

consider the colors of a sunset or the expressiveness of a Beethoven symphony or the graceful lines of a statue or the contorted movements of a dance. But the strangeness diminishes when one claims that one is obligated to consider the intrinsic properties considered worthy of attention in a culture when deciding what to do with the paintings in the Sistine Chapel.

Some may object that it is a *moral* obligation in the case of the Sistine Chapel—that one has a moral obligation to posterity to preserve objects that will enrich others' lives, not an aesthetic obligation. But suppose we have a case where we believe the moral value of two options is equivalent. Say we have a canvas on which two beautiful paintings have been placed, one on top of the other, and that people's lives will be equally enriched if either is saved, or equally harmed if either does not exist. For aesthetic reasons alone, one must then make a choice. I do not believe a coin-tossing strategy would be satisfying here, anymore than it is in the moral realm. Ultimately, of course, we are concerned with how people's lives will be affected—what will make their lives meaningful or worth living. The fact that there are hard aesthetic choices—ones involving incompatibility and emotional remainder—shows what a serious, important role aesthetic experiences have in creating such lives.

## SEVEN

### *Aesthetics: The Mother of Ethics?*

**BOTH** strong and weak formalists who insist on the separation of ethics and aesthetics exhibit, I have suggested, a zeal for establishing a rightful place for the latter. Some theorists express a similar zeal in maintaining not only that the moral does not always come first but also that actually it comes second. I believe that this is also a mistake—another version of the separatist mistake—but it is one that takes us further toward a correct integrationist view.<sup>1</sup>

In his Nobel laureate address in 1988, the poet Joseph Brodsky said, "On the whole, every new aesthetic reality makes man's ethical reality more precise. For aesthetics is the mother of ethics."<sup>2</sup> Many philosophers of art have struggled to convince others that aesthetics and ethics are connected; some of us have gone so far as to claim that aesthetic and ethical values are, at least sometimes, equally important and serious. That was the topic of the last chapter. But few go so far as Brodsky does in this remark. One might even construe it as hyperbole. Another author, André Gide, when asked in an interview what morality is, responded, "A branch of aesthetics."<sup>3</sup> One senses that Gide was trying to be outrageous or cute. I think Brodsky, however, was quite serious. What could it possibly mean to say that aesthetics is the *mother* of ethics? In his lecture, Brodsky did not spell out in any detail what he meant, but the phrase enralls me and I believe that consideration of possible interpretations of it sheds light on the extent to which aesthetics and ethics are integrated.

The history of Western philosophy does not offer many theories in which aesthetics is prior to ethics. Plato, of course, tells us that beauty and goodness are ontologically equivalent. Hence, neither can be construed as the "mother" of the other. And when at the level of human experience the aesthetic is embodied artistically, it is strictly inferior to ethics for Plato. Even when our friend Aristotle gives artistic value its due, it does not for him become superior to or prior to ethical value. At most, they are equal, as they are for his medieval champion, Thomas Aquinas, who ascribes ethical value to doing, aesthetic value to making. Though goodness and beauty for him are manifestly different in human experience, Aquinas, like Plato, does give them ontological equality. But when he discusses the conflicts that may arise when one tries both to do good and to create beauty, he acknowledges that art can have both positive and negative effects on our moral life. These are determined extra-aesthetically, by the degree to which art leads one to God; thus, in this sense goodness finally takes the primary role. In later centuries, when beauty

and goodness are related—when beauty is as beauty does, for example—the moral almost always takes precedence. D. Z. Philips's attitude, encountered in chapter 5, that moral considerations override all others, has been prevalent.

Western philosophy offers us plenty of systems in which the ethical and the aesthetic are firmly separated. Kant's is the most influential. It is against such views that I (and many others) have argued. The formalism that has its roots in the Kantian separation of the aesthetic from the ethical and cognitive has led, as Mary Devereaux succinctly observes, to precluding a full understanding of artworks, confusing the interests of the dominant group with universal interests, and disguising the actual standards of evaluation that are employed.<sup>4</sup> Referring to such formalism as "radical autonomism," Noel Carroll has recently argued that it fails to recognize that a great many works of art become intelligible only when the audience provides appropriate moral emotion and evaluation.<sup>5</sup> Failure to elicit proper moral response, he argues, can be an aesthetic flaw. I shall discuss Carroll's view more fully in a later chapter. For now, suffice it to say that even those of us like Devereaux and Carroll who insist on a deep connection between aesthetic and moral values rarely go so far as to say that the aesthetic is in some sense *prior* to the ethical. There may be assessments that require *both* aesthetic and ethical reflection simultaneously. In chapter 9, I shall offer sentimentality as just such a concept. But in this and similar cases, the ethical and the aesthetic seem to be on equal footing. Neither is the mother.

Mark Packer has recently argued that some evaluative notions used morally are, in fact, aesthetic. He gives several examples of conduct that is deemed offensive, even when no threat of pain or infringement of rights exists. Suppose, he says, that we could use DNA painlessly extracted from cows or chickens to create rib eye steaks or boneless breasts. Since no animal would suffer, vegetarian arguments against eating such meat would lose their force. And suppose, further, that we could produce and serve human flesh in the same way. Does all moral offensiveness disappear? Packer answers, "No." But the offensiveness, outrageousness, or at the very least the inappropriateness herein must lie in aesthetic evaluation, since no issues of pain or rights are involved. He says, "Our consumption of human flesh . . . [or other] real life instances of harmless offense, such as incest between consenting adults, are instances of behavior that are found unacceptable in virtue of the actions themselves, i.e. for aesthetic reasons."<sup>6</sup> Negative response to harmless offensiveness is, he thinks, more widespread and common than we have realized.

Packer calls this an "aesthetic approach to morality," and there are ties, I think, to views that I shall discuss later. But even if he provides a way of giving priority to aesthetics over ethics in some specific moral responses, there is still a historical and conceptual dependence of the former on the latter, rather than the other way round. Outrageousness, for example, even if one agrees that it is *now* primarily an aesthetic response, is a vestige of a moral response that originated because of deleterious effects, according to Packer. Pains or rights infringement may get separated off (nothing may feel pain if I eat DNA-produced roast human thigh) but the principle against doing it remains, as does the emotional aversion. So, implicitly for

Packer, the ethical does retain its priority. And he admits that his analysis seems to fit only some ethical notions (like offensiveness), not all; thus, it cannot serve as a general argument that supports the priority of aesthetics over ethics.

Julia Driver points to another area in which morality and aesthetics are intertwined. Sometimes she argues, "Being good is . . . a matter of looking good."<sup>7</sup> There is a grain of truth in the intuition that an act may be immoral or moral if it is not morally valuable in itself but only resembles an action that is morally valuable, because others, upon seeing it performed, may imitate it. For example, if we see Caesar's wife (or anyone who is supposed to have integrity) acting badly, we may conclude that it is okay for us to behave similarly. (This intuition was expressed over and over again during the recent impeachment crisis in the United States.) It is such an intuition that keeps those of us who support animal rights from wearing even fake fur; we don't want to be taken as someone who supports wearing fur coats, for that might make it more likely that someone will see me doing it and think it is all right for them to wear real fur. Thus, Driver might have uncovered another area in which we, as Packer puts it, approach morality aesthetically. But again, this is at most a special case, and although appearance is crucial, the ethical is not superseded, for it is the appearance of being ethical that matters; the ethical thus remains prior.

