the states that one directly perceives or is forced to conceive each and every time one considers them. When the reader considers whether they are conscious, they do not need an axiom stating as much. Lack of conceivability of an alternative is the force that prevents us from an infinite regression (Primus, 2019). The authority of morality is derived from logic (Primus, 2021) and the authority of logic is derived from the inconceivability of any alternative (Primus, 2019). When one cannot conceive of any other alternative to a proposition, despite continual consideration, one is logically bound.

The condensed version of my appeal to the reader's logical reasoning in the determination of desire as an ultimate value is as follows:

States (e.g., objects, thoughts, and actions) sought in and of themselves (as ends) are universally (objectively) more valuable than the states merely sought as means to those ends – irrespective of what each of those states specifically are.

I assert that the above observation is an objective (universal, impartial, discoverable, mind-independent) aspect of reality, which may be further extrapolated as such:

1. A desire – defined as a state which is sought for arbitrary, if any, purpose(s) (Primus, 2021, p.2) and thus being sought in and of itself rather than being needed (as a logical means) for the realization of any other (higher) purpose(s), or being unsought – is the only type of sought end that we can conceive if we consider the nature of what might constitute a sought end – something sought in and of itself – with sufficient conceptual depth. And;

2. As the most distal or ultimate sought state that we can imagine, desires intrinsically and universally – from the perspective of all logical observers – possess the greatest value that we can conceive.

I present my appeal to the reader's logical reason here in its expanded structure, before attempting to demonstrate desire's ultimate value by appeal to the reader's intuition in part two of this series, via the use of thought experiments:

1. Let us define a 'state' as any entity, whether a structure, thought, emotion, sensation, or action, or event, and whether real (purely physical) or purely conceptual.

2. Let us define a 'purpose' as an ultimate (distal or final) state which an entity strives to realize (bring about) in any

moment. A purpose might otherwise be referred to as an outcome, endstate, objective, goal, or reason (for striving), by nature of being sought (valued). The reader should note that in Purist teleology, a purpose is not synonymous with a sought end (desire), the latter being the most ultimate type of purpose we can conceive. That is, whilst all sought ends are a category of purpose, not all purposes are sought in and of themselves and, hence, their purpose will be to merely serve as further, higher means to other purpose(s).

3. Let us define a logical state (e.g., a purpose) as one embodying purely logical (consistent) properties, characterized by an absence of arbitrary, if any, difference (variance and/or limitation) (Primus, 2021, p.14). Let us use logicity as a synonym for (literal or figurative) consistency (uniformity across times and space), which, through this property, embodies objectivity (universality, impartiality, discoverability, mind-independence). A state sought for a logical purpose, for example, has specific, concrete, objectives that must be satisfied in order to bring about the purpose for which its logical properties are sought.

4. A state sought for a logical purpose – a state sought for its logical properties – must conceivably possess its sought properties in relation to at least one other, higher state (being the purpose for which its properties are sought). We cannot conceive that any state that is sought to fulfil a logical purpose – characterized by objectivity (universality, impartiality, discoverability, mind-independence) – can be logical in and of itself, yet rather, only in relation to, and through grounding via, other (objective) states. That is, a logically sought state can conceivably only express logical (consistent, objective) properties in relation to a(t least one other, higher) state, existing outside of itself, and conversely, the seeking of any state in relation to only itself will necessarily be arbitrary. A vehicle sought for a logical purpose, for example, might be sought for the purpose of safely, comfortably and efficiently transporting people to and from their destinations. This purpose is logically rather than arbitrarily sought because the properties of the materials which are needed to bring about this (objective) outcome must possess specific, concrete, objective natures in relation to the sought purpose. Arbitrary properties – whether those properties are (arbitrarily) selected in isolation from the purpose or whether they are arbitrary in relation to the purpose – will conceivably result in inefficiency or failure to fulfill the objectives of safety, comfort, efficiency.

5. Any state may conceivably have multiple purposes assigned to it in any moment (e.g., a movie might be

sought for both its entertainment and educational value at the same time).

6. Any purpose will conceivably either be arbitrary or logical in nature, that is, either sought (valued) for its logical or arbitrary properties. So whilst we can conceive that any particular state might be both arbitrary for one purpose and logical for another at the same time, we cannot conceive that a state can be both arbitrary and logical in relation to the same purpose at the same moment. More specifically, we cannot conceive of a purpose that is both sought in and of itself, for no other, higher purpose(s), and sought merely for the achievement of another, higher purpose(s) – both are mutually exclusive and exhaustive in the context of any one purpose.

7. Let us define a state that is sought (valued) in and of itself as an ‘end.’ For example, watching a movie under normal conditions – e.g., for purely enjoyment purposes – is an end on the basis that the experience of viewing the movie is sought in and of itself rather than *merely* a means to some other sought state.⁹

8. On the basis that each end is sought in and of itself, not merely as a means to another purpose, an end is logically the most ultimate or distally-sought state that we can conceive. Each end will be viewed as an ultimate value by any logical observer – even if the subjective (arbitrary) or non-existent reasons for which any particular end is sought are unknown to said observer. That is, from the perspective of any observer with a logical system of valuation: A sought end is more valuable (e.g., considered ‘precious’) than the means that would probably most efficiently achieve these ends, and both a sought end and its optimal means are more valuable (e.g., considered ‘important’) than non-optimal means and any state which is unsought.

