

MORAL THEORY

Reid on the moral sense

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Some interpret Reid's notion of a moral sense as merely analogical. Others understand it as a species of acquired perception. To understand Reid's account of the moral sense, we must draw from his theory of perception and his theory of aesthetic experience, each of which illuminate the nature and operation of the moral faculty. I argue that, on Reid's view, the moral faculty is neither affective nor rational, but representational. It is a discrete, basic, capacity for representing the real moral properties of humans and human conduct.

Keywords: Thomas Reid; perception; moral perception; moral sense; aesthetic perception

... Men judge of the primary and secondary qualities of body by their external senses, of beauty and deformity by their taste, and of virtue and vice by their moral faculty.
-Essays on the Active Powers of Man, 352

1. Introduction

Although Thomas Reid depicts perceptual, aesthetic, and moral experience as unified by a common purpose and structure, his treatment of the moral faculty as a faculty of *sense* is far less committal than his treatment of, for example, aesthetic perception (Reid 2010, 352, 357).¹ Why does Reid hesitate in the case of the moral sense? In the *Essays on the Active Powers of Man*, he worries that identifying the moral faculty as a faculty of *sense* will lead readers to associate his theory with the views of his opponents: the sentimentalists (Reid 2010, 175–176, 300, 345). He fears that readers will saddle him with the view that moral properties depend on or consist in human feelings, emotions or other affective states and that moral judgment is justified and explained by appeal to affective states (Reid 2010, 175–176). But Reid faces a similar worry in dealing with aesthetic experience, and he confronts it more directly than he does in his discussion of the moral faculty. Should the moral faculty be called a faculty of

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sense? Reid is indecisive: ‘It is of small consequence what name we give to this moral power of the human mind . . . I find no fault with the name *moral sense*, although I think this name has given occasion to some mistakes concerning the nature of our moral power’ (Reid 2010, 300). So, does Reid mean ‘perception’ metaphorically or literally when he talks about the moral faculty?

Students of Reid are ambivalent too. Some think that his notion of moral perception is merely analogical. Others understand it as a species of acquired perception – but that settles the question only if we know whether acquired perception is to be taken literally or is merely a metaphor.² Reid’s apparent ambivalence arises from not wanting to be misread: ‘Modern Philosophers have conceived of the external senses as having no other office but to give us certain sensations . . . And this notion has been applied to the moral sense. But it seems to me a mistaken notion in both’ (Reid 2010, 300). While Reid clearly sees the moral faculty as a faculty of sense, he knows that readers may try to understand him as if his version of perception were the usual version of his contemporaries, who promoted the sentimentalism that he opposes (Reid 2010, 345).

The name of the *moral sense* . . . has got this name of *sense*, no doubt, from some analogy which it is conceived to bear to the external senses. And if we have just notions of the office of the external senses, the analogy is very evident, and I see no reason to take offence, as some have done, at the name of the *moral sense*.

The offense taken at this name seems to be owing to this, That Philosophers have degraded the senses too much, and deprived them of the most important part of their office.

This notion of the sense I take to be very lame . . . (Reid 2010, 175).

When Mr. HUME derives moral distinctions from a moral sense, I agree with him in words, but we differ about the meaning of the word *sense*. Every power to which the name of sense has been given, is a power of judging of the objects of that sense, and has been accounted such in all ages; the moral sense therefore is the power of judging in morals. But Mr. HUME will have the moral sense to be only a power of feeling, without judging: This I take to be an abuse of a word (Reid 2010, 353).

Sentimentalism – like skepticism about the external world and subjectivism about aesthetic judgment – has its origin in a misguided view of perception, according to Reid. But to know whether Reid understands moral experience as a kind of perceptual experience, we need a clear account of his theory of perception. And we also need to consider his treatment of aesthetic experience for he also thinks that aesthetic sensitivity is perceptual rather than affective or intellectual (Reid 2002, 571, 603). Reid is unequivocal about aesthetic properties, calling them ‘real excellences’ of objects to which natural experience attunes us so that over time we become more sensitive to them (Reid 2002, 594–595). Accordingly, while Reid’s account of the moral faculty is thin by contrast with his treatment of aesthetic experience, what he says about aesthetic experience can supplement his theory of perception to provide a more detailed account of the nature and operation of the moral faculty.

Deciding whether moral experience is perceptual is not just a matter of terminology, and Reid is clear about some of what needs to be settled: that there

is a distinction between the outer sense and the inner senses, and that perception of external objects and their properties is via the outer sense (Reid 2002, 420–421, 573, 594; 2010, 351). Accordingly, aesthetic and moral experiences come by way of the inner senses (Reid 2002, 571, 594; 2010, 175). Then, if we stipulate that ‘perception’ refers only to the external sense, Reid’s use of that term for aesthetic and moral experience will seem wrong. Nevertheless, Reid treats perceptual experience, aesthetic experience, and moral experience as faculties of *sense*. Each is a basic representational capacity, original to the human mind, attuned to features particular to that faculty of sense (Reid 2010, 175). Each is capable of development, whereby the faculty’s sensitivity increases, enabling humans to become more sensitive to more features than those available in experience originally. Perceptual experience, aesthetic experience, and moral experience have distinct objects but not distinct functions: each is a basic capacity of the mind to represent the objects and features in its environment that figure most importantly in its proper and practical functioning.

If moral experience is a basic representational activity, alongside perceptual and aesthetic perception, the usual picture of Reid – standing with Clarke and Price as a moral rationalist, against Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, and Hume as sentimentalists – gets blurry.³ If sentimentalists part with rationalists over the moral faculty’s response to affect or reason, Reid has no stake in the fight. The moral faculty is neither affective nor rational, according to Reid, but representational: perceptual, moral, and aesthetic experiences are partly constituted by – but not reducible to – felt, affective elements, and none is a product of reasons or rationality, though each is reason-giving.

2. Perception

Central to Reid’s theory of perceptual experience is his distinction between sensation and perception.⁴ Sensations are the felt, qualitative, element in perceptual experience, while perceptions are the representational element. Sensations neither represent objects nor attribute qualities to them. Were a creature to sense but not perceive, the creature would have no objective experience – no experience as of objects or their qualities. By contrast, perception is a basic form of representational experience. Perceptions have a singular demonstrative element, which Reid calls a conception, and an attributive element, which he calls a belief (Reid 1997, 96). A perception consists in an apprehension of an object and an attribution of properties to the object apprehended. Perception represents apprehended objects as being thus-and-such.

