value of life is greater. Clearly, value of life estimates based on willingness to pay are considerably more reliable than in the 1980s and a growing number of decision makers are finding values of life which are reliable enough for benefit-cost analysis and regulatory impact analysis.

Questions about risk information, perception, econometric estimation, contingent valuation and the values of life estimates remain. Risk analysis as developed as an alternative to benefit-cost analysis in an analysis of regulations. The central relationship is the KopfRJSmtVkes)99VaugN

See also: Children. Value of: Consumer Economics; Cost-Benefit Analysis: Health Economics; Health Risk Appraisal and Optimistic Bias: Human Capital; Educational Aspects: Life Course; Sociological Aspects. Safety; Economics of: Wage Differentials and Structure

Bibliography


G. C. Blomquist

Value Pluralism

‘Value pluralism’ has traditionally been understood as a metaphysical thesis about what values there ultimately are: there are many values that cannot be ‘reduced’ to a single supervalue. Although value monism has an impressive pedigree of proponents (e.g., Bentham, Mill, and, arguably, Aristotle and Nietzsche among others), it is now widely assumed to be false. The arguments for value pluralism, however, are surprisingly inconclusive. Indeed, they critically depend on the resolution of a neglected question in value theory: how are values properly individuated?

The metaphysical plurality of values has been thought to be important in two main ways. First, if values are plural, any theory that relies on value

16139
monism is mistaken. So, for example, hedonistic utilitarianism and most forms of preference-utilitarianism must be rejected. Second, the plurality of values is thought to raise problems for rational choice. If justice, for instance, is irreducibly distinct from mercy, how can there be rational choice between them? Without reduction, it seems there is no common ground that justifies choosing one value over another.

On closer inspection, however, it turns out that metaphysical or ‘reductive’ value pluralism does not bite the implications for rational choice that many have supposed. A charitable interpretation of value pluralist writings suggests a second, ‘nonreductive,’ form of value pluralism. Nonreductive pluralism is neutral on the metaphysical question of plurality but insists that in the context of choice, there are differences between values—whether or not these values reduce to a single supervalue—that have important implications for rational choice. Since the differences claimed to hold between values vary from author to author, nonreductive value pluralism is not itself a particular view about values but merely a convenient rubric under which a loose collection of different views about values may be grouped.

This article examines the main arguments for reductive value pluralism, argues that reductive value pluralism does not have certain implications it is widely thought to have, and outlines three forms of nonreductive value pluralism.

1. Reductive Value Pluralism

Value pluralists maintain that whatever values are, there are ultimately many of them: they do not all reduce to a single ultimate value. Exactly how this metaphysical thesis is to be understood depends on how the notion of reduction is to be understood.

Reduction in the context of values is best understood as an explanatory relation: if one value reduces to another, what it is to bear the one value is fully explained by what it is to bear, promote, or respect the other value. This reduction is neutral on the general ontological question of whether there ‘really’ are any values at all. The pluralist maintains only that there are many values, whether or not they are to be regarded as entities in their own right.

Two paradigmatic relations of explanatory reduction are ‘is merely instrumental to’ and ‘is wholly constituted by.’ (Others include ‘is merely symbolic of,’ ‘is merely contributory to,’ ‘is merely a part of’). If one value is merely instrumental to another, there is nothing more to having the one value than promoting the value it is a means to. For example, if beauty is merely instrumental to pleasure, what it is to be beautiful is fully explained by the pleasure it brings. If one value is wholly constituted by another, there is nothing more to having the one value than being a way in which the other value is borne. For example, if the evening’s pleasure is wholly constituted by the thrill at the gaming tables, what it is to have the evening’s pleasure is fully explained by the thrill it is constituted by.

If all values reduce to a single value, that value is the one ultimate value, and value monism is correct. If however there is something more to two or more values than the values they are instrumental to, constituted by, etc., then those values are irreducibly distinct, and value pluralism is correct.

2 Three Arguments for Reductive Value Pluralism

Although there has been no agreement on which is the one value to which all others reduce, the view that there is such a value has two main attractions. If values reduce to one, then values can be neatly systemized as instruments to, constituted by, etc., a single supervalue. Value monism appears to ensure a simple and elegant axiology, with a supervalue at the trunk of a structure that branches out to the other values that each derive from the supervalue in some way.

Moreover, if value monism holds, it seems that all conflicts between values are only apparent. For if there is ultimately only one value, then options for choice can be tidily arrayed according to how much of the supervalue they bear, promote, or respect. Any evaluative choice would ultimately be a choice between two amounts of the supervalue. Choosing between values would always be like choosing between two lumps of coal or three. Thus, value monism seems to dissolve the threats to practical rationality posed by tragic choices, moral dilemmas, and ‘incommensurable’ options.

