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Reining In The Passions: The Role Of Emotions In Understanding Self-Control

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REINING IN THE PASSIONS: THE ROLE OF EMOTIONS IN UNDERSTANDING

SELF-CONTROL

by

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Under the Direction of Eddy Nahmias, PhD and Andrea Scarantino, PhD

ABSTRACT

In this paper, I consider a philosophical model of self-control recently developed by Chandra Sripada (2010, 2012) and inspired by current dual-process models in both the sciences of the mind and philosophy. Sripada argues that the mind is bifurcated into two motivational systems that correspond to *Emotion* and *Reason* and that to exercise self-control is to act in accordance with reason when it comes into conflict with emotion. I argue that Sripada's model rests on two false assumptions, that emotions are cognitively impenetrable and that self-control is always about taming our emotions. Based on these arguments, I conclude that our capacity for self-control cannot be understood in terms of a divided-mind and consider a structural model of self-control recently developed by Kentaro Fujita (2016).

INDEX WORDS: *Synchronic* self-control, Puzzle of self-control, Emotions, Dual-process theory

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DEDICATION

For David, Theresa, Helen & Barak, thank you for your endless love and support; For

Schuler & Yuan, thank you for turning an interest into a passion; And for Mary-Ann &

William, you are dearly missed.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Kicking an addiction, writing a thesis, and being a faithful partner are, at least for many of us, challenging goals to achieve. Even when we greatly desire to give up smoking for good, to finish the final draft of our thesis, and to live up to the promises we made to our partner, desires to the contrary often stand in our way. We may still crave the cigarette, want to spend the night at a bar with friends rather than alone in the library, and desire the attractive stranger who just moved in next door. Some of us never beat our addiction, complete our thesis, or manage to be faithful, but many of us do. The difference between successful and failed attempts to achieve such goals is likely the result of many interacting factors, both personal and social, over which we may have varying degrees of control (Kennett 2013). When we do succeed in resisting our goal-defeating desires, however, the most proximate cause of our success is oftentimes attributed to self-control.[1]

A question that has attracted philosophers and scientists of the mind for decades is: how should we understand the capacity for self-control? In this paper, I consider a philosophical model of self-control recently developed by Chandra Sripada (2010, 2012) and inspired by current dual-process models in both the sciences of the mind and philosophy (e.g. Hofmann et al. 2009; Holton, 1999, 2009; Levy 2011[2]; Masicampo & Baumeister 2008; Metcalfe & Mischel 1999). Sripada argues that the mind is bifurcated into two motivational systems that correspond to *Emotion* and *Reason*. The outputs of these two systems can conflict and, when they do, we need to exercise self-control in order to act in accordance with reason. To exercise self-control, the reasoning system engages

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[1] There is now a substantial body of empirical literature whose findings corroborate the idea that our capacity for self-control plays a decisive role in determining our ability to meet and maintain desired life-goals, whether they be academic, financial, or health related (Duckworth & Seligman 2005; Mischel, Shoda & Rodriquez 1989; Moffitt et al. 2011).

[2] Levy's (2011) divided-mind model is technically focused on weakness of the will or *akrasia* rather than self-control. While some (e.g. Mele 1987) claim that self-control and akrasia are opposing sides of the same coin, others (e.g. Holton 1999, 2003) claim that it is "strength of will" that stands in opposition to weakness of will. As my focus is exclusively on self-control, I will bracket the issue of its relation to akrasia or weakness of the will.

a system of executive processes that are capable of reining in the passions, even if they are stronger than our desire to act in accord with reason.

I will develop two objections against Sripada's model. First, I will argue that it mischaracterizes the nature of emotions in assuming that emotions are typically *recalcitrant*, that reason and practical-judgments cannot shape or alter an emotion once elicited. Second, I will argue that, in defining self-control problems in terms of conflict between *Emotion* and *Reason*, Sripada's model fails to capture a large portion of cases in which the motivational conflict is not between emotion and reason, but rather is between conflicting emotions or even conflicting higher-order cognitive processes. Based on these arguments, I conclude that we should abandon the idea that a "divided-mind" is at the heart of understanding the capacity for self-control. I then consider whether Kentaro Fujita's recently developed structural model of self-control is a promising alternative to dual-process based accounts, arguing that, while it solves some of the problems facing divided-mind accounts, it cannot make sense of the capacity for self-control. In light of the problems facing both Sripada Fujita's models, I outline a series of desiderata that future attempts to understand self-control should aim to meet.