Reid’s use of ‘conception,’ and ‘belief’ can mislead. The conception by which objects are apprehended in perception does not involve concept-application: Reid’s is a pre-Kantian notion of conception as ‘simple apprehension’ (Reid 2002, 295).⁵ The belief or judgment – Reid uses the terms interchangeably – by which we attribute properties in perception is not a propositional attitude. Rather, belief or judgment represents the object apprehended by conception as being thus-and-

such. In other words, the belief or judgment that partially composes perceptual experience is not independent of conception and is formed on the basis of it. Conception and belief together are the representational aspects of perceptual experience. A perceiver does not apprehend a blue sphere before acquiring a separate, propositional attitude to the effect that the object is blue and spherical (though she may do so). What Reid calls 'belief' or 'judgment' is what we might now call representational *content* of experience – the part of experience that presents the world as represented to the subject of experience.

While sensation and perception are distinct kinds of mental operation – the first purely phenomenal, the second representational – Reid holds that they are systematically related by laws that govern the human mind (Reid 1997, 58, 74, 122, 198). Laws of the human mind connect sensation-types with perception-types; typical humans form the same perception-types when they have the same sensation-types. Upon having a particular sensation type, for example, a properly functioning human will have a tactile experience as of hardness. According to Reid, the laws that systematically relate types of sensations to types of perceptions in humans are contingent on God's will: God could have willed (and could will) that we have some different sensation than the one we have upon touching solid objects. Because the laws that regulate the relations among sensations and perception are contingent, perceptions are metaphysically independent of sensations: the relations among sensations and perceptions are nomological rather than logical or metaphysical. As such, sensations leave perceptions underdetermined. If there were no laws governing their systematic relations to perceptions, sensations would lack the relations to perceptions that make one derivable from the other. Sensations do not represent objects or properties and do not provide an epistemic or otherwise cognitive basis for representing objects or properties.

Yet Reid claims that sensations *suggest* perceptions and are *signs* of features in the environment (Reid 1997, 177, 190–192). He takes the language of signs and suggestion from Berkeley in order to emphasize – like Berkeley – that the perceptual process should be studied in a Newtonian way through laws of nature rather than causes.⁶ According to Reid, material objects and their properties *occasion* sensations while sensations *suggest* perceptions. But sensations are not of or about the objects or properties that occasion them – they have no representational content. Rather, a law of the human mind ensures that sensations suggest states with representational content: perceptions. Perceptions represent the objects and properties that occasion sensations. But because sensations suggest perceptions systematically, by a law of nature, they are about objects and their properties only in a derivative way. Absent such laws, sensations signify nothing.

According to Reid, laws of the human mind ensure that experience is attuned to basic, generic, ubiquitous features of ordinary objects – hardness, figure, color, extension, motion (Reid 1997, 57–58, 79, 105; 2002 181, 235–236). These *original* perceptions are modality-specific and stable for all properly functioning humans. For example, a normal human who has certain haptic sensations will immediately experience certain objects as having hardness, motion, and extension

(Reid 1997, 55–76). A normal human who has certain visual sensations will immediately experience certain objects as having color, illumination, and surface figure (Reid 1997, 77–87). Particular haptic sensations are original *signs* of hardness, while particular visual sensations are original *signs* of color. Original perceptions require no previous experience; they are ‘judgments of nature,’ grounded in the laws that establish common, basic cognitive functions attuned to basic features of objects (Reid 2002, 412).

Acquired perceptions – another notion borrowed from Berkeley – require previous experience (Reid 2002, 235). Like Berkeley, Reid holds that distance and three-dimensional figure are original only to touch; we do not see distance or depth originally. The spatial features original to visual experience are confined to two-dimensional surface figures (which Reid calls visible figure) and positions in two-dimensional space.⁷ But early in their development humans notice systematic relationships between visual features and tactile features: between how things look and how things feel, thereby coming to have visual experience of spatial features previously experienced only by touch (Reid 1997, 50, 166, 191; 2002, 236, 238, 417). Visible features such as color, illumination, and surface figure acquire spatial significance – a significance to which we are not originally attuned. Once attuned, however, we experience visible features that are as much signs of hardness, motion, and extension as were the tactile sensations that originally signified those features.

From the time that children begin to use their hands, nature directs them to handle every thing over and over, to look at it while they handle it, and to put it in various positions, and at various distances from the eye. We are apt to excuse this as a childish diversion . . . but if we think more justly, we shall find, that they are engaged in the most serious and important study . . . They are thereby every day acquiring the habits of perception, which are of greater importance than anything we can teach them. The original perceptions which Nature gave them are few, and insufficient for the purposes of life; and therefore she made them capable of acquiring many more perceptions by habit (Reid 1997, 201).

Though visual experience of depth and three-dimensional figure is Reid’s central example of acquired perception, he extends his account of acquired perception to include experiences of higher-order properties for all sensory modalities. Though human perceptual capacities are originally attuned to a narrow range of basic features, the features to which mature humans may become perceptually sensitive in acquired perception are many and diverse (Reid 1997, 171–172, 191–192). Reid’s examples highlight the miscellaneous contingency of the features to which perceivers become sensitive: the weight and quality of cattle, the weight of ships, the manner of an artistic work, kinds of jewels and whether they are counterfeits, the taste of cider and brandy, the smell of apples and oranges, the noise of thunder and ringing of bells, and the familiar example of a coach passing. The prospect of perceptual sensitivity to a cow’s health seems odd to us, but Reid would feel the same about a car’s speed on the street.

Is acquired perception a kind of perceptual belief – a belief formed on the basis of perception?⁸ Though we often infer from perception to belief, Reid

explains, what we achieve intellectually by inference is not an acquired perception. Acquired perception is uniquely *perceptual*. A person with no special knowledge of gems may *infer* that a jewel is a counterfeit from what she sees and feels. But an expert jeweler just sees the diamond for what it is, and likewise the cubic zirconia. Reid's idiosyncratic use of 'belief' and 'judgment' to describe the representational content of perceptual experience is not helpful here. Original and acquired perception, in his view, both consist in a *singular* element – a conception – and an *attributive* element – a belief or judgment. Acquired perception *attributes* features to which we are not originally attuned in perception, but it is no less perception for that. Indeed, Reid holds that original perception is impoverished and that perceptual experience of a rich, unified environment is a mature achievement based on acquired perception.

From what has been said, I think it appears, that our original powers of perceiving objects by our senses receive great improvement by use and habit; and without this improvement, would be altogether insufficient for the purposes of life. The daily occurrences of life not only add to our stock of knowledge, but give additional perceptive powers to our senses . . . (Reid 2002, 239).

