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Suggested Reference

Davies, S. (1990). Reply to McFee's Reply. *Grazer Philosophische Studien*, 38, 185-186. doi: [10.5840/gps1990388](https://doi.org/10.5840/gps1990388)

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Important note: This is a final draft and differs from the definitive version, which is published in **Grazer Philosophische Studien**, 38 (1990): 185-186. I have been assured by the University of Auckland's research office that if they have made this publicly available then it does not violate the publisher's copyright rules.

A Response to McFee's Response

I have three brief comments to make about Graham McFee's 'Davies' Replies: A Response'.

(1) McFee rightly notes that, at best, my discussion shows only that the view that critics' strong evaluations cannot be soundly deduced is not proven by (some of) the reasons which are offered in support of it. I accept that my approach is limited and negative. If such an approach is worthwhile, this is because the arguments which it questions and rejects are widely accepted. I believe that each of the arguments to which I offer a reply has attracted a philosophical following.

(2) McFee objects that if my arguments have unpalatable consequences they will not appeal as an alternative to the view which I attack. Of course he is correct in this. As an example of such a consequence, he suggests that a functional account of aesthetic value leads (or may lead) to the denigration of art merely as the means to an otherwise specifiable end. I agree that it would be unfortunate if my view entailed such a consequence, but deny that it does so.

A concern with the value of art in general might have valuable effects - for example, as an aid to mental health - which might be achieved (more efficiently, sometimes) by other means. Because of the value of such consequences, one might encourage in others a concern for the arts. But this is not to say that an instrumentalist on artistic value, such as Beardsley is, need hold that this is a good reason for an interest in any particular artwork, or a standard by which one should judge the value of particular artworks. An instrumentalist on

artistic value might hold that each particular work is to be valued “for its own sake” - for the sake of the enjoyment afforded by an apprehension and appreciation of its individuality as an artwork - and is not to be valued merely as a member of a series which, as it grows, makes more likely the realisation of the benefits of an interest in art in general. Neither need there be an incompatibility between holding that artworks are properly to be approached as individuals and holding that true generalisations about artworks are of importance for critics, for one cannot treat the work as the individual which it is without one's recognising what kind of individual it is, and that recognition depends on a grasp of the general criteria which govern genre-membership within the arts. (These are matters I discuss in more detail in **The Definition of Art**, forthcoming from Cornell University Press.)

(3) McFee notes correctly that I believe that, if the practice of criticism were severed from the pursuit of truth (even if the truths at issue are ones hedged about with qualifications and probabilities, as well as ones relativised to times, places and social practices), and if critics' arguments did not derive their force from the possibility of their reformulation in tight logical forms (even if they are not usually expressed in such forms), then criticism would be non-rational at heart. Against this view he holds that reason-giving often appears neither to involve nor to suppose a deductive form (especially where it deals with the singularity of cases rather than generalities), so that the rejection of my views need not take us nearer to the abyss of non-rationality. Of course I do not deny that, in practice, the force of critics' arguments does not depend upon the style of their presentation, but I do believe that the foundation for standards of rationality are set by principles of deductive (and inductive) logic and that, were it to be shown that criticism in the arts lacked contact with such a foundation, it would follow that the practice of criticism is non-rational. Practical reasoning often has a distinctively informal character - for example, it often is enthymematic. Perhaps that is because so much common ground - methods of reasoning, as well as shared information - is taken for granted by us, and not because, in the case of the categories of art, there are no true generalisations about criteria for value. That much reasoning does not depend on its formulation in deductive form for its persuasive power does not show

that it should or could retain that power if such a reformulation were impossible.

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