I first provide an overview of Sripada's model and the relevant philosophical problems motivating his theory (Section 2). After this groundwork is in place, I will develop my first objection that emotions are not recalcitrant, and consider the implications of the cognitive penetrability of emotions. I then raise my second objection, that self-control conflicts do not necessarily involve a conflict between emotion and reason (Section 3). I then proceed to argue that we should shift our way of conceptualizing self-control away from divided-mind models and consider the viability of Fujita's alternative understanding of self-control (Section 4). Finally, I conclude by outlining three desiderata for future models of self-control (Section 5).

2   SRIPADA'S SOLUTION TO THE PUZZLE OF SELF-CONTROL

In an attempt to home in on the ways in which people may exercise self-control, philosophers have differentiated between two broad classes of self-control, which they call *synchronic* and *diachronic* self-control (Kennett & Smith 1997; Sripada 2012; Mele 2014). To illustrate the distinction, imagine the following scenarios:[3]

> *Scenario (1)*: Theresa, a long-time smoker who is trying to quit, is at the bar with her friend Dave, who offers Theresa a cigarette. Theresa has a strong craving to smoke but judges that, all-things-considered, she should not smoke the cigarette. Theresa exercises self-control to act in accordance with her judgment and does not accept the smoke.
>
> *Scenario (2)*: Theresa*, a long-time smoker who is trying to quit, does not currently have a craving for a cigarette but knows that if she were to pass by a smoke shop that she would develop a strong craving to smoke and would likely be overwhelmed by it. As such, on her way home from work, Theresa* takes a route home that does not pass by the shop where she used to buy cigarettes.

The general consensus in the literature is that both Theresa and Theresa* exercise self-control, albeit different types of self-control. In *Scenario (1)*, Theresa must resolve an *occurrent* motivational conflict. At the same time, Theresa is motivated both by her craving to smoke a cigarette and by her judgment not to smoke, but manages to resist her craving and act on her judgment not to smoke. This is an instance of *synchronic* self-control. In Scenario (2), Theresa* is anticipating a motivational conflict. Theresa* anticipates that, if she were in the position to easily buy cigarettes, that she would be overwhelmed by a craving to smoke and would likely give into that craving. In taking measures to prevent such a sequence of events from happening, Theresa*

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[3] These scenarios are inspired by other examples of synchronic and diachronic self-control previously developed by Jeannette Kennett and Michael Smith (1996, 1997), Al Mele (1997, 1998, 2014), and Chandra Sripada (2012).

exercises *diachronic* self-control. The difference, then, between these two types of self-control has to do with whether the agent exercises self-control to resolve a motivational conflict she is currently experiencing – *synchronic* self-control – or if she exercises self-control to resolve an anticipated, future motivational conflict – *diachronic* self-control.

In what follows, my primary focus will be on *synchronic* self-control, as it is this type of self-control that Sripada is attempting to model (hereafter, I will drop the qualifier and will refer to '*synchronic* self-control' simply as 'self-control').[4] While it may seem obvious that people are capable of exercising self-control, some philosophers have found the exercise of self-control puzzling. The starting point for the puzzle, as identified and framed by Alfred Mele (1987), is the relationship between desire and intentional action[5] which is expressed in the 'Law of Desire' (Clarke, 1994; Davidson, 1980) stated below:

> If a person most desires to perform some action A, and if she believes herself free to A, then she will A, if she does anything at all intentionally.[6]

Given the Law of Desire, Mele notes that the exercise of self-control appears to either be impossible or unnecessary. If Theresa most desires to smoke, and believes herself free to smoke, then she will smoke if she does anything at all intentionally. In this case, then, it does not seem possible for Theresa to intentionally exercise self-control. If, however, Theresa most desires to not smoke and believes herself free to not smoke, then – given the Law of Desire – she will not smoke and, thus, will not need to exercise self-control.

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[4] The reader should be aware that, unless otherwise noted, the following discussion is referring exclusively to synchronic self-control and not diachronic self-control.