Despite these attractions, most contemporary value theorists assume that value pluralism is true. There are three main arguments for pluralism. First is the intuitive implausibility of value monism: given the apparent diversity of values, how could there be a single value ‘common to’ all valuable items? Second is the thought that instrumentalism can be explained only if values are plural; how can it make sense for someone to choose something that she believes is worse overall unless there is something attractive about the worse option that is not ‘included’ in the better one? A closely related third argument maintains that some choice situations involve unavoidable loss: no matter which alternative one chooses, something valuable will be forgone, and thus, there must be plural values at stake in the choice.

2.1 Ordinary Intuition

Value monism seems to run afoul of common sense. Two intuitions suggest that any monistic account

be vulnerable, there be joys, items as digestible as philosophical insights. Whil
strumental pleasure, it or respectin
being valued that exhausts evaluative c
given by the d
philosophical ins
teresting or qi
think that e
are just a m
To these
to suggest uncharitab
what it is to
about a kin
happiness, I
things invol
happy expe
Some moni
is given by t
'rationa' d
that runs a
property of
value of

whether value are pl,
be 'fully-in
is usually u
and being I
might be pr
ately-neut
certain eval
or 'rational
guarantee
strengths w
more valu
have fully-in
perform evi
for those d
ones. If, in:
evaluative c
insisting th
one must gi
as constrain
value they c
values, not:
Monists I
reply was in
utilitarianism
of Bentham

be vulnerable to counterexample. First, how could there be just one value that runs through valuable items as diverse as, for example, achieving philosophical insight and eating a slice of delicious cheesecake? While perhaps the value of both options is instrumental to or constituted by some value (e.g., pleasure), it is hard to believe that bearing, promoting, or respecting what value is ultimately all there is to their being valuable. Second, if there were a single value that exhausted the value of all valuable things, the evaluative difference between things could always be given by some amount of the supervalue. But how could the difference in value between achieving philosophical insight and eating delicious cheesecake be a matter of quantity of some one thing? It is incredible to think that evaluative differences among diverse goods are just a matter of more or less of a single value.

To these charges, monists offer two replies. The first is to suggest that the troublesome intuitions rely on an uncharitable view of monism, one according to which what it is to bear the supervalue is to bear or bring about a kind of feeling or experience like pleasure or happiness. It is, indeed, hard to believe that all valuable things involve having or producing a pleasurable or happy experience. But monism need not be so crude. Some monists propose instead that the ultimate value is given by the satisfaction of one’s ‘fully-informed’ or ‘rational’ desires or preferences. The one property that runs through all valuable items, then, is the property of satisfying constrained desires, and it is the value of that that is the supervalue. Evaluative differences between items are a matter of the strength or number of desires they satisfy.

Whether desire-satisfaction accounts of the supervalue are plausible depends on what it is for a desire to be ‘fully-informed’ or ‘rational.’ ‘Full-information’ is usually understood as ‘having all the relevant facts and being free from logical error.’ ‘Rational’ desires might be procedurally rational (passing certain evaluatively-neutral tests) or substantively rational (passing certain evaluative tests). Insofar as ‘full-information’ or ‘rational’ is a value-neutral constraint, there is no guarantee that such constrained desires or their strengths will track what is intuitively valuable or more valuable; it is perfectly possible that everyone has fully-informed or procedurally rational desires to perform evil and malicious deeds, and that the desires for those deeds be stronger than desires for angelic ones. If, in an effort to secure this tracking, one places evaluative constraints on desires, as one might do by insisting that desires be substantively rational, then one must give up monism. For the values that operate as constraints on desires must be distinct from the value they constrain, and so there are ultimately many values, not one.

Monists have a second, more promising, reply. This reply was introduced by Mill in an effort to defend utilitarianism against countereventual consequences of Bentham’s quantitative hedonism. There are, Mill insisted, not only different quantities of pleasure, but different qualities of pleasure. The pleasure of philosophical insight is a ‘higher’ pleasure than the pleasure of eating delicious cheesecake. Thus, while there is ultimately only one value, there are different qualities of it that explain the seeming diversity of values. Moreover, the evaluative differences between valuable items are not simply given by some amount of the supervalue; achieving philosophical insight and eating cheesecake may differ in the quality of the supervalue they bear or instantiate—one pleasure is ‘higher.’

