



On Two Interpretations of the Desire-Satisfaction Theory of Prudential Value

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Summary

This article considers two different ways of formulating a desire-satisfaction theory of prudential value. The first version of the theory (the object view) assigns basic prudential value to the state of affairs that is the object of a person's desire. The second version (the combo view) assigns basic prudential value to the compound state of affairs in which (a) a person desires some state of affairs and (b) this state of affairs obtains. My aims in this article are twofold. First, I aim to highlight that these are not mere notational variants, but in fact have quite different implications, so that this distinction is not one that the theorist of prudential value should ignore. More positively, I argue that the object view is better able to capture what is distinctive and appealing about subjective theories of prudential value, on any plausible account of what the central subjectivist insight is.

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