[5] Sripada does not explicitly adopt any particular theory of intentional action.

[6] This particular formulation of the Law of Desire comes from Davidson (1980). Both Sripada (2012) and Mele (2003, 2014) note that this formulation of the Law of Desire is false. For instance, Mele writes "a soccer player who most desires to score a goal on his penalty kick and believes himself free to do so may intentionally kick the ball and unintentionally kick it too far to the right" (Mele 2014, 363). Despite such counter-examples, Sripada claims that, even though it is false, "the principle provides a useful starting point for discussion" (2012, fn. 1)

How can we explain why self-control is both possible and necessary in many cases? In this paper, I will consider Chandra Sripada's (2012) proposed solution, which is based on a dual-process model of self-control. Generally speaking, dual-process models posit that the brain is capable of processing information in – at least – two qualitatively different ways (e.g. fast, low effort, and high processing capacity vs. slow, high effort, and "limited" processing capacity) and that these two types of information processing map onto different systems in the brain (Evans 2007, 2010; Kahneman 2011; Stanovich 2004, 2011).[7]

On Sripada's model, as mentioned above, these two systems correspond roughly to the folk notions of *Passion* and *Reason* and he calls them the *Emotional Motivational System* and the *Deliberative Motivational System* (hereafter, simply the emotional system and the deliberative system). Conflict between the outputs of the emotional and deliberative systems define the conditions under which self-control is needed, and acting in accordance with the output of the deliberative system is to successfully exercise self-control. That is, self-control problems are defined exclusively in terms of a motivational conflict between the outputs of the emotional system and the deliberative system. To solve the puzzle of self-control, Sripada argues that there is a third system at play, the *Regulatory System*, that can be engaged by the deliberative system and whose function is to regulate the emotional system.

While past attempts to solve the puzzle of self-control have assumed that the Law of Desire – outlined above – is true (e.g. Kennett & Smith, 1996, 1997; Mele 1997, 1998, 2003), Sripada breaks with this tradition and argues that the Law of Desire is not universally operative. He claims

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[7] For further notable discussions of dual-process and dual-system theory see: Evans (2007a, 2008, 2009); Evans & Frankish (2009); Frankish (2010); Lieberman (2003, 2007); Sloman (1996); Smith & DeCoster (2000); Stanovich (1999); and Stanovich & Toplak (2012). For recent critiques of duel-process theory see: Keren & Schul (2009); Kruglanski & Gigerenzer (2011); Mugg (2016); and Osman (2004).

that there are cases in which a person can act on the weaker of two, conflicting desires. Sripada calls cases in which the Law of Desire does not apply "Full-Blooded Willpower" (hereafter, FBW).

To explicate what Sripada means by FBW, I will first re-state his formal definition and then provide an illustrative example. Sripada defines the conditions for FBW as follows:

(1) During some (arbitrarily long) interval I extending over $t_1…t_n$, $S's$ [practical-desire] is opposed by his wayward desire D to A straightaway, and throughout I, D is $S's$ strongest desire.

(2) At t_2, even while D remains $S's$ strongest desire, S undertakes an active intentional exercise of willpower that prevents him from acting on D.

(3) At no time during I does S perform any actions that promote D, or start to perform any actions that promote D. (Sripada 2012, 10; brackets are mine)

To better illustrate how Sripada envisions FBW, imagine the earlier example with the types of desire now specified:

Scenario (3): Theresa and Dave are at the bar and Dave, always the enabler, offers Theresa a cigarette. Theresa's practical-desire to not smoke the cigarette is opposed by her emotional-desire to smoke. Even though Theresa's strongest desire is her emotional-desire to smoke, she exercises willpower and thus prevents herself from taking any actions that support her emotional-desire.

Sripada's goal, then, is to construct a model of self-control that can account for FBW. In order to understand Sripada's account of FBW it will be necessary to first go into a bit more detail on his model.