There have been theorists who have thought that there is a causal connection between aesthetic and ethical experiences. Leo Tolstoy, for example, insisted that genuine artistic expression is a matter of transmitting feelings and thereby spiritually uniting communities. People who really participate in real art are morally improved. Urban designers from Thomas Jefferson to Jane Jacobs have argued that beautiful cities make for better citizens. When the Baltimore Aquarium opened a new Caribbean Reef exhibit, the curator said she believes that when people see how beautiful the ocean ecosystems are, they will be more likely to take action to protect these environments. Indeed, many ecologists do report that the beauties of nature initially drew them to their specializations.

Unfortunately, we can find a plethora of counterexamples to the claim that aesthetic experiences make people morally better in general. SS officers in Nazi concentration camps often arranged concerts performed by prisoners. People who love to visit forests on weekends often leave litter behind, and there is little evidence that artists are typically kinder or more generous than nonartists. As Alan Goldman puts it, "For every Verdi there is a Wagner."<sup>8</sup>

Even if it were true that people for whom aesthetic activity plays a significant role in their lives were more ethical than others, the priority of the aesthetic would still not be established. Advocating city beautification via claims about the moral benefits presupposes ethical preferences. Saying that more fountains and neater streets will make better neighbors presupposes a theory of what makes citizens "better." Just as claiming that eating more salmon makes one healthier depends on a particular concept of health, valuing beauty as a means to goodness presupposes a concept of moral goodness. Theories of artistic genius that attribute special ethical insights to art makers, even if true, also presuppose a concept of what it means

to be ethical. Thus, even those theorists who have claimed a causal connection for art and the aesthetic on the one hand and ethical action on the other do not provide a way of giving the aesthetic the role of *mother*.

Brodsky himself makes some causal claims in his Nobel laureate address. On that occasion, he said,

I have no wish to . . . darken this evening with thoughts of the tens of millions of human lives destroyed by other millions. . . I'll just say that I believe—not empirically, alas, but only theoretically—that, for someone who has read a lot of Dickens, to shoot his like in the name of some idea is somewhat more problematic than for someone who has read no Dickens. . . . A literate, educated person, to be sure, is fully capable, after reading some political treatise or tract, of killing his like, and even of experiencing, in so doing, a rapture of conviction. Lenin was literate, Stalin was literate, so was Hitler; as for Mao Zedong, he even wrote verse. What all these men had in common, though, was that their hit list was longer than their reading list.<sup>9</sup>

Brodsky here echoes a position taken by Wayne Booth in *The Company We Keep*.<sup>10</sup> The books we read, like the friends we surround ourselves with, say much about what kind of people we are. But I think that Brodsky is doing more than making a causal claim when he says that aesthetics is the mother of ethics. As he himself says, he is not making an empirical claim; he has a conceptual connection in mind. What he seems to be after is a strong sense in which the ethical comes into existence only when an aesthetic system is already established.

Perhaps Brodsky was influenced by another European literary artist and theorist, Friedrich Schiller, whose book *The Aesthetic Education of Man* by its very title suggests a central role for the aesthetic in broader human development. Two human faculties, Schiller claims, sensation and reason, have too often been thought at odds by philosophers. Reason has usually been awarded the higher status. But, Schiller fears—anticipating, perhaps, the theories of Bernard Williams—that when reason is deprived of sense or feeling, the self is coerced; one acts to do the right thing as if with clenched fists. Art can reconcile reason and feeling, for it is there that one freely acts to do what is aesthetically pleasing. This is, Schiller scholars have pointed out, analogous to Kant's moral ideal, in which one freely, disinterestedly does one's duty.<sup>11</sup> This, they say, is in fact what Kant must have meant when he said that beauty is the symbol of the good. For Schiller, however, reason is not separated from feeling in a judgment of beauty; rather, they are in harmony: "Athletic bodies can, it is true, be developed by gymnastic exercises; beauty only through free and harmonious play of the limbs. In the same way the keying up of individual functions of the mind can indeed produce extraordinary human beings; but only the equal tempering of [all human powers creates] happy and complete human beings."<sup>12</sup>

Schiller calls the working together of sense and reason the "play drive." Education should seek to reinforce this drive—to produce people who derive pleasure from sensation, which is developmentally prior in human beings, when it works in partnership with reason. The priority of sensation and the delight attending it begins to sound like the kind of priority Brodsky wants. Unfortunately, I find Schiller's writing so difficult that it is, for me, suggestive at best. One finds mottoes,

for instance, "Aesthetic education is education from the aesthetic through the aesthetic to the aesthetic," but not a clear way to explain, let alone accept, how for him aesthetics might be the mother of ethics. Thus, we must, I think, look elsewhere for a possible interpretation of Brodsky's metaphor.

American philosophy does serve up one person who could provide the strong prior role for aesthetics over ethics that Brodsky indicates. Charles Peirce describes aesthetics as the "science of ideals, or of that which is objectively admirable without any ulterior reason." In a letter to William James in 1902, he describes how he came rather late to a recognition of the unity of the sciences of logic, ethics, and aesthetics, and of the way in which "logic must be founded on ethics, of which it is a higher development." "Even then," he admits, "I was for some time so stupid as not to see that ethics rests in the same manner on a foundation of esthetics—by which, it is needless to say, I don't mean milk and water and sugar."<sup>13</sup> Just exactly what he does mean—in this as elsewhere in his dense, obscure writings—is not completely clear. Logic, he says, rests on ethics because the question "What is the end of reason?" is an ethical question. Ethics, in turn, rests on aesthetics because answering the question "What conduct will achieve certain ends?" requires first answering the question "What are or should our ends be?" And this last question can be answered only in terms of intrinsic desirability—an aesthetic matter, he thinks. Or, to put it another way, the question "What makes an ideal ideal?" requires aesthetic evaluation: "An ultimate end of action deliberately adopted—that is to say, *reasonably* adopted—must be a state of things that *reasonably recommends itself in itself* aside from any ulterior consideration. It must be an admirable ideal, having the only kind of goodness that such an ideal *can* have; namely, esthetic goodness. From this point of view, the morally good is a particular species of the esthetically good."<sup>14</sup>

However, the sort of value that Peirce has in mind is profoundly influenced by Kant and is a view in which the aesthetic is grounded in formalistic pleasure. In Peirce's description of how human understanding of the world arises out of humans' experiences in the world, he presents his tripartite distinction between firstness, secondness, and thirdness. Firstness is the quality of the felt world—the world as inner, subjective experience. Secondness is the relation of "bumping up against the world"—the sensation of self coming up against nonself. Thirdness is the representation of generality—the human experience of making predictions. Aesthetic theory belongs to firstness. When he discusses this aspect of experience, he gives the following examples: the taste of quinine, the color of magenta, the tragicness of *King Lear*. These are, of course, not just pleasures or pains, but they are nonetheless inner feelings. Peirce says we cannot really use worlds to name them, because this in itself would be artificially to divide up firstness by selecting only certain aspects of it. Experience of this sort is "so tender that you cannot touch it without spoiling it."<sup>15</sup> There are clear connections here to Kant. Thus, the priority Peirce gives to aesthetics depends on his separating the feeling from the object of the feeling. Ultimately, then, Peirce gives priority to the aesthetic only by separating the aesthetic completely from the ethical. This is something that I have shown I am loath to do. It is, I have argued, a misguided way of conceiving of aesthetic value.