In *original* perception sensations – the felt, qualitative elements in perceptual experience – are the signs. The signs in *acquired* perception are the narrow range of features presented in original perception. The *objects* of original perception become the *signs* in acquired perception.⁹ Vision is originally attuned to color, illumination, and surface figure, and visual sensations are original signs of those features. But humans soon develop visual sensitivity to the spatial significance of color, illumination, and surface figure, seeing cubes where they once saw two-dimensional surfaces, with color and illumination. In mature, acquired perception the original significance of sensations is screened off by – effaced by – the significance of the environmental features presented in original perception. The new role such environmental features play as signs in acquired perception dampens the significance of sensations. The sensations remain. They are partly constitutive of perceptual experience, but their significance decreases as the human perceptual system becomes increasingly sensitive to the significance of features in its environment. The development from original to acquired perception is a development towards greater objectivity; it is the normal development of the human perceptual capacity to experience a rich, detailed, fine-grained world of objects and properties.

	Faculties	Signs	Objects
External sense	Original Perception	sensations	hardness, softness, figure, motion, color, illumination, and other proper sensibles
	Acquired Perception	hardness, softness, figure, motion, color, illumination, and other proper sensibles	depth in vision, the size of bells by hearing, the weight of cattle by sight, and kind properties

One might expect that acquired perception is a kind of perceptual *belief* – not perception, strictly speaking. In addition, one might expect that aesthetic experience and moral experience are species of acquired perception. After all, an aesthetic property like beauty – and a moral property like wrongness – is a higher-order property, just the kind that may be experienced but surely cannot be *sensed*. Accordingly, James Van Cleve has argued that ‘most cases of acquired perception probably do not count as perception,’ an interpretation that I have contested (Van Cleve 2004; Copenhaver 2010). If acquired perception is not perception proper, and if aesthetic and moral experience belong to acquired perception, we can respond straightforwardly to Reid’s frequent statements that perceiving beauty or perceiving goodness is merely analogical. Our response is at home with the taxonomy of the moral philosophers with whom Reid is customarily counted – alongside Clarke and Price – as a rationalist. If moral experience is an intellectual achievement rather than a kind of sensitivity, it is clear how he may be counted among those who hold that reason, not affect, is the ground of morality.

But acquired perception is perception properly so called, and aesthetic and moral experience mirror the external sense by each dividing into original and acquired kinds of experience. When we turn to Reid’s account of aesthetic experience, we find that the inner sense of taste is structurally similar to the external sense of perception. Just as the human cognitive system is *originally* attuned to a sparse range of basic environmental features and *acquires* more developed perceptual powers through experience, so too, according to Reid, do we have both *original* and *acquired* aesthetic experience. This structural similarity between the external sense and the inner senses indicates that aesthetic experience is not confined to acquired perception. Aesthetic experience is an additional faculty of sense, with its own natural objects and its own range of features to which we become responsive through repeated experience.

Aesthetic experience, moral experience, and perceptual experience are originally attuned to, and develop sensitivities to, different features. Each is a basic representational capacity of the human mind, directed towards and increasingly responsive to objects and features in the environment.

3. Aesthetic perception

Reid’s distinction between sensation and perception is central to his account of perceptual experience. Central to his account of aesthetic perception is a similar distinction between a felt, qualitative element and a representational element (Reid 2002, 592–594).¹⁰ Aesthetic experience has two elements: an emotional or otherwise affective element, and an element by which we experience the world as being a certain way. Just as sensations are distinct from the objects and qualities that occasion them, so too the emotions that partially constitute aesthetic experience are distinct from the qualities in objects that occasion them (Reid 2002, 574, 578, 592). A law of the human mind ensures that emotions are connected to aesthetic qualities of objects such as beauty and grandeur: in this way, our emotions attuned to beauty and grandeur.

Because our emotions are systematically *connected* to basic aesthetic properties, they are *about* such properties in a derivative sense. The emotions are original signs of beauty and grandeur in the same way that our sensations are original signs of hardness, color, extension, etc. But as with sensations, the emotional element in aesthetic experience is itself non-representational. Rather, emotions suggest a state distinct from themselves, a state that represents objects as beautiful or grand. As with perception, Reid uses the terms 'belief' and 'judgment,' to describe this second element in perceptual experience (Reid 2002, 577, 578, 592). Emotions as signs of aesthetic properties suggest states that represent the world as beautiful or grand – judgments of taste. As in the case of perception, we should not be misled by Reid's description of such states as beliefs or judgments. The state is not a verdict on or attitude towards a proposition. Rather, it is a representation of an object in the environment as being a certain way. More precisely, it is like what we might now call the representational *content* of aesthetic experience.

Sensation underdetermines perception; emotions underdetermine judgments of taste (Reid 2002, 592–594). The relationship between the emotional and representational elements of aesthetic experience is nomological rather than logical or metaphysical. Emotions themselves do not represent objects as beautiful or grand, nor do they ground judgments of taste epistemically or cognitively. Absent the laws that connect emotions with experiences that represent objects as beautiful or grand, the agreeable emotions we enjoy in aesthetic experience signify nothing.

The structural similarities between Reid's account of perception and his account of aesthetic experience are not confined to his distinction between the phenomenal and representational elements of experience. He also reproduces the distinction between original and acquired perception (Reid 2002, 493). Recall that, according to Reid, the human mind is perceptually sensitive originally to a narrow range of very basic features such as hardness, color, motion, extension, and figure. The original signs of these features are sensations. This basic, original perceptual capacity is stable across humans: immediately upon having a particular haptic sensation, a normal human will experience an object as hard; immediately upon having a particular visual sensation, a normal human will experience an object as red. Likewise, according to Reid, immediately upon enjoying a particular emotion, a normal human will experience an object as beautiful.

Some objects strike us at one, and appear beautiful at first sight, without any reflection, without our being able to say why we call them beautiful, or being able to specify any perfection which justifies our judgment. Something of this kind there seems to be in brute animals, and in children before the use of reason; nor does it end with infancy, but continues through life (Reid 2002, 596).

Such aesthetic experiences are original to our constitution; they are judgments of nature (Reid 1997, 169; 2002, 412). All properly functioning humans are disposed to form these *instinctive judgments of taste* regardless of previous experience, by laws that establish a common cognitive ability attuned to basic

aesthetic features of the environment. This is why infants are drawn to shiny objects and regular forms. The emotions infants enjoy are attuned to such features. Upon having such emotions, we immediately experience objects as aesthetically valuable.