9. A desire – defined as a state which is sought for arbitrary, if any, purpose(s) (Primus, 2021, p.2) – is, by definition, sought as an end, in and of itself. The clause ‘if any’ affirms that if a desired state is sought for any particular purpose, the reason for that purpose’s existence will necessarily be arbitrary in nature, rather than logical (each being mutually exclusive and exhaustive concepts, see 6. above). Alternatively, a desired state might conceivably be sought in the absence of any purpose (and rather, simply sought). In either case, all aspects of any desired state – both the state

itself and any arbitrary purposes assigned to it – are sought in and of themselves, as an end, by definition, on the basis that their sought properties are not sought merely as a means to the realization (bringing about) of (an)other state(s), as they would be in the instance of logically sought purposes – states sought on the basis of their logical properties in relation to their probable ability to bring about at least one other, higher purpose. For example, if one desires to watch a movie, the act of watching and any associated purposes will necessarily be sought arbitrarily, rather than being sought to fulfil a logical purpose. More specifically, the movie will be sought for its arbitrary properties, whereby those properties are sought in and of themselves, while also potentially being associated with arbitrarily sought purpose(s) (e.g., the movie might be associated with ‘joy’ or even a nonsensical reason, such as its jabberwockyness) whereby said properties are also sought by the viewer for the sake of seeking them. There is no logical reason (higher purpose) to experience either the movie or any purpose associated with it unless the movie or its purpose(s) have properties which are sought to (logically) bring about other, higher purpose(s), beyond the movie and its arbitrarily sought purposes. In such cases, where a logical reason exists to experience its joy or jabberwockyness (in addition to any arbitrary reason(s) that might exist), the movie is not purely desired – it is also needed (for its logical properties). If, however, the movie and its sought purposes are each purely desired, they will be simply sought for what they are. Alternatively, the experience of watching the movie may be (arbitrarily) sought for no purpose(s) (e.g., one simply wants to watch the movie) and the movie itself is simply sought for what it is. In either case, a desired movie, by definition, cannot merely be sought for its logical properties in relation to a higher purpose, nor, more specifically, can it be sought merely as a(n) instrumental, interchangeable) means of bringing about other, higher, purpose(s) beyond the purpose(s) for which it is sought.

10. We cannot conceive of how any state other than desire – a state which is sought for an arbitrary purpose or nil purpose – could meet the definitional criteria of a sought end – a state which is sought (valued) in and of itself. That is, any state is either:

- a. Sought for an arbitrary purpose;
- b. Sought for a logical purpose;
- c. Sought, but not for any purpose (simply sought);
- d. Sought for multiple purposes at once (in any combination of a. and b.); or
- e. Not sought at all (unsought).

The above categories are logically exclusive and exhaustive. States a. and c. meet the definitional criteria

⁹ A consequence of this definition is that states that are not sought in and of themselves are not ends, even though they might erroneously (have) be(en) classified as such. I note in this contemporary era that many states that are described as ‘ends’ are more accurately sought as a means to another means.

for desire (see 9. above). States which are sought (valued) for a logical purpose are, by definition, sought as a means to another purpose, rather than being sought in and of themselves. States which are unsought are unvalued. States sought for multiple purposes should have each purpose treated separately, noting that a purpose is either arbitrary or logical in nature, never both (see 6. above).

11. Desire is, exclusively, the ultimate value.

The reader should be careful not to get drawn into comparing the *specific* natures of various different ends (desires). Specifically, they should not attempt to consider whether the nature of any specific desire, if optimally (and thus fully) realized by its means, would interfere with others' sought ends within any specific society. Doing so may lead the reader to then question whether a particular set of optimal means would be sought (valued) by a logical observer if the employment of these means were to probably violate the peace in society (e.g., resulting in the full realization of an ostensibly 'harmful' desire). These concerns are dealt with by the normative component (see Primus, 2021) and the conceivably amoral (morally-neutral) nature of all natures of desire will be briefly discussed in part two of this series. Here I am comparing the general nature of two categories of value in the context of determining an ultimate value – specifically, the categories of desire and non-desire. I am attempting to establish in the mind of the logical reader – an observer with a logical system of valuation – that, upon appropriate consideration, they are forced to conceive that there are logically only two *fundamentally* different categories of value: States that are sought (desired) as an end in and of itself – and thus sought as an ultimate value – and states that are not – either because they are sought (perceived to be needed) as a means to an end (the states we ultimately value) or because they are unsought. In the second article of this two-part series, I will introduce readers to a posthuman society in which, I offer, the recognition and treatment of these categories of value is extended to its logical conclusion.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has declared that they have no conflict of interest.

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