If this is what Brodsky meant by the aesthetic being the mother of ethics, I want none of it. It is—excuse me—throwing out the baby with the bathwater. And I do not think that Brodsky wanted this either.

A more promising source for a view that might provide an interpretation of what it could mean to put aesthetics first is an interview given by Michel Foucault for an Italian magazine, *Panorama*. The interview is suggestively titled “An Aesthetic of Existences,” and implicitly rests on his general theory of the way in which human practices and institutions define us as individuals, as communities, and as individuals-in-communities—how names name, for instance. He suggests that lives can be construed as works of art. For example, the differences between the moralities of antiquity and of Christianity, he says, are differences in “styles” of liberty. The former was “mainly an attempt to affirm one’s liberty and to give to one’s own life a certain form in which one could recognize oneself, be recognized by others, and which even posterity might take as an example.”<sup>16</sup> Thus, an “elaboration of one’s own life as a personal work of art . . . was at the centre . . . of moral experience” in antiquity. For Christians, “morality took on increasingly the form of a code or rules.”<sup>17</sup> But both can be construed formally—and hence aesthetically. In our own age, as codes are increasingly questioned—both in particular and more generally (by Bernard Williams, for example) in terms of the role they actually play in moral experience—we are increasingly, Foucault suggests, seeking a new form, a different “aesthetic of existence.”

Foucault does not, in this interview, provide the details of what such searching or choosing might entail, and I do not want to attribute to him a view in which aesthetics is in some sense the mother of ethics. But suppose one gives more emphasis than may typically be given to the term *form* in Wittgenstein’s phrase “forms of life.” Suppose that one chooses the form one’s life should take before deciding on the content. That is, suppose one opts for the form Foucault ascribes to antiquity—decides that what matters is living according to patterns that can be recognized by other members of one’s community as representing a particular type of person or character. Or suppose one opts for a life in which one demonstrates that one is following a code. Which patterns or which code is not as important, one might imagine, as the fact that one exhibits the style appropriate to patterned or coded (or some other, maybe even any other) behavior. Form would in this sense be prior to content, and hence aesthetics might be construed as prior to ethics.

Something along these lines is, I think, proposed by Charles Altieri in his book *Canons and Consequences*. He sets out to bridge the Kantian gap between universal ethical principles and concrete moral problems, and turns to expression of the sort one finds in art for a solution.

The fullest social uses of art have less to do with exposing the historical conditions of their genesis than with clarifying how the arts help us understand ourselves as value-creating agents and make possible communities that can assess those creations without relying on categorical terms traditional to moral philosophy. . . . Persons appeal to communities not because their deeds meet criteria for rationality but because the deeds embody specific features of intentionality that an agent can project as deserving certain evaluations from those who can be led to describe it as the agent does.<sup>18</sup>

Expression properly understood accounts for a strong sense of artistic presence in works that draws viewers to go beyond the manifest properties to make “expressive implicatures” that allow speakers “to project certain qualities of their own act as significant aspects of the message.”<sup>19</sup> We call attention to the way we speak, as well as to what we say. We project purposiveness into the world, thus contributing to the creation of a “public theater” where we act and react to constitutive acts. Like Charles Taylor, Altieri believes that in acting, we present a certain kind of self that reflects second-order values. We take both first- and third-person stances whenever we enter complex personal and social relationships. Similarly, self-assessment is carried on in terms of traditional forms. These forms come to us from art, which provides “a range of projective sympathies so that we come to appreciate what is involved in given choices.”<sup>20</sup> Expressive patterns constitute a grammar for action and for evaluation of action. A basic question is “How will others see me?” But we cannot answer this question without knowing the grammar by which others see us. And this we learn from art, according to Altieri. One might interpret him as saying that lives are presentations whose intrinsic properties, within specific communities, become representations.

If Foucault and Altieri insist on a separation of form and content, then I want no more of them than I do of Kant, Schiller, or Peirce. If they claim that one can choose bare form apart from content, if I am supposed to be able to choose to express myself as a code follower and then choose the code, for instance, then I believe the claim is a *reductio ad absurdum*. For it is impossible to understand what it is for something to have the form of a code without understanding concepts such as the function of a code, which ultimately requires general and probably specific ethical concepts. But I do not think that this is what they claim. Rather, they represent the ethical and the aesthetic as essentially intertwined, and perhaps a clearer sense of Brodsky’s mother metaphor begins to emerge. In the mother-child relationship, the members are not ontologically equivalent, nor are they conceptually separate, nor is the first causally related but separated from the second. Rather, they are conceptually related, and the causal connections are continuous and in both directions. I shall return to this idea shortly.

The Foucault-Altieri way of connecting aesthetics and ethics turns to art as a course for the construction of the individual and of communities. Many postmodernists have given a great deal of attention to the role of art in the development of individual and community identities. Sharon Welch, for instance, insists that solidarity grows in part from listening to stories.<sup>21</sup> Humans are moved not only by better arguments but also by “more richly textured narratives.” She calls this “transformative communication.” But she admits that aesthetic objects are only one source of it and thus, like most postmodernists, views the connection between aesthetics and ethics synchronically rather than in terms of conceptual or causal priority.

In the analytical philosophical tradition, writers such as Hilary Putnam and David Wiggins<sup>22</sup> argue that art plays a crucial role in developing meaningful lives. Wiggins builds on Richard Taylor’s use of the Sisyphus myth to explain how value must be added to one’s life, either by providing an external purpose (I am pushing

these stones uphill to help build a beautiful temple) or by producing an appropriate inner psychological state (I somehow get an injection of something that produces happiness as I push my boulder). Value, according to Wiggins, does not exist independently of human existence; it is invented. In science, it makes sense to seek for a truth, at least in the Peircean sense in which truth exists as an ideal—the eventual agreement of all rational people. In ethics, all rational people will not ever agree about the single best invention of what counts as a meaningful life. But this does not mean that invention is wholly arbitrary or that all ways of inserting value into one's life are equal. Invention must be, as Wiggins puts it, "assertible"; that is, like assertions, the choices one makes about the best kind of life to lead must call for justification. One product of invention, literature, offers alternatives, he says, and we can learn from art which ways of constructing meaningful lives are assertible. In *Anna Karenina*, for example, Tolstoy represents Levin's life as more assertible than Anna's. We as readers may disagree. But we realize that different rational agents invent differently. Thus, aesthetic objects are a major source of teaching us how to be inventive. They may not be the only source—Wiggins does not discuss this. Whether aesthetic objects can be devoid of ethical content or whether, even if they could, they would create ethics is another question. Perhaps Wiggins's view is a version of the causal theory. I am inclined to think it is subtler.