In a heap of pebbles, one that is remarkable for brilliancy of color and regularity of figure, will be picked out of the heap by a child. He perceives a beauty in it, puts a value upon it, and is fond of the property of it. For this preference, no reason can be given, but that children are, by their constitution, fond of brilliant colors, and of regular figures (Reid 2002, 598).

Instinctive judgments of taste are like original perception. Upon having certain emotions, a normal human will experience an object as beautiful or grand. Accordingly, Reid's acquired perception finds its counterpart in aesthetic experience in what he calls *rational judgments of taste* (Reid 2002, 493, 595–596, 598–599, 602, 605, 607, 613). But moving from original to acquired perception shifts the significance – from the significance of sensations to the significance of the features presented in original perception, as when we respond to the spatial significance of color, illumination, and surface figure by seeing a cube, not just a two-dimensional figure variously colored and illuminated. Likewise, moving from instinctive judgments of taste to rational judgments of taste shifts the significance. According to Reid, humans develop increasingly sensitive aesthetic capacities as they mature, no longer merely sensing 'the beauties of the field, of the forest, and of the flower-garden' but also understanding their significance (Reid 2002, 493, 598, 607). Maturing humans no longer just enjoy big, shiny objects that they experience as beautiful or grand; they start to recognize what makes them beautiful or grand.

Rational judgments of taste are not rational in the sense of being products of reasoning, inference or any other discursive acts of mind. But they are reason-giving: by making the judgments, we respond to the aesthetic *significance* of the features presented in original aesthetic experience. Just as the infant playing with her blocks is learning the spatial significance of the visible features given her in original perception, so too, the infant drawn to big, shiny things is learning the aesthetic significance of the beautiful things to which she is instinctively drawn.

To make an end of this subject, taste seems to be progressive as man is. Children . . . are disposed to attend to the objects about them; they are pleased with brilliant colors, gaudy ornaments, regular forms, cheerful countenances, noisy mirth, and glee. Such is the taste of childhood, which we must conclude to be given for wise purposes . . . It leads them to attend to objects which they may afterwards find worthy of their attention. It puts them upon exerting their infant faculties of body and mind, which, by such exertions, are daily strengthened and improved (Reid 2002, 613).

By rational judgments of taste we respond to the reasons that ground our experiences of objects as beautiful or grand. We begin to understand the significance of aesthetic properties in our environment – we understand *why*

an object is beautiful or grand, we understand the beauty and grandeur of objects as expressions. But what is the significance of those properties? Behind a distinction that bears on the question, the distinction between original and acquired aesthetic experience – or between instinctive and rational judgments of taste – lies another of Reid's distinctions: between *original beauty* and *derived beauty*.

We are naturally attuned to beauty and grandeur in objects, but they are *derived* rather than *original* (Reid 2002, 599, 602). Beauty and grandeur are in objects only *derivatively*, as signs of *original* beauty. *Original* beauty and grandeur belong to minds, not to objects; they are excellences of the author, artist, or craftsman (Reid 2002, 587, 591, 599, 601–604). 'I apprehend, therefore, that it is in the moral and intellectual perfections of mind, and in its active powers, that beauty originally dwells; and that from this as the fountain, all the beauty which we perceive in the visible world is derived' (Reid 2002, 602). The derived beauty and grandeur of objects are signs of original properties of excellent minds.

Derived beauty is the proper object of *instinctive judgments of taste*, while *original beauty* is the proper object of *rational judgments of taste*. We make rational judgments of taste when the derived beauty of an object becomes legible as a sign of the original excellences of mind that created it – when, in aesthetic experience we 'begin to discern beauties of mind' (Reid 2002, 613). Where a child may instinctively recognize the beauty in a work of art, a mature human, having a developed aesthetic sense, understands how and why a work of art expresses and exemplifies the virtues of the craftsman.

A work of art may appear beautiful to the most ignorant, even to a child. It pleases, but he knows not why. To one who understands it perfectly, and perceives how every part is fitted with exact judgment to its end, the beauty is not mysterious; it is perfectly comprehended; and he knows wherein it consists, as well as how it affects him (Reid 2002, 574).

The signs in instinctive aesthetic experience are emotions – the felt, qualitative elements in aesthetic experience. The signs in mature, rational, aesthetic experience are the derived beauties of objects presented in instinctive aesthetic experience. In other words, *the objects* of instinctive aesthetic experience – derived beauty and grandeur – become *the signs* in mature aesthetic experience. In mature aesthetic experience, the original significance of emotion is screened off by the significance of the derived beauties and grandeur of objects. The role derived beauty plays as a sign of an excellent mind dampens the significance of emotion. As with perceptual experience, the felt element of aesthetic experience remains. The emotions remain. They are partly constitutive of aesthetic experience. But their significance decreases as aesthetic experience becomes more and more sensitive to reasons that ground judgments of taste – more sensitive, that is, to the original beauty and grandeur of minds.

These are structural similarities between perceptual and aesthetic experience.

	Faculties		Signs	Objects
External sense	Original Perception		sensations	hardness, softness, figure, motion, color, illumination, and other proper sensibles
	Acquired Perception		hardness, softness, figure, motion, color, illumination, and other proper sensibles	depth in vision, the size of bells by hearing, the weight of cattle by sight, and kind properties
Internal sense	Aesthetic Perception	Instinctive Judgments of Taste	feelings/emotions	derived beauty: perfections in objects, e.g., shininess, symmetry, concordance, etc.
		Rational Judgments of Taste	derived beauty: perfections in objects, e.g., shininess, symmetry, concordance, etc.	original beauty: perfections of minds, e.g., moral virtues and intellectual virtues

Since Reid knew that he might be misread as a subjectivist about aesthetic qualities, he opens his essay *Of Taste* by distinguishing his account from those that make aesthetic qualities identical with or dependent on affective or emotional responses (Reid 2002, 574). He agrees that emotions are partly constitutive of aesthetic experience: normally functioning humans enjoy agreeable emotions upon perceiving beautiful and grand objects. Emotions are signs to which humans instinctively respond by representing objects as beautiful or grand. Moreover, the beauty and grandeur of objects derives from the original beauty and grandeur of minds, thus depending on qualities of mind. As mind-dependent, aesthetic qualities may be secondary: mere modes of mind, not of objects. Does Reid think that beauty and grandeur reside in feelings, emotions, or other affective mental states?¹¹

Reid responds by insisting that the beauty and grandeur of objects, though derived, are real properties of objects, what he calls *real excellences* (Reid 2002, 595). An object is beautiful or grand if it expresses or exemplifies the virtues of the mind that created it (Reid 2002, 587). An object has beauty or grandeur independently of whether anyone experiences it as beautiful or grand (Reid 2002, 595). ‘It depends no doubt upon our constitution, whether we do, or do not perceive excellence where it really is: But the object has its excellence from its own constitution and not from ours’ (Reid 2002, 584). An object is excellent by expressing or exemplifying the original excellences of the mind of its craftsman or creator. An object may fail to excel – a painting may be badly painted, for example – but whether it fails or succeeds in expressing the excellences of its author turns on the object itself. It is the painting that is beautiful or crude because it fulfills or does not fulfill in greater or lesser degree its expressive function (Reid 2002, 574).