This reply gets to the heart of the dispute between monists and pluralists. The monist insists that the common-sense belief in multiple values is in fact a belief about different qualities or aspects of a single value. Whether this position is plausible depends on how values are to be individuated. What makes two considerations two distinct values as opposed to two qualities or aspects of a single value? Unfortunately, this question has received almost no philosophical attention. Until the question of how values are to be individuated is settled, ordinary intuitions cannot provide good reasons for thinking value pluralism is true.

### 2.2 Akrasia

Some philosophers (Wiggins 1978, Nussbaum 1986) have argued that for akrasia to be explained as a coherent phenomenon, plural values are required, and since akrasia is a coherent phenomenon, it follows that there are plural values. This argument is often presented as establishing the ‘incommensurability’ of values, but ‘incommensurability’ is used as synonymous with or as entailing plurality.

If one judges that one has most reason to choose one alternative but instead chooses the other, one is weak of will. Suppose one must choose between going to a party and staying home to work. Although one believes that staying home to work has the greater value—and therefore that one has most reason to stay home—one chooses to go to the party. How can such a choice be explained? If monism is correct, it seems that weakness of will must be an incoherent phenomenon. For suppose that there is a single ultimate value, say, pleasure. It seems, then, that there is nothing about the lesser option that could possibly attract one to it. For everything the lesser option has going for it—a certain amount of pleasure X—is included in what the greater option has going for it—X plus more pleasure to boot. One cannot choose to stay home for a reason, no matter how bad, for there is no reason for choosing the one option that is not already a reason for choosing the other.

The argument, however, does not succeed in establishing value pluralism. For akritic choice can be explained simply by attributing to the akrasia a belief that there are plural values at stake; there need not
actually be plural values. One might mistakenly believe that the value of going to the party is irreducibly distinct from the value of staying home and thus be attracted by the allure of the former. One’s reason for going to the party, while based on a false belief, could nevertheless be a reason that makes one’s weakness of will coherent.

But perhaps for *akrasia* to be coherent in an “objective” sense, that is, coherent for agents with, *inter alia*, relevant beliefs that are true, plural values are required. This version, however, also fails. One possible difficulty is that what grounds the akrates’ attraction to the lesser option may be not the plurality of the values at stake but rather some contingent feature of the circumstances in which the value of the lesser option is instantiated or realized. So, for example, although there might ultimately be only pleasure at stake, the fact that the lesser pleasure of going to the party occurs in a seedy part of town has a special allure for the akrates. There are arguably no plural values here, only circumstances extrinsic to the supervalue whose special appeal to the agent might provide a reason for choosing the lesser option.

A more significant problem is the fact that attraction to the lesser option can be explained by appeal to different qualities or aspects of the supervalue. Take, for example, a choice between two glasses of wine. one laced with pepper and one not (Stocker 1990). Although one judges that the unadulterated wine will provide the greater pleasure, one is charmed by the particular pleasure of the wine laced with pepper and so chooses the lesser pleasure for the reason given by its particular charm. Similarly, one might choose to go to the party while judging that staying home is better for the reason that the party option provides a particular quality of the supervalue which staying at home lacks.

The success of this reply depends on an account of the individuation of values. Is what attracts about the lesser option a value distinct from the value of the greater option or some distinctive quality of an ultimate supervalue?

### 2.3 Unavoidable Loss

In some choice situations, it seems that no matter which alternative one chooses, something valuable will be lost. If, for example, one must choose between attending a lecture on Kant’s ethics and having cheesecake with friends, one is bound to lose out on value no matter which alternative one chooses—and not simply because one cannot have both. If one chooses to attend the lecture, one will forgo the gustatory pleasure of eating cheesecake; if one chooses to go out for cheesecake, one will forgo the philosophical insight one would have gained at the lecture. The fact that any choice in such situations entails value loss shows that the choice involves a conflict between distinct values. Therefore, there are plural values. (Essentially the same argument is sometimes put in terms of the possibility of rational regret over having foregone a lesser good.)

Monism, it seems, must deny that such cases exist. For if monism were true, then choice would always be a matter of choosing more or less of a single value. If one chooses the option with more value, there is no value loss. If one chooses the option with the lesser value then there is value loss, but it is not unavoidable.

Both the argument from *akrasia* in its “objective” form and the argument from unavoidable loss rely on the conviction that values are sometimes incommensurable with one another: pursuit of (respect for, instantiation of, etc.) one excludes pursuit of (etc.) the other. It is the incommensurability of values that grounds the akrates’ attraction to the lesser option and that ensures that no matter which value one chooses, there will be value loss. This incommensurability of values might be conceptual, as Isaiah Berlin believed was true of value concepts like *justice* and *mercy*, or an intrinsic feature of values given the circumstances in which they arise. If values are incommensurable, it seems that they cannot be reduced to a common value.