The notion of *invention* is clearly related to imagination—a human faculty that has often been viewed with fear and suspicion in philosophy but that recently is getting a better rap. Sabina Lovibond, for example,<sup>23</sup> believes that it is central to ethics, for it is required if we are to do the necessary work of projecting the good situations that we want to bring about. Mark Johnson makes similar claims. In his book *Moral Imagination*, he argues that our key moral concepts are metaphorical, both theoretically and practically. "Acting morally requires acts of imaginative exploration of possibilities open to us in morally problematic situations."<sup>24</sup> We select and then organize significant details on the basis of narratives provided by our cultures. We criticize ourselves and others by pointing out that certain details have been ignored in making decisions, or that the order of the actions is wrong: "Living a fulfilling life in accordance with some notion of human flourishing is one of the chief problems we are all trying to solve. We each want very badly for our particular life stories to be exciting, meaningful, and exemplary of the values we prize. Morality is thus a matter of how well or how poorly we construct (i.e. live out) a narrative that solves our problem of living a meaningful and significant life."<sup>25</sup>

In this statement, we find a number of aesthetic concepts, for example, *exciting*. Like John Dewey, Johnson believes that the artistic can give experience coherence by unifying it. Hence, moral development can entail aesthetic development. "The aesthetic dimensions of experience—including imagination, emotions, and concepts—are what make meaning and the enhancement of quality possible (or correlative, the disintegration and impoverishment of experience)."<sup>26</sup> Aesthetic skills provide us with the necessary moral skills of discernment, expression, investigation, creativity, and interaction of materials, forms, and ideas.<sup>27</sup>

Several years ago, R. W. Hepburn and Iris Murdoch urged a view of moral philosophy that would capture concerns similar to Johnson's. (More recently, a grow-

ing number of moral philosophers have come to share their attitude, but I think insufficient attention has been given explicitly to Hepburn and Murdoch's work. The extent to which I have been influenced by their insights will become more important in chapter 11, when I describe ways in which the role of narrative in morality specifically points to one kind of deliberation in which ethical and aesthetic merit necessarily come together.) Using autobiographies as data, Hepburn described an ethic based on "inner vision" rather than on a morality of choices made in specific circumstances. Some people describe their lives, and what they have tried to do with their lives, in terms of what Hepburn calls "personal myth." These stories involve "interlinked symbols, not rules, a fable, not a sheaf of principles."<sup>28</sup> On such a view, evaluating lives morally employs such concepts as coherence, comprehensiveness, vividness, and harmony. Murdoch, too, proposes a view of morality different from the standard one in which moral differences are based on "differences of choice, given a discussable background of facts."<sup>29</sup> This different ethic, she thinks, accounts for the following.

When we apprehend and assess other people we do not consider only their solutions to specifiable problems, we consider something more elusive which may be called their total vision of life, as shown in their mode of speech or silence, their choice of words, their assessments of others, their conception of their own lives, what they think attractive or funny: in short, the configurations of their thought which show continually in their reactions and conversation. These things, which may be overtly and comprehensibly displayed or inwardly elaborated and guessed at, constitute what, making different points in the two metaphors, one may call the texture of a man's being or the nature of his personal vision.<sup>30</sup>

This texture of being expresses a person's moral nature and demands a vocabulary and methodology not provided by an ethic based solely on independent choices.

Cora Diamond continues this line of thought by insisting that what Murdoch calls "texture of being" is precisely what novels give us. (And, I would add, other kinds of art as well.) A morality based on forms of social lives includes, for example, Henry James's interest in the kind of furniture people have.<sup>31</sup> This seems exactly right to me; it accounts for my sympathy with Mrs. Gereth's assessment of the moral character of her hosts in his novel *The Spoils of Poynton*, based on the fact that she finds it impossible to sleep because of the way they have wallpapered the guest room. It also explains the unease I feel about having laughed with Mrs. Gereth at the hosts' poor taste when I am caused to reflect, later in the novel, upon what such aesthetic-ethical assessment, amounting as it does to snobbism, can entail. The question, Diamond argues, is not how art helps me to understand an issue more clearly (e.g., whether I should talk behind my hosts' backs about how badly they have decorated their home and what it implies about their shallow moral character) but, as Diamond puts it, "How is it that *this* (whatever feature of the novel it may be) is an illuminating way of writing about *that* (whatever feature of human life)?"<sup>32</sup> Just as seeing a connection with ethics requires that one have a view of aesthetics that differs from formalism, seeing a connection with aesthetics requires that one have a different way of thinking about ethics.

But in saying that the moral entails the aesthetic, or in identifying an aesthetic dimension to moral development and assessment, Johnson, Hepburn, Murdoch, and Diamond do not, I think, go as far as Brodsky—at least if what we take Brodsky to be saying is that the aesthetic necessarily comes first, that there is no ethics without aesthetics in the sense that first we become aesthetically skilled and only then does moral development begin. But does Brodsky mean this, or does he come closer to views in which aesthetics and ethics are not related in terms of *causal* priority but in terms of woven *interdependence*?

In the theories I have mentioned, we find two main ways one might posit a connection in which priority is given to the aesthetic over the ethical. I do not have a wholly satisfactory terminology but, for lack of anything better, will use the following.

1. **Formalistic Priority.** According to this view, in making a moral decision, one first chooses style and then content.
2. **Psychological or Behavioral Causal Priority.** The strong version of this view asserts that one who fails to engage in aesthetic activity will not be a moral person. The weak version asserts that people who engage in aesthetic activity are more likely to be moral people.

Both, I believe, should be rejected, and if either is what Brodsky means in saying that aesthetics is the mother of ethics, then he is wrong. But a third kind of connection has also been suggested.

3. **Conceptual Interdependence.** To understand morality and thus become a mature person, one's action must have both appropriate style and content, and this requires aesthetic skills. In this third position, neither the aesthetic nor the ethical is prior, so if priority is required for motherhood, Brodsky's metaphor is not apt.

In the Nobel laureate address and elsewhere, there definitely are statements that are consistent with both the formalistic and psychological or behavioral causal views. Brodsky maintains that evil is "bad style."<sup>33</sup> In an essay on Stephen Spender, he says that we recognize character traits from an individual's "metier."<sup>34</sup> That we are aesthetic creatures before we are ethical creatures, he insists, is shown by the way that we are directed by our aesthetic instincts. Babies go to their mothers rather than to strangers for aesthetic, not moral reasons.<sup>35</sup> "If in ethics not 'all is permitted,' it is precisely because not 'all is permitted' in aesthetics, because the number of colors in the spectrum is limited."<sup>36</sup> Brodsky championed poetry-for-the-people and supported federal subsidies for distribution of inexpensive paperback books because he thought a civilization in which art becomes the "property or prerogative of a minority" is doomed.<sup>37</sup> Politicians "should be asked, first of all, not how [they imagine] the course of [their] foreign policy, but about [their] attitude toward Dickens," because like the envoys he describes in his late poem titled after a Balkan dance, "Kolo," too little Dickens may lead to too much time spent "contemplating new ways of creating symmetry in a future cemetery."