Beauty and grandeur are mind-dependent but not subjective; beauty and grandeur are mind-dependent but not response-dependent. They depend on the

existence of subjects for their existence, but not upon the experiences of apprehending subjects. Were there no minds, there would be no beautiful or grand objects: the beauty and grandeur of objects resides in their ability to express or exemplify wisdom, magnanimity, innocence, gentleness, fortitude, self-command and so on (Reid 2002, 601). Though beauty and grandeur in objects depend on and are derived from the excellences of minds, the dependency or derivation makes them no less real or objective.

Discussing the emotions that instinctively signify beauty and grandeur, Reid insists that they are distinct from the real properties of objects that occasion them, just as sensations are distinct from the properties that occasion them. 'When a beautiful object is before us, we may distinguish the agreeable emotion it produces in us, from the quality of the objects which causes that emotion' (Reid 2002, 574). Beauty and grandeur are real properties of objects, neither identical with nor dependent on emotional responses: '... beauty belongs to this excellence of the object, and not to the feeling of the spectator' (Reid 2002, 595). Beauty and grandeur are metaphysically independent of feelings, emotions, or any other affective states of a subject. Although we respond to the beauty and grandeur of objects by enjoying agreeable emotions, the response is grounded in a law of the human mind. The relationship between emotions and beauty is merely nomological. Emotions, alone of themselves, are insufficient for aesthetic experience. They neither represent objects as beautiful nor provide a basis to form aesthetic judgments. We cannot explain or justify judgments of taste by appeal to emotions.

Yet Reid admits that 'some of the qualities that please good taste resemble the secondary qualities of body ...' (Reid 2002, 574). The 'secondary qualities' that Reid has in mind, far from supporting any subjectivism, are his weapons against the theory of ideas, a theory that he regards as inevitably skeptical, idealist, sentimentalist and subjectivist. The theory of ideas proceeds upon a mistaken conception of secondary qualities. According to that theory, secondary qualities are identical with, or depend on, sensations. But this is just what Reid's theory of perception denies. He sees secondary properties as real properties of objects, distinct from the sensations that occasion them.

This ought rather to be observed, because it has become a fashion among modern Philosophers, to resolve all our perceptions into mere feelings or sensations in the person that perceives, without anything corresponding to those feelings in the external object. According to those Philosophers, there is no heat in the fire, no taste in a sapid body; the taste and the heat being only in the person that feels them. In like manner, there is no beauty in any object whatsoever; it is only a sensation or feeling in the person that perceives it.

I had occasion to show, that there is no solid foundation for it when applied to the secondary qualities of body; and the same arguments show equally, that it has no solid foundation when applied to the beauty of objects, or to any of those qualities that are perceived by good taste (Reid 2002, 574).

In Reid's genealogy of skepticism, subjectivism, and sentimentalism, the trouble starts with Descartes, who taught that 'many things supposed to have an external

existence, were only conceptions or feelings in the mind' (Reid 2002, 583–584). Locke then distinguished primary properties from secondary properties, locating the former in objects while transporting the latter to mind. Locke's disciples followed his habit of 'converting into feelings things that were believed to have an external existence,' by making 'extension, solidity, figure and all the primary qualities of body... sensations or feelings in the mind' (Reid 2002, 583–584). Hutcheson was then 'carried away' by Locke's distinction and applied 'to beauty, what DES CARTES and LOCKE had taught concerning the secondary qualities' (Reid 2002, 594). Losing no momentum, modern philosophers recognized that it...

...was then a very natural progress to conceive, that beauty, harmony, and grandeur, the objects of taste, as well as right and wrong, the objects of moral faculty, are nothing but feelings of the mind... Mr HUME... put the finishing stroke to it, by making truth and error to be feelings in the mind, and belief to be an operation of the sensitive part of our nature (Reid 2002, 584).

Reid's story shows that he does not treat secondary properties as modifications of mind or mind-dependent. Even though some aesthetic qualities are *like* secondary properties, secondary properties are real properties of objects. If some aesthetic qualities are like secondary properties, this is consistent with making aesthetic properties real excellences of objects.

In objects that please the taste, we always judge that there is some real excellence, some superiority to those that do not please. In some cases, that superior excellence is distinctly perceived, and can be pointed out; in other cases, we have only a general notion of some excellence we cannot describe. Beauties of the former kind may be compared to the primary qualities perceived by the external senses; those of the latter kind, to the secondary (Reid 2002, 578).

Reid's rhetoric is a symptom of the bind he finds himself in when arguing that the aesthetic faculty is a faculty of sense. He wants the aesthetic faculty to take its place alongside the external sense of perception and the internal moral faculty as a capacity to represent real features in the environment. He claims that perceptual, aesthetic, and moral experiences are basic ways of representing a world of real objects and properties. However, those raised in the theory of ideas cannot help but construe sense-talk as the mere having of sensations, feelings, or emotions. Interpreting Reid's theory this way – as an appendix to the theory of ideas – saddles him with the very view that he rejects and attacks, whereby the mind is directed towards itself and its own subjective states rather than the world.

4. The moral faculty

On Reid's view, perceptual experience and aesthetic experience are distinct yet structurally similar representational capacities basic and original to the human mind. The range and responsiveness of these capacities is not static. Each faculty responds originally to a narrow range of features but eventually acquires greater sensitivity to many more through repeated experience. Each faculty is directed

towards features in the environment rather than to the effects of such features on the mind. These features are real and independent of the responses of experiencing subjects. Perceptual experience represents objects as red, as round, as fruit, as tomatoes. Aesthetic experience represents objects as beautiful, as grand, as expressing gentleness, as exemplifying courage.

So too, what Reid calls the *moral faculty*, or *conscience*, or *the moral sense*, is directed towards and represents real properties in the environment: e.g., rightness and wrongness. ‘We judge of colours by the eye; of sounds by the ear; of beauty and deformity by taste; of right and wrong in conduct by our moral sense or conscience’ (Reid 2002, 424; Reid 2010, 170, 175, 180, 186–195, 185, 300). Moral experience represents behaviour as wrong, as right, as malicious, as just, as mean (Reid 2010, 195). As with perception and taste, the moral faculty is a representational capacity basic and original to the human mind. We do not first observe some behaviour and then judge that behaviour to be right. Rather, the moral faculty consists in a capacity to experience (for which Reid often uses the word ‘perceive’) conduct as right, wrong, just or unjust.