The monist reply here is already familiar from the previous two arguments. Sophisticated monists of the Millian varieties might insist that there can be incommensurabilities among different qualities or aspects of a single value. In cases of unavoidable loss, there need not be more than one ultimate value. The languorous pleasure of basking in the sun might be incommensurable with the piquant pleasure of hearing unexpected good news having the one pleasure now rules out having the other even though they are nevertheless instances of a single value, pleasure (cf. Stocker 1990). Similarly, the qualitative value of achieving philosophical insight may be incommensurable with the qualitative value of eating delicious cheesecake. Choosing between the lecture and the cheesecake involves a loss in value no matter how one chooses, but there is only one ultimate value.

All three arguments for value pluralism crucially depend on the answer to the question, “How are values properly individuated?” The fundamental idea behind the common monist response to pluralist arguments is that there is a *nonultimate* sense of “value” according to which it can be true that there are distinct “values” and yet those values cannot be values in the robust sense implied by the claim that there are two distinct *ultimate* values.

Exactly how this is to be worked out remains to be seen. Hurka (1996) has suggested that one pleasure is not a different ultimate value from another pleasure if it does not differ in any of its “intrinsic” features. In explaining what it is for a feature to be intrinsic to a value, Hurka urges that the location of a value is extrinsic to it. Thus, John’s pleasure and Joanne’s pleasure are two instances of the same value, pleasure. Stocker (1990), however, has suggested that if pleasure is located in ultimate value pleasure-for-J that it is between two or more of the same thing.

3. Implications

Assuming that anything is at all incoherent, the result seems to generalize, to do. (This is what it is rejected. On some or other all values are.) Many economists satisfaction the very least true. Economists satisfaction of any claim if one’s prefer to be rationality conforming. Philosophers have the only valuation best is s, it being the cl. desire-satisfactorially.

Some have any form of a common value.

1642
is located in different people, there are different ultimate values: there is the pleasure-for-John and the pleasure-for-Joanna. Stocker (1990, 1997) maintains that if it is rational to care about any difference between two evaluative considerations, it follows that those considerations are different ultimate values. Thus, there is sharp disagreement about how values are properly individuated.

Monism, if it is to be plausible, must hold that the correct account of value individuation leaves room for a tenable notion of a value quality or aspect that serves to undermine intuitions that values are plural, accounts for weakness of will, and explains away choices that seem to involve unavoidable loss. If there is such a notion, then value monism may yet win the day. But any such victory for monism may be hollow. For if monism is to be cluttered with complex relations among value qualities or aspects, the two chief attractions of monism in short, the tidiness and simplicity it seemed to offer—fall by the wayside. In the end, then, the debate between value pluralists and value monists may be much ado about nothing.

3. Implications of Reductive Value Pluralism

Assuming that there are ultimately many values, what, if anything, of interest follows? There are two main implications that are thought to be important.

First, if reductive value pluralism is true, then reductive value monism and any theory that relies on it must be rejected. So, for example, Benthamite utilitarianism has to go. Perhaps more significant is the result that preference utilitarianism, or, more generally, desire-satisfaction theories of value must go. (This is not to say that desire-satisfaction theories of what it is for something to be a value must be rejected. One might hold that every value must satisfy some or other desire to be a value while denying that all values reduce to the value of desire satisfaction.) Many economists and some philosophers favor desire-satisfaction accounts of value, and their accounts at the very least require modification if value pluralism is true. Economists who model rational choice on satisfaction of preferences, for example, must relinquish any claim that goodness is a matter of satisfaction of one's preferences and instead maintain only that the rationality of choice depends on one's preferences conforming to certain axioms (cf. Broome 1991). Philosophers who think that individual well-being is the only value there is and that what makes one's life go best is satisfaction of one's desires must give up either the claim that well-being is the only value there is or the claim that well-being is simply a matter of desire-satisfaction.