I have far more sympathy with the psychological view than with the formalist view. On those days when I can still muster up some optimism about teaching, I even believe that bringing students to love Henry James or Bach or Michelangelo will make them morally better. I certainly wish we would hear more discussions of

*David Copperfield* during election campaigns. But I think that the third way of connecting aesthetics and ethics—one that demands a conceptual interdependence—is closer to the truth, and more likely to give an interpretation to the mother metaphor that enriches the study of both ethics and aesthetics.

In the Spender essay, Brodsky says, "You can tell a lot about a man about his choices of an epithet," for "Living is like quoting."<sup>38</sup> But epithets are chosen not just because they fit the space on a piece of marble or granite. Quotation is not just repetition of rhythms and rhymes. We repeat not just the way something is said but the sense or content of what is said as well. This conception of morality is basically Aristotelian, and the idea is to imitate the behavior of people we believe are virtuous in order to become virtuous ourselves. Martha Nussbaum asserts that Greek drama foregrounds this connection between what is done and how it is done.

Content is not separable from its poetic style. To become a poet was not regarded by the Greeks, nor should it be regarded by us, as an ethically neutral matter. Stylistic choices—the selection of certain metres, certain patterns of image and vocabulary—are taken to be closely bound up with a conception of the good. We, too, should be aware of these connections. As we ask which ethical conception we find most compelling, we should ask what way or ways of writing most appropriately express our aspiration to be humanly rational beings.<sup>39</sup>

Brodsky would agree completely and would add, I think, that such choices extend to life in general. Not only must one make aesthetic choices when one attempts to create art but also one must do it as one attempts to become a moral individual. Becoming virtuous involves more than imitating what people do; it involves quotation: attempting to copy the *way* those we admire act. The dancer and the dance cannot be torn or told apart.

The reason that André Gide could play *enfant terrible* by saying that ethics is a branch of aesthetics is that aesthetic decisions so often seem not to pack the punch that ethical decisions do. As Stuart Hampshire has written, artists' choices seem "gratuitous."<sup>40</sup> Even Alan Goldman, with whom I find myself almost always agreeing, has said that "aesthetic disagreements do not involve so broad and direct conflicts among important interests" as do ethical disagreements.<sup>41</sup> But the views of Foucault, Altieri, Wiggins, Hepburn, Murdoch, and Diamond belie this view. For them, the aesthetic is not always gratuitous, let alone frivolous. Aesthetics can become as important as ethics not because making an ethical decision is like choosing wallpaper but because it like choosing one story over another. The story one chooses is a life story—hardly a gratuitous matter. I shall return to this sense of ethical deliberation in a later chapter.

In her paper "Taste and Moral Sense," Marcia Cavell seems initially to agree with Hampshire. She writes, "As moral creatures we have to think of the effects of our actions on ourselves and others; we have to make difficult decisions which require us to consider and reconsider our commitments and often to sacrifice one moral good for another; we are confronted with problems in such a way that even to attempt to avoid them is to incur responsibility. To these dimensions of concern and obligation there is nothing parallel in the activity of the artist qua artist."<sup>42</sup> And one assumes she thinks there is nothing parallel in the activity of aesthetic viewer

qua aesthetic viewer. But she thinks Hampshire overstates his case, and in arguing for a revision she comes closer to something like the conceptual interdependence view. As in aesthetic judgments, there are many moral judgments that do not involve references to principles, she asserts. Furthermore, neither aesthetic nor moral judgments concern themselves with "an object or event in isolation from the environment and other events."<sup>43</sup> Moralists and art critics have a great deal in common, she asserts. In moral judgments, "We don't so much justify our judgments as explain them in much the same way as the critic explains why a character is badly drawn, or how a musical passage is more or less banal than it seemed on a careless listening, or why a poem is false or sentimental."<sup>44</sup> We point to details, give new emphasis to them, and show new patterns and relationships between them. Moral sensitivity develops in particular contexts. We have to pay attention to the tone with which something is said, as well as to the content, and to the relations between the speakers, or to meanings of other words spoken earlier or later.

A similar observation is made by R. M. Hare in *Freedom and Responsibility*, though like Cavell, he ultimately seems to want to keep the aesthetic and the ethical distinct. Moral ideals, he observes, have a close resemblance to aesthetic ideals, as can be seen in the following example.

The leader of a Himalayan expedition has the choice of either leading the final assault on the mountain himself, or staying behind at the last camp and giving another member of his party the opportunity; yet it is easy to suppose that no argument concerned with the interests of the parties will settle the question—for the interests may be precisely balanced. The questions that arise are likely to be concerned, not with the interests of the parties, but with ideals of what a man should *be*. Is it better to be the sort of man who, in the face of great obstacles and dangers, gets to the top of the *n*th highest mountain in the world; or the sort of man who uses his position of authority to give a friend this opportunity instead of claiming it for himself? These questions are very like aesthetic ones. It is as if a man were regarding his own life and character as a work of art, and asking how it should best be completed.<sup>45</sup>

Decisions like this do seem to involve the sort of thing that Cavell rightly attributes to art criticism.

When one attends to relationships and patterns of expression, one relates and arranges specific things. Attention to fit and implications challenges one to attend closely to a variety of elements, and challenges one to develop powers of perception, reflection, and imagination. In this way, music and abstract art have as much to offer ethics as do narrative and representational art. Both aesthetic and moral sensitivity are demanded in making judgments such as "This situation calls for bold action" or "This situation calls for subtlety." Great music, as well as great literature, helps one to learn to make such distinctions. Many of my students seem to model their lives on soap operas. I think I did, too, at that age. But I unabashedly assert now that there are better models for meaningful life stories than *Stella Dallas* or *Melrose Place*. Most Bach fugues offer more toward becoming a reflective, mature agent than do most country-western hits.

At the same time, one must be careful not to interpret the notion of judging lives like works of art in separatist, formalist terms. One does not decide what sort of

person to be simply in terms of rhythms or shapes or fit of images. There is an interdependence between what have typically been taken as ethical considerations on the one hand and aesthetic considerations on the other. One may remain undecided even after all the matters of interests or rights are settled; nonetheless, we will not choose between the alternatives in ignorance of matters of interests and rights.

But if aesthetics and ethics are equal partners, what happens to the mother metaphor? Is there any way of holding on to it if we give up the view that aesthetics comes first, as I think we must finally do?

To answer this question, we have to ask ourselves what work Brodsky intends the metaphor to do. The answer is straightforward: he wants to convince his audience of the importance of art. My readers, I am sure, share this goal with me and would like from such a metaphor help in convincing others of the importance of aesthetics. The truth of the statement that aesthetics is the mother of ethics depends on the truth of the premises on which it rests. The argument goes something like this:

1. Mothers are valuable to their children.
2. Aesthetics is the mother of ethics.
3. Therefore, aesthetics is valuable to ethics.