[B]y an original power of the mind, which we call *conscience*, or the *moral faculty*, we have the conceptions of right and wrong in human conduct, of merit and demerit, of duty and moral obligation, and our other moral conceptions; and that, by the same faculty, we perceive some things in human conduct to be right and others to be wrong; that the first principles of morals are the dictates of this faculty; and that we have the same reason to rely upon those dictates, as upon the determinations of our senses, or of our other natural faculties (Reid 2010, 180).

Moral experience, like perceptual and aesthetic experience, consists in a felt element and a representational element. Aesthetic experience, according to Reid, consists in an emotion and a judgment of taste. Perceptual experience consists in a sensation and a perception. Perception itself, according to Reid, is composed of two elements: a singular demonstrative element, which he calls a conception, and an attributive element that represents the object conceived as thus-and-such: for example, as red or round. We find similar elements in Reid’s account of moral experience, which – like aesthetic experience – consists in an emotion and a judgment: a felt element and a representational element (Reid 2010, 180, 350, 352). Like perceptual experience, moral judgment is also composed of two further elements: a conception of a behaviour that expresses or exemplifies rightness or wrongness, and an approval or disapproval of that behaviour *as* right or *as* wrong. Reid calls the former a *moral judgment* and the latter *approbation* or *disapprobation*. Just as the attributive element in perception depends on conceiving or apprehending the object to which properties are attributed, the evaluative element in moral experience depends on representing an action as right or wrong and thus worthy of approval or disapproval *as such*.

Of this faculty the operations appear to me, the judging ultimately of what is right, what is wrong, and what is indifferent in the conduct of moral agents; the approbation of good conduct and disapprobation of bad in consequence of that

judgment, and the agreeable emotions which attend obedience, and disagreeable which attend disobedience to its dictates (Reid 2010, 185).

As we have seen, although sensations suggest perceptions by a law of nature, they are metaphysically distinct from perceptions. Sensation underdetermines perception and forms no cognitive or epistemic basis from which to infer to the objects and properties represented in experience. Emotions in aesthetic experience are connected to judgments of taste – again, merely nomologically. Emotions underdetermine aesthetic judgment and cannot justify or explain experiences of objects as beautiful or grand. So too, the emotions that partially constitute moral experience are distinct from and underdetermine the representational content of moral experience. ‘I know, that what a man judges to be a very worthy action, he contemplates with pleasure; and what he contemplates with pleasure must, in his judgment, have worth. But the judgment and the feeling are different acts of his mind...’ (Reid 2010, 350; 180, 183, 348–349, 352). Humans respond emotionally to kindness, meanness, gentleness, and other morally significant behaviours we feel pleasure when we experience one person helping another person up after a fall; we feel displeasure when we experience one person rudely interrupting another. But our moral judgments do not consist in these responses, nor do they depend on them.

Indeed, the relationship between moral emotions and moral judgments is less salient in Reid’s account than the relationships between sensations and perceptions and between aesthetic emotions and aesthetic judgments. Sensations suggest perceptions of extension, figure, color, illumination and so on, as original *signs* of these very basic properties. Aesthetic emotions, like a child’s glee at seeing a shiny thing, suggest experiences of beauty as *signs* of excellences in objects. But moral emotions do not suggest states that represent behaviour as morally relevant and morally evaluable. The pleasure and displeasure felt in moral experience are the *result* of such apprehension and evaluation, not their antecedents (Reid 2010, 348–349). As such, moral emotions are not *signs* of moral features of human conduct. Sensations are signs because they suggest perceptions. Delight and glee are signs because they suggest our original experiences of beauty and grandeur. But because our agreeable and disagreeable feelings as we live with other persons do not suggest original experiences of rightness, wrongness, justice, injustice, etc., those feelings cannot be *signs* of basic moral features – at least not as sensations and aesthetic emotions are signs.

Given Reid’s account of the role of emotion in moral experience, what is his etiology of our original conceptions of moral properties? Normal humans who have certain sensations immediately experience objects as hard, soft, extended and so on. Likewise for having certain emotions and experiencing objects as beautiful or grand. These original perceptions and instinctive judgments of taste have moral counterparts, according to Reid.

As the eye not only gives us the conceptions of colors, but makes us perceive one body to have one color, and another body another... so our conscience, or moral

faculty, not only gives us the conception of honest and dishonest, but makes us perceive one kind of conduct to be honest, another to be dishonest . . .

That these sentiments are not the effect of education or of acquired habits, we have the same reason to conclude, as that our perception of what is true and what false, is not the effect of education or acquired habits (Reid 2010, 327).

The moral faculty, like the external senses and the internal sense of beauty and grandeur, is capable of *original* conceptions, and these are ‘ideas of right and wrong in human conduct’ (Reid 2010, 195; 176, 179, 180, 279, 327). But what occasions these original conceptions? What signs suggest the moral significance of human conduct immediately, prior to experience? Not the moral emotions. As noted above, the moral emotions are *effects* of our apprehending and evaluating the moral significance of features in our environment. They neither *suggest* such apprehension or evaluation, nor *signify* moral properties. Rather, according to Reid, *human conduct* suggests our original conceptions of rightness, wrongness, and other basic moral properties. Normal humans attending to human behaviour immediately experience it as honest, dishonest, right, wrong, magnanimous, mean and so on. The relevant human conduct is a *sign* of a moral property.

Our first moral conceptions are probably got by attending coolly to the conduct of others, and observing what moves our approbation, what our indignation. These sentiments spring from our moral faculty as naturally as the sensations of sweet and bitter from the faculty of taste. They have their natural objects (Reid, 2010, 279).

A man in company, without doing good or evil, without uttering an articulate sound, may behave himself gracefully, civilly, politely; or on the contrary, meanly, rudely, and impertinently. We see the dispositions of his mind, by their natural signs in his countenance and behavior, in the same manner as we perceive the figure and other qualities of bodies by the sensations which nature hath connected with them (Reid 1997, 191).

Human behaviour, in Reid’s theory, does for moral experience what sensations do for perceptual experience and emotions do for aesthetic experience: as ensured by laws of the human mind, they suggest original conceptions of the most basic features to which those faculties are attuned. The laws governing the faculties give sensations, emotions, and behaviour a derivative significance. Absent such laws, sensation, emotion, and behavior signify nothing. There are laws of nature to assure that some sensations have an original spatial significance, some emotions have an original aesthetic significance, and some human behavior has an original moral significance.

