

Affective Persistence and the Normative Phenomenology of Emotion

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Abstract This paper presents a detailed analysis of affective persistence and its significance – that is the persistence of affect in the face of countervailing or contradictory evaluative information. More specifically, it appeals to the phenomena of affective persistence to support the claim that a significant portion of the emotional experiences of adult humans involve a kind of normative phenomenology. Its central claim is that by appealing to a distinctive kind of normative phenomenology that emotions exhibit, we get a neat personal level explanation of why affect persists. In doing so it introduces and explores an interesting claim that Ronald de Sousa makes concerning the distinctiveness of emotion, explicating it in terms of the idea of affective persistence. As such, the contribution of the paper is twofold: a thesis about emotional phenomenology *qua* its normative phenomenology is presented, and that thesis is used to explain something distinctive about our emotional experiences, namely that they often persist in the face of conflicting evaluative judgements and beliefs.