Also presupposed is a belief in the value of ethics. So aesthetics is valuable to something of value. And the first premise, "Mothers are valuable to their children," when filled out, produces the real argument:

- 1a. Mothers are valuable to their children when and because the relationship that exists between the mother and child provides the child with something of value.
- 2a. Aesthetics is the mother of ethics and does relate to it in a way that provides it with something of value.
- 3a. Therefore, aesthetics is valuable to ethics.

The value derived from the relationship does not require biological or ontological priority. Rather, the special relationship calls attention to two features that will help us convince others of the importance of aesthetics. First, in the mother-child relation, each member is defined in terms of the other. Second, it is a relationship in which nurturing and mutual concern are, ideally, long and deep.

Are aesthetics and ethics defined in terms of one another, and does nurturing take place? Is what characterizes the relation between them such that one might look to aesthetics to try to better understand the nature of ethics? I think the answer to all of these questions is affirmative. In later chapters, I shall provide specific examples of the nature of the mutual influence of the one on the other. The importance and seriousness of aesthetics is manifest when one sees what it has to offer ethics (and other disciplines): a kind of attention and understanding that is not gratuitous.

Still, the mother metaphor is troubling because we are left with a relationship that emphasizes a one-way direction, and I believe this makes it misleading. The only way that one can say that aesthetics comes first by definition is in terms of barren formal properties or patterns. This I reject. I would prefer a metaphor that em-

phasizes the conceptual interdependence and mutual nurturing without any connotation of priority. Friendship or siblinghood would be better. But the point Brodsky makes when he says, "Aesthetics is the mother of ethics" seems weakened when we replace it with "Aesthetics is the friend of ethics" or "Aesthetics is the sibling of ethics." Neither connotes the depth or longevity of parenthood or childhood. (By childhood, I mean the relation one is in for life with one's parent, not simply the period of one's youth. Unfortunately, there seems to be no good word to capture responsible, caring "offspringhood.") The fact that much is lost when the metaphor is revised in itself supports the centrality of metaphors—an aesthetic concept really—to human life.

And the mother metaphor is gendered. How different would Brodsky's point have been had he said that aesthetics is the *father* of ethics! There are certainly tasks conventionally associated with motherhood that I do not want to include. Suffice it to say that if his mother metaphor demands accepting traditional views of mothers as illogical servants happy to remain in the background and gaining satisfaction from washing and ironing others' clothes so that they will look good, I want none of it.

What I really want is a way of construing aesthetics that will make clear that it is important, serious, and integrated with general human values in a binding, influential, and deep way. I attempt to provide it in the next part of this book.

## PART III

### *Integrating Aesthetic and Moral Value*

What happens when someone looks at a brightly colored abstract painting and learns that it was produced by dying goldfish? There is, I think, no single correct answer to this question. People respond differently to aesthetic objects—to objects that possess intrinsic properties of the sort considered worthy of attention in their communities. One mistake often made by aestheticians (by both strong and weak formalists certainly) is thinking that theirs is the right way to respond, perhaps the only way that counts as responding in a genuinely aesthetic way to objects and events. I do not want to repeat this mistake. What I insist is that we not dismiss a priori as nonaesthetic those experiences that involve both attention to the work and attention to the world at the same time.

There are several things that might happen, several reports that might be given, when individuals who have been enjoying the bright painting learn how it was made.

1. "I am so taken by the colors that I don't even think about the fact that I am looking at something made by dying goldfish." In this case, one's moral experience is overridden by aesthetic considerations. Indeed, one might not even have a moral response.
2. "All I can think about is those poor fish—I can't even concentrate on the colors." Here, one's aesthetic experience is overridden or precluded by one's moral considerations.
3. "First I think about the fish and feel repelled, but then I think about how lovely the colors are." One shifts back and forth between moral and aesthetic considerations, has first a moral and then an aesthetic experience.
4. "I was enjoying the painting; but now that you've told me how it was made, I don't enjoy it quite so much; the lines look creepy rather than playful." Here, one's aesthetic experience, while not, perhaps, wiped out completely, *changes*. The aesthetic does not give way to the moral in the sense of being overridden by it (as it is in the second case), but the colors and shapes no longer please one as much as they did before.

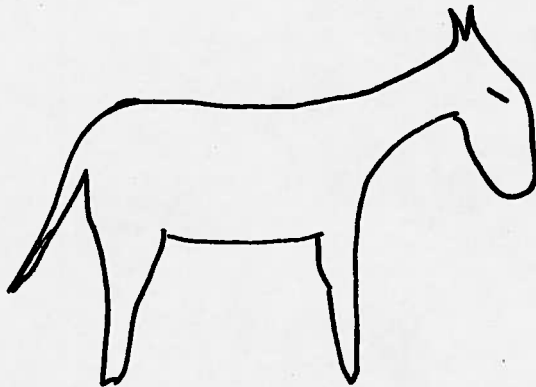
All of these cases are quite possible, I believe. Some people's aesthetic experience may remain the same. They do not find it artificial, unrealistic, or contrived to be told, "Just forget about the goldfish and look at the wonderful squiggly colors." But the fact is that



some people are unable to forget. They say the following sort of thing: "When I look at the painting, I see the colored marks [a perception of an intrinsic property] made by dying goldfish [a consideration of an extrinsic fact about the painting]. And this latter consideration makes it hard for me to enjoy the colors that I continue to look at. I do not, in fact cannot, treat it the way I treat a duck-rabbit figure. That is, I cannot just look at the marks per se and have a pure aesthetic experience and then just think about the dying goldfish and have a pure moral experience."<sup>1</sup>

As I said before, I do not want to dictate what counts as the one and only correct kind of aesthetic experience, for I think these differ tremendously between individuals and, certainly, between cultures. What I do insist is that perception and/or reflection on intrinsic properties is a necessary condition. For me and for some others (but by no means all), the actual perception of some works changes when we are given certain bits of information. The reflection or conception obviously changes. Hence, the overall experience changes. We look for positive features that we did not look for before—instances of an intriguing use of perspective or application of an interesting color theory or expression of democratic values—or, negatively, we notice how boring the composition is or we scrutinize it for and find traces of sexism, fascism, or sadism, for instance. Often, the level of pleasure changes, though the experience remains one that we want to call 'aesthetic'. This suggests that aesthetic response is a result of aggregate rather than separate perceptions.

Perceptual experiences like those of the duck-rabbit figure are rare. So, I think, are occasions in which we neatly shift back and forth between exclusively moral and exclusively aesthetic experiences. When we are looking at, say, a painting of a horse, we do not look first at a horse



and then at the horse shape on the canvas. Those who have learned to "read" the marks immediately see a horse. There are not two acts of seeing here the way there are two acts of seeing in the duck-rabbit case. Seeing the horse in the horse shape (and vice versa) is what Richard Wollheim calls "the two-foldedness of seeing-in." Seeing a horse in marks on a page is an experience that has two aspects, but, as Wollheim writes, they are "two aspects

of a single experience that I have, and the two aspects are distinguishable but also inseparable. They are two aspects of a single experience, they are not two experiences."<sup>2</sup>

I believe that my thinking about the goldfish painting is also a two-folded experience—one that involves distinguishable but inseparable components. It is wrong to assert that considering goldfish marks *as marks* and *as marks made by dying goldfish* implies that there must be two different experiences, one aesthetic and one moral. To repeat, most experiences do not come neatly parceled in that way.