Human behavior is a sign of moral properties, according to Reid. Yet he also holds that the moral significance of human behavior is the *object* of moral experience. The function of the moral faculty, he claims, is ‘to shew us what is good, what bad, and what indifferent in human conduct’ (Reid 2010, 191). Signs direct the mind to objects and features other than the sign itself. Sensations direct the mind toward such basic features of objects as hardness and color. Emotions direct the mind to the beauty and grandeur in the world. If human conduct is both sign and object, does it direct the mind to itself?

According to Reid, the object of *original* aesthetic experience is *derived* beauty: the beauty of objects, which he treats as a real excellence. Objects have real excellence inasmuch as they express or exemplify the artist's, craftsman's or creator's original beauty. Objects have beauty and grandeur as signs of an excellent mind. At first, a young mind is directed only or mainly to the derived beauty itself of objects. A mature mind, capable of acquired aesthetic experience, is directed to the significance of this derived beauty – directed by the *derived beauty of objects* to the *original beauty of minds*.

The moral significance of human behavior, according to Reid, is likewise derived from the original moral properties of mind. Human conduct is morally significant inasmuch as it expresses moral properties of the agent whose conduct it is: 'Their external behavior and conduct in life expresses the good and bad qualities of their mind' (Reid 2002, 603). Just as the beauty of an object is a real excellence of the object, the rightness of an action is a real property of the action.

...[E]steem and benevolent regard, not only accompany real worth by the constitution of our nature, but are perceived to be really and properly due to it; and... on the contrary, unworthy conduct really merits dislike and indignation.

There is no judgment at the heart of man more clear, or more irresistible than this, That esteem and regard are really due to good conduct, and the contrary to base and unworthy conduct (Reid 2010, 181, 236).

An action is right insofar as it successfully expresses or exemplifies virtues of the agent who acts: '... all human actions, considered in a moral view, are either good, bad, or indifferent' (Reid 2010, 177; 180, 191). As an expression of agency, human behavior has moral significance, to which we are originally attuned. Detached from agency, human behavior lacks moral significance. Just as a purely accidental object could not be beautiful or grand, according to Reid, a mere event could not be mean or just. Human conduct is morally significant, but its significance derives from the original moral qualities of agents.

...[P]ower, wisdom, and goodness, are properly the attributes of mind only...

Some figures of speech are so natural and common in all languages, that we are led to think them literal and proper expressions. Thus an action is called brave, virtuous, generous; but it is evident, that valour, virtue, generosity, are the attributes of persons only, and not of actions. In the action considered abstractly, there is neither valour, nor virtue, nor generosity... (Reid 2002, 587).

The goodness and fairness of an action is a sign of what a virtuous mind would do. In aesthetic experience, the human mind is directed originally to the derived beauty of objects. In moral experience, the human mind is directed originally to the derived moral value of human behavior. Human behavior is a sign in moral experience, and the moral value of human behavior derives from the original moral value of agents. Given this pattern of derivations from originals, will Reid extend his account of perceptual and aesthetic experience to understand moral experience developmentally? The moral faculty is originally attuned to basic moral features of behavior, he claims, and '... like all other powers, it comes to maturity by insensible degrees, and may be much aided in its strength and vigour

by proper culture' (Reid 2010, 186; 186–195, 277–278). Something like the distinction between original and acquired perception, and like the distinction between instinctive and rational judgments of taste, underwrites Reid's account of the moral faculty.

Humans are instinctively attuned to the moral significance of facial expressions, tones of voice, gestures, and other body language: 'The features of the human face, the modulations of the voice, and the proportions, attitudes, and gesture of the body, are all natural expressions of good or bad qualities of the person, and derive a beauty or deformity from the qualities which they express' (Reid 1997, 60, 190–191; Reid 2002, 141, 185, 484–486, 493–494, 503, 603; Reid 2010, 141, 331–333). As with other signs, the relations between facial expressions, tones of voice, gestures, and the qualities of mind they signify is nomological, not metaphysical or logical. By themselves, a smile, a whisper, or a shrug signify nothing. But because they are systematically connected by a law of nature with friendliness, gentleness, and indifference, they are reliable (not infallible) signs of those mental qualities. Expressions, gestures, and tones are signs in an *original* way, claims Reid, not an acquired way because we respond to their significance immediately, prior to experience.

The signs in natural language are features of the face, gestures of the body, and modulations of the voice; the variety of which is suited to the variety of things signified by them. Nature hath established a real connection between these signs, and the thoughts and dispositions of the mind which are signified by them; and nature hath taught us the interpretation of these signs; so that, previous to experience, the sign suggest the thing signified, and creates the belief of it (Reid 1997; Reid 2010, 331–332).

A keen observer of children, Reid notes their sensitivity to the moral import of an angry look, a soothing voice, or a melancholy tone. Infants play with blocks to learn the spatial significance of visible features (Reid 1997, 160; 2002, 484–485). Children pick shiny, symmetrical pebbles from a heap to learn the aesthetic significance of the beauty of objects. A father playing peek-a-boo with his daughter; a mother raising and lowering her voice in telling a story; a sibling play-pinching and sticking out his tongue at his little sister: each is teaching the child the moral significance of human behaviour.

The perceptual, aesthetic, and moral faculties are attuned to basic, ubiquitous features in the environment. Originally, the mind is directed in perception to such features as shape, extension, and color. In mature, acquired perceptual experience, the mind is directed to the significance of these features. Originally, the mind is directed in aesthetic experience to the beauty of objects. In mature, acquired aesthetic experience, the mind is directed by the derived beauty of objects to the original beauty of minds. Originally, the mind is directed to the moral value of human behaviour. In mature, acquired moral experience, the mind is directed to the *significance* of human behaviour. It is directed by the derived moral value of *behaviour* to the original moral value of *agents*. The mind attends not to the behaviour, but to what that behaviour expresses or exemplifies, to what

it says about the person whose behaviour it is. The object of instinctive moral experience – human conduct – becomes *the sign* in mature moral experience. In mature moral experience, the original significance of facial expressions, vocal inflection, and gesture is screened off by the significance of moral qualities of the agent. The role of human conduct as a sign of a virtuous or vicious mind dampens the significance of behaviour itself.