Some have thought that value pluralism shows that any form of utilitarianism is mistaken. But what is essential to utilitarianism is compatible with value pluralism (Sen 1981). Others have thought that value pluralism is the foundation of political liberalism: if values are metaphysically plural, then liberalism is the correct theory of justice. But the metaphysical plurality of values is plausibly neutral between liberalism and nonliberalism. The fact that there are ultimately many values does not entail that a state should not compel its citizens to pursue one value over others; nor does monism entail that a state should not protect its citizens' choices to pursue nonultimate values in ways that do not best promote or respect the supervalue. As some political theorists have pointed out, liberalism itself might be understood as monistic about value: the ultimate value is the value of permitting people to pursue different nonultimate values. Whether there is, in the end, some indirect way in which value pluralism supports liberalism remains an open question.

Value pluralism has been thought to have a second implication. If value pluralism is correct, then difficulties supposedly follow for rational choice. The difficulties alleged are various, but the reason for thinking that none follows from value pluralism is the same. Many have supposed, for example, that alternatives for choice bearing plural values are incomparable. How can the option of respecting someone's right to free speech be compared with an option that doubles everyone's pleasure? Insofar as the value of a right to free speech is irreducibly distinct from the value of pleasure, it seems that there is no common basis on which to make a comparison between their bearers. The argument goes, if options for choice bearing plural values are incomparable, rational choice between them is precluded.

There is good reason, however, to think that the plurality of values does not entail the incomparability of options that bear them. Take any two putatively ultimate values such as the value of the right to free speech and the value of pleasure. One can no more imagine some option that bears the one value in a notable way that can be compared with another option that bears the other value in a nominal way. So, for instance, an option that involves violating everyone's right to free speech is worse than an option that involves reducing one person's pleasure by a small amount. Given any two putatively irreducibly distinct values, there will always be some comparison between a notable bearer of the one value with a nominal bearer of the other value. The existence of 'nominal-notable' comparisons demonstrates that if alternatives are incomparable, it is not the plurality of values per se that entails their incomparability (Chang 1997). Assuming that rational choice depends on the comparability of alternatives, the plurality of values, then, does not preclude rational choice in this way.

Although value pluralism does not entail incomparability, perhaps the issue of value pluralism is important because if value monism is true, complete comparability follows. If there is ultimately only one value, evaluative differences between items must al-
The importance of values in anthropology was recognized by the mid-twentieth century by the designation of two chapters on this topic in Alfred Kroeber's *Anthropology Today: An Encyclopedic Inventory* (1952). Both chapters were written by philosophers, F. S. C. Northrop and David Sidney, rather than practicing anthropologists, which perhaps suggests a sense that the topic should be grounded in a humanistic tradition. Both authors trace philosophical underpinnings while also discussing issues still current such as the debate between cultural relativism and human rights. While the present essay is much briefer than the two noted, they serve as a baseline against which we can note new developments.

Values, in the sense of "conceptions of the desirable" (Kluckhohn 1951) definitions of the good, the moral, enter anthropology both as an object of study and as an aspect of the anthropologist's own experience. Treating values as the object of study, anthropologists have taken either a cultural or a sociological approach, either emphasizing the patterning of values in themselves and the power of values as cultural conceptions which shape experience or mutatis mutandis, emphasizing the interrelationship between values and the sociological context.

Examples of the first approach come largely from cultural anthropology in the American tradition (which has philosophical roots in German idealism). Early examples are based on configurationism: that is, holistic analysis of values which define broad themes of a particular culture. Benedict (1934), *Patterns of Culture*, is the classic example. She distinguished Appolonian and Dionysian values among plains compared with pueblo Indians. Later, during and following World War II, Benedict, Mead, and others applied the same approach to whole nations, depicting dominant values and psychological patterns of Japan, Germany, and Russia, thus created the national-character school in anthropology. Recognizing the somewhat undisciplined, sweeping holism of these anthropological studies, Kluckhohn, Vogt, and Alberi (1966). Kluckhohn and Strodebeck (Kluckhohn 1951, Kluckhohn and Strodebeck 1961) refined the approach, explicitly centering on values, defining dimensions for comparison (for example, past vs. future orientation in relation to time or dominant context) and making systematic comparisons of particular ethnic or regional groups within America. Clifford Geertz adopted a Parsonian definition of culture (values, symbols, and ideas) that further refined the older configurationalist notion, then pursued a Weberian project in his *Religion of Java* (1960) where he distinguished the major divisions within a complex culture according to distinctive values. *Habits of the Heart* (Bellah 1985) applied this approach to America, producing an influential critique of American individualism and calling for a return to earlier values that recognized societal responsibility. As with the early configurationists, German influences remained important in these later, Weberian-inspired works: *the leitmotif* is that values, as a manifestation of culture, have meaning and significance not reducible to any societal context.

The second approach gives more importance to the sociocultural context, which is viewed as a crucial source...