What advice are we being given, or what are we being asked to do, when urged, "Don't let your moral considerations get in the way of your having an aesthetic experience"? Is it on a par with "Don't let the duck get in the way of the rabbit"? If so, it applies to relatively few experiences—those where a doubling or shifting is involved. The advice is quite unclear when it amounts to being told "Don't let seeing the horse get in the way of your seeing the horse shape," or vice versa. One may see a drawing of a horse and, for some reason, stop looking at the drawing—think about childhood pony rides or sexual theories of teenagers' fascination with stallions. But as long as we continue to look at the horse, we continue to look at the horse shape. Surely, looking closely at the horse (attending to the intrinsic properties of the drawing) does not preclude our looking at the horse shape, or vice versa.

Similarly, moral considerations do not necessarily block aesthetic experiences. Indeed, as in the case of sentimentality (discussed in detail in chapter 9), the aesthetic and the moral may be mutually dependent. Philipa Foot characterizes moral considerations as those relevant to moral judgments.<sup>3</sup> Any statement that can be shown to be directly or indirectly relevant to a moral judgment is a candidate—something as obviously relevant as pointing out that an action is a case of breaking a promise or as apparently irrelevant as being done on a Friday. A story can be told that makes the particular day of the week extremely important. As I argued in chapter 2, anything can also be aesthetically relevant, as long as it reports about or draws attention to an intrinsic property aesthetically and communally valued. "It was painted in Canada" or "The paint was applied by dying goldfish" can do this. They can also serve at one and the same time as a moral consideration and as an aesthetic consideration. Knowing something about goldfish may change the way we perceive or reflect upon the paint, and something about the paint may modify our moral appraisal. But no gestalt or mode shift is required here. Being applied by goldfish is not relevant exclusively to a moral judgment, and being frenetic is not relevant exclusively to an aesthetic judgment.

In this part, I shall examine some specific ways in which the aesthetic and nonaesthetic are connected, particularly at ways in which aesthetic and ethical concerns are integrated. I shall discuss what makes for "an aesthetic life." I shall also show how one term of assessment, 'sentimental', provides a case study for the interconnectedness of aesthetic and ethical evaluation. I shall conclude this part with two essays, one on art and moral lessons and one on a kind of ethical deliberation in which aesthetic attention is at the core. I hope that these specific examples of the integration of moral and aesthetic concerns and values will provide the best foundation for coming to recognize the general inseparability of these two core elements of humanity.

(in either one or both propositions), whereas the discovery that two desires cannot both be satisfied does not serve to weaken either or both desires. I am inclined to agree with Williams, but exactly how beliefs and desires contribute to moral choices will not be crucial to my discussion.

4. I shall, for simplicity's sake, discuss dilemmas in terms of only two options; clearly, in some situations there may be more than two.
5. For this type of characterization, see Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, *Moral Dilemmas* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988), p. 29.
6. Some philosophers believe that the contradiction can be avoided by rejecting this move. See Ruth Barcan Marcus, "Moral Dilemmas and Consistency," *Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 77, March 1980, p. 134.
7. William Styron, *Sophie's Choice* (New York: Random House, 1979).
8. Martha Nussbaum, *Love's Knowledge* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 131–32.
9. While I was a resident scholar at the Rockefeller Study Center in Bellagio, Italy, March 6–April 8, 1992, I had the opportunity to talk about these issues with the artists John Casken, Joseph Heller, and Anita Desai, who were also visiting the center. All were extremely patient and helpful. I am most grateful to the Rockefeller Foundation for their support.
10. Norman Bowie, private conversation.
11. Marcia Muelder Eaton, "James's Turn of the Speech-Act," *British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol. 23, No. 4, Autumn 1983, pp. 33–45.
12. George Dickie, *Evaluating Art* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988).
13. In conversation.
14. "Masterpiece Is Damaged at the Louvre," *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, 11 July 1992, p. 10A.
15. I offer a fuller discussion of this in my book *Aesthetics and the Good Life* (Cranbury, N.J.: Associated University Presses, 1983).

#### Chapter Seven

1. Much of what follows is based on an earlier published paper, "Aesthetics: The Mother of Ethics?" *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 55, No. 4, Fall 1997, pp. 355–364.
2. Joseph Brodsky, "Uncommon Visage," *Poets and Writers Magazine*, March–April, 1988, p. 17.
3. "Une dependance de l'esthetique," *Chroniques de l'ermitage, Oeuvres Completes*, Vol. 4 (Paris: NRF, 1933), p. 387.
4. Mary Devereaux, "Censorship," in *Ethics and the Arts: An Anthology*, ed. David Fenner (New York: Garland Press, 1995), p. 48.
5. Noel Carroll, "Moderate Moralism" *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol. 36, 1996, pp. 223–38.
6. Mark Packer, "The Aesthetic Dimension of Ethics and Law: Some Reflections on Harmless Offense," *American Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 33, 1996, p. 57.
7. Julia Driver, "Caesar's Wife: On the Moral Significance of Appearing Good," *Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 89, No. 7, July 1992, p. 343.
8. Alan Goldman, *Aesthetic Value* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1995), p. 149.
9. Brodsky, "Uncommon Visage," p. 21.
10. Wayne Booth, *The Company We Keep: An Ethics of Fiction* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988).

11. Elizabeth M. Wildinson and L. A. Willoughby, "Introduction" to Friedrich Schiller's *On the Aesthetic Education of Man* (first published 1794; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), p. xxiii.
12. Schiller, in *Ibid.*, p. 6.14
13. Charles Peirce, *Writings*, p. 8.255.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 5.130
15. *Ibid.*, p. 1.358
16. Michel Foucault, "An Aesthetic of Existence," Interview with Alessandro Fontano, *Panorama*, July 1984; reprinted in *Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writings*, Lawrence D. Kritzman, ed. (New York: Routledge, 1988), p. 49.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
18. Charles Altieri, *Canons and Consequences* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1990), pp. 227 and 228.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 238.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 238.
21. Sharon Welch, "An Ethics of Solidarity and Differences," in *Postmodernism, Feminism, and Cultural Politics*, ed. Henry Giroux (New York: State University of New York Press, 1991), pp. 94ff.
22. Hilary Putnam, "Literature, Science, and Reflection," in *Meaning and the Moral Sciences* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), pp. 87–90; David Wiggins, "Truth, Invention, and the Meaning of Life," *Proceedings of the British Academy*, Vol. 62, 1976, pp. 331–78.
23. Sabina Lovibond, *Realism and Imagination in Ethics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983).
24. Mark Johnson, *Moral Imagination* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. 31.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 182.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 208.
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 210ff.
28. R. W. Hepburn, "Vision and Choice in Morality," Part 1 of a symposium in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Suppl. Vol. 30, 1956, p. 15.
29. Iris Murdoch, "Vision and Choice in Morality," Part II of a symposium in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Suppl. Vol. 30, 1956, p. 40.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 39.
31. Cora Diamond, "Having a Rough Story about What Moral Philosophy Is," in *The Realist Spirit: Wittgenstein, Philosophy, and the Mind* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991), pp. 374–75.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 379.
33. Brodsky, "Uncommon Visage," p. 17.
34. Joseph Brodsky, "English Lessons from Stephen Spender," *New Yorker*, 8 January 1996, p. 59.
35. Brodsky, "Uncommon Visages," p. 17.
36. *Ibid.*
37. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
38. Brodsky, "English Lessons," pp. 62 and 59.
39. Martha Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 15.
40. Stuart Hampshire, "Logic and Appreciation," in *Aesthetics and Language*, ed. William Elton (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1967), p. 162.