Though Reid does not use the phrases ‘instinctive moral judgment,’ ‘rational moral judgment,’ ‘derived moral value,’ and ‘original moral value,’ these phrases help show how his theories of perception and aesthetic experience extend to his account of the moral faculty:

	Faculties	Signs	Objects
External sense	Original Perception	sensations	hardness, softness, figure, motion, color, illumination, and other proper sensibles
	Acquired Perception	hardness, softness, figure, motion, color, illumination, and other proper sensibles	depth in vision, the size of bells by hearing, the weight of cattle by sight, and kind properties
Internal sense	Aesthetic Perception	Instinctive Judgments of Taste	feelings/emotions
		Rational Judgments of Taste	derived beauty: perfections in objects, e.g., shininess, symmetry, concordance, etc.
	Moral Perception	Instinctive Moral Judgments	derived beauty: perfections in objects, e.g., shininess, symmetry, concordance, etc.
		Rational Moral Judgments	facial expressions, body language, vocal inflections
			derived moral value: behaviour, conduct, actions
			original moral value: perfections in objects, e.g., shininess, symmetry, concordance, etc.
			original moral value: moral virtues and intellectual virtues
			derived moral value: behaviour, conduct, actions
			original moral value: moral virtues: valor, generosity, magnanimity, etc.

5. Conclusion

Is Reid’s moral faculty a faculty of sense? Is moral experience perceptual? The best answer to these questions is that the moral faculty is a basic representational faculty, independent of – but on a par with – such other basic representational faculties as the external senses and the internal sense of taste. By the moral faculty, we experience the world as being a certain way, becoming sensitive to real features in the environment, becoming responsive to a larger range of morally relevant properties. At first we respond only or mainly to real moral

properties of human conduct. But as we mature, we recognize the moral *significance* of human conduct, coming to understand how and why human behaviour expresses and exemplifies the equally real virtues and vices of agents. We become sensitive to the goodness, fairness, maliciousness, and meanness of other people. We see through the signs in human behaviour to what behaviours signify: the real moral qualities of persons.

The involuntary signs of the passions and dispositions of the mind, in the voice, features, and action, are a part of the human constitution which deserves admiration. The signification of those signs is known to all men by nature, and previous to all experience.

They are so many openings into the souls of our fellow-men, by which their sentiments become visible to the eye. They are a natural language common to mankind... (Reid 2010, 141).

Reid's reluctance to call the moral faculty a faculty of sense reflects his antagonism to sentimentalism and to the theory of mind that he sees as the source of sentimentalism, skepticism, idealism, and subjectivism. The moral faculty, a faculty of sense, is not reducible to or grounded in the having of sensations, feelings, emotions or any other affective state. Emotions are partially constitutive of moral experience. But moral emotions underdetermine moral experience. They are distinct from the real moral properties represented in experience and from the judgments by which we represent conduct and persons as good or bad. Appeal to the moral emotions neither justifies nor explains our apprehension and evaluation of the morally relevant features in the environment. Though we respond to such features with emotion, our apprehension and evaluation of morally relevant features does not depend on this response.

Reid wants to recognize the affective elements in aesthetic and moral experience without obligating himself to a theory of mind that reduces our capacities for objective representation to mere sensation or affect. In the final essay of the *Active Powers*, Reid reiterates his gloomy genealogy in order to explain his ambivalence about the phrase 'moral sense.' The passage is strikingly similar to his defense of aesthetic experience against the subjectivist interpretation.

DES CARTES and Mr LOCKE went no farther than to maintain that the secondary qualities of body, heat and cold, sound, colour, taste and smell, which we perceive and judge to be in the external object, are mere feelings or sensations in our minds, there being nothing in bodies themselves to which these names can be applied; and that the office of the external senses is not to judge of external things, but only to give us ideas or sensations, from which we are by reasoning to deduce the existence of a material world without us, as well as we can.

ARTHUR COLLIER and BISHOP BERKELEY discovered, from the same principles, that the primary, as well as the secondary, qualities of bodies, such as extension, figure, solidity, motion, are only sensations in our minds; and therefore, that there is no material world without us at all.

The same philosophy, when it came to be applied to matters of taste, discovered that beauty and deformity are not any thing in the objects, to which men, from the beginning of the world, ascribed to them, but certain feelings in the mind of the spectator.

The next step was an easy consequence from all the preceding, that moral approbation and disapprobation are not judgments, which must be true or false, but barely, agreeable and uneasy feelings or sensations.

Mr HUME made the last step in this progress, and crowned the system by what he calls his *hypothesis*, to wit, That belief is more properly an act of the sensitive, than of the cogitative part of our nature (Reid 2010, 345).

Reid is no sentimentalist. Nor is he a moral rationalist who takes moral judgments to be products of reason. On Reid's view, the moral faculty is a faculty of moral judgment, but moral judgments are not products of reason, rationality or other discursive acts of mind. Humans do not first perceive human conduct and then proceed to moral judgments of the conduct or of the person whose conduct it is. Our relevant experience represents persons and conduct as having moral properties in the first instance. Mature moral experience is rational only in the sense that it is reason-giving. Mature humans do not merely sense a cold shoulder or a friendly voice; we understand what these behaviours express and how and why they express them. Reid's moral faculty is neither affective nor rational, but representational. It is a discrete, basic, capacity for representing the real moral properties of humans and human conduct.

Notes

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2. There is a significant and growing literature on Reid's account of the moral faculty. Roeser (2010) collects several contributions to this literature, including: Kroeker (2010) and Broadie (2010). See also Cuneo (2003, 2006).
3. For an extended treatment of the ways in which Reid ill-fits the rationalist-sentimentalist distinction, see Cuneo (2013).
4. For extended treatments of Reid's theory of perception, see Copenhaver, (2004), Nichols, (2007) and Van Cleve, (2004).
5. See Wolterstorff, (2004), and Van Cleve (2004).
6. For an extended treatment of Reid's indebtedness to Berkeley, see Copenhaver (2013).
7. On this point Reid begins to depart from Berkeley. Berkeley insists that original visual experience is in no way spatial – not even two-dimensional. Reid holds that visible figure and what he calls 'real figure,' are inter-derivable, while Berkeley holds that the features present in visual and haptic experience are heterogeneous and incommensurate.
8. For an extended treatment of Reid's theory of acquired perception, see Copenhaver (2010).
9. I intend this as a point concerning the *general* structure of original and acquired perception. Though there are cases of acquired perception in which sensations are signs, the general case is one in which the objects of original perception become signs in acquired perception.
10. For an extended treatment of Reid's theory of aesthetic perception, see Copenhaver, [forthcoming](#).
11. Indeed, some current scholars read Reid as a subjectivist. See Manns (1998).

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