41. Goldman, *Aesthetic Value*, p. 145.
42. Marcia Cavell, "Taste and Moral Sense," in *Ethics and the Arts*, ed. David Fenner (New York: Garland Press, 1996), p. 275.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 293.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 295.
45. R. M. Hare, *Freedom and Reason* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 150. I am grateful to Peter Kivy for this reference.

### Part III

1. This point is related to one that Thomas Nagel has made concerning the variety of sources of human value in "The Fragmentation of Value," in *Moral Dilemmas*, ed. Christopher Gowans (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 269–82. He has argued that in addition to adherence to principles of rights and to considerations of consequences, primary sources of value include creativity and autonomy. The complexity of human nature and experience (and I would add the diversity of cultural goals and practices) preclude any built-in guarantee or a priori knowledge concerning the overridingness of any single source of value. Nagel thinks that this accounts for the existence of genuine moral dilemmas (and I shall argue in chapter 6 that the existence of genuine aesthetic dilemmas shows that aesthetic values can be as serious as moral values). I believe it also accounts for the fact that moral considerations do not always wipe out aesthetic enjoyment, and aesthetic responses do not preclude moral reflection.

2. Richard Wollheim, *Painting as an Art* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1987), p. 46.

3. Foot, "Are Moral Considerations Overriding?" p. 183.

### Chapter Eight

1. Much of what follows is based on an earlier published paper, "Anthony Powell and the Aesthetic Life," *Philosophy and Literature*, Vol. 9, No. 2, Fall 1985, pp. 166–83.

2. Frederick Karl, *A Reader's Guide to the Contemporary English Novel*, rev. ed. (New York: Octagon Books, 1972), p. 313.

3. I shall in my citations abbreviate these titles as follows: *QU*, *BM*, *AW*, *LM*, *CCR*, *KO*, *VB*, *SA*, *MP*, *BFR*, *TK*, *HSH*. I shall refer to the set of twelve as *Dance*. All page references are to the four-volume paperback edition of the novels (New York: Popular Library, 1976).

4. "A Who's Who of 'The Music of Time,'" *Time and Tide*, Vol. 41, 2 July 1960, pp. 764–65, and 9 July 1960, pp. 808–9.

5. Hilary Spurling, *Invitation to the Dance: A Guide to Anthony Powell's Dance to the Music of Time* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1977).

6. Marvin Mudrick, review of *Dance*, *Hudson Review*, Vol. 17, 1964, p. 119.

7. Anthony West, review of *Dance*, *New Yorker*, Vol. 38, 16 February 1963, p. 163.

8. Mudrick, review of *Dance*, p. 119.

9. *Ibid.*

10. John David Russell, *Anthony Powell, A Quintet, Sextet, and War* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1970), p. 22.

11. Anthony Powell, *Afternoon Men* (Boston: Little, Brown, & Company, 1952), p. 48.

12. *Ibid.* p. 119.

13. Anthony Powell, *From a View to Death* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1968), p. 168.

14. Anthony Powell, *To Keep the Ball Rolling: The Memoirs of Anthony Powell, Volume II, Messengers of Day* (London: William Heinemann, 1976), p. 36.

15. Anthony Powell, *To Keep the Ball Rolling: The Memoirs of Anthony Powell, Volume I, Infants of the Spring* (London: William Heinemann, 1976), p. 28.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 133.

17. Kingsley Amis, "Afternoon World," *Spectator*, 13 May 1955, p. 619.

18. Robert K. Morris, *The Novels of Anthony Powell* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1968), p. 9.

19. Karl, *A Reader's Guide*, p. 243.

### Chapter Nine

1. This chapter is based on a paper published earlier, "Laughing at the Death of Little Nell: Sentimental Art and Sentimental People," *American Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 4, 1990, pp. 269–82.

2. Allen B. Sprague, "The date of sentimental and derivatives," *Proceedings of the Modern Language Association*, Vol. 48, 1933, pp. 303–7.

3. The connection between 'sentimental' and 'sentiment' is very interesting, for while 'sentimental' was taking on negative connotations, 'sentiment' remained neutral. In the eighteenth century, the latter was, of course, the ground of several moral theories, and indeed "sentimentalism" is still sometimes used to refer neutrally to such theories. David Hume used 'sentiment' to mean just 'feeling'; Thomas Reid used it to refer to a combination of feelings and judgments—thus combining the two Latin roots. For more on this, see J. L. Mackie, *Hume's Moral Theory* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980); and Louis I. Bredvold, *The Natural History of Sensibility* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1962). Virtue was connected with positive feelings or sentiment, vice with negative; positive sentiments were tied to beauty, and negative sentiments to ugliness. There are also important connections between 'sentimental' and 'sensibility' or the French 'sensibilite'. In France, according to Anita Brookner, *sensibilite* was largely a literary movement characterized by descriptions of characters' emotional experiences in ways meant to instruct morally. Deep feeling was considered a sure sign of virtue. In one novel, a mother decides which of two suitors should have her daughter's hand by taking them both to the theater. The one who cries throughout wins. See Anita Brookner, *Greuze: The Rise and Fall of an Eighteenth Century Phenomenon* (Greenwich, Conn.: New York Graphics, 1972). As feelings came to be equated with virtue and acting as if one felt deeply substituted for acting in accordance with moral principles, sentimentality opened itself to negative criticism.

4. Quoted in Sprague, "The date of sentimental and derivatives," p. 306.

5. Oscar Wilde, Letter to Lord Alfred Douglas, 1887, in *The Letters of Oscar Wilde*, Ed. Rupert Hart-Davis (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1962), p. 501.

6. Kermit Roosevelt, *A Sentimental Safari* (New York: Knopf, 1963).

7. "Theatre in the Round's '84 Charing Cross Rd. Lacks a Sentimental Tug," *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, 13 January 1988, p. 9Ew.

8. James C. Thomson Jr., Peter W. Stanley, and John Curtis Perry, *Sentimental Imperialists: The American Experience in East Asia* (New York: Harper & Row, 1981), p. xi.

9. "For the Love of Helga," *New York Times*, 6 February 1987, p. 26Y.

10. Quoted in Douglas C. McGill, "Helga Show Renews Debate on Andrew Wyeth," *New York Times*, 3 February 1987, p. K6.