Emotional-desires are the primary output of the emotional system. Sripada defines emotions as "triggered responses to certain prototypical sorts of events of concern" to an agent

(2012, 12). In particular, Sripada focuses on two features of emotions, *passivity* and *recalcitrance*. By passivity, Sripada means that emotions are typically triggered "automatically," without any need for "attention or supervision" (2012, 12). For example, if a large animal starts to charge you, then you will likely experience fear automatically, without having to engage in any sort of voluntary or conscious evaluation of the situation. By recalcitrance, Sripada means that triggered emotions typically persist, and motivate us to act, even if the agent "has made a sincere judgment that the emotion is not apt or warranted" (2012, 12). A commonly used, illustrative example is a person who has a fear of flying even though she knows that traveling by airplane is safer than by car. That is, even though the person sincerely judges that she should not be afraid, she continues to experience fear.

Practical-desires are the output of the deliberative system. The deliberative system "refers to the collection of processes that implement practical reasoning" (Sripada 2012, 11). Practical reasoning or deliberation can be understood in two ways. The first is when a person runs through reasons for and against performing some action. For example, if you are deciding whether to buy a particular house, you would likely weigh reasons for and against the purchase. The second is when a person has a desired outcome and evaluates the probability of achieving that outcome given a set of possible actions.

Emotional-desires and practical-desires are what Sripada, following Mele (2003), calls *action-desires*. Action-desires are a type of "essentially motivation-encompassing attitude" which Sripada defines as follows: "[Person] S's essentially motivation-encompassing A attitude is…an attitude that represents S's A-ing as part of its content, and that non-deviantly contributes to S's A-ing in all possible scenarios in which S has this attitude" (2012, 34; brackets are mine). Having such attitudes increases the probability that a person will perform the action that is represented by

that attitude. Or, to put it differently, a satisfactory causal explanation of why person S intentionally performed action A could appeal to S having a motivation-encompassing attitude to A as a proximate cause. For example, the first thing Matt does every morning is go for a run. In order to explain why Matt performs this action (i.e. going for a run), one could say that Matt has an essentially motivation-encompassing attitude, in this case an action-desire, that represents Matt going for a run as part of its content and contributes to Matt's going for a run every time he has that action-desire.

Thus far, I have given an overview of the central tenet of Sripada's theory, namely, that the mind is bifurcated into two, separate motivational systems. Sripada views his use of dual-process theory in constructing his model of self-control as an argument in favor of his view and writes:

> An…argument in favor of the divided mind account of willpower is that the divided motivational architecture being proposed is an instance of a more general kind of architecture, called a dual-process architecture, that is now well accepted across many domains in cognitive science. It thus helps the divided mind approach that it has empirical support that arises independently of its being adduced as a solution to the puzzle of synchronic self-control. (Sripada 2012, 31)

Before I turn to outlining how Sripada uses the divided-mind model to solve of puzzle of self-control, however, I need to discuss the notion of strength of desire.

Sripada begins to flesh out the idea of strength of desire by claiming that "desires are *dispositions to act*" and that what determines the extent to which a person is disposed to act in a particular way is determined by the *motivational strength* of that desire (Sripada, 2012, 18).

Sripada relies on two concepts, "motivational-bases" (see Mele 2003) and "causal-powers," to explicate the notion of motivational strength.

The motivational-base for an attitude, an action-desire in our case, can be *positive* or *negative*. Sripada defines the positive motivational-base of an attitude *A* as "the set of motivation-encompassing attitudes that contribute to the motivational strength of *A*" (2012, 13). For example, Matt's desire to go for a run is *strengthened* by his practical judgment that running is good for his health. Conversely, Sripada defines the negative motivational-base of an attitude *A* as "the set of motivation encompassing attitudes that weaken the motivational strength of *A*" (2012, 13). For example, Matt's desire to go for a run is *weakened* by his practical judgment that excessive running is bad for his joints. For any given action-desire, the larger the positive motivational-base relative to the negative motivational-base, the stronger the person's action-desire. Importantly, Sripada claims that the motivational-bases for the outputs of the deliberative system and the emotional system are separate. That is, the motivation-encompassing attitudes of the emotional system neither strengthen nor weaken the motivation-encompassing attitudes of the deliberative system and *vice versa*. For example, Matt's emotional-desire to stay in bed is not weakened by the practical judgment that running is good for his health.

The idea of motivational-bases helps to explain the notion of a desire's strength but it does not explain the relationship between strength of desire and action. In order to explain this latter relationship, Sripada employs the idea of "causal-powers." Desires, according to Sripada, have causal powers. The stronger the desire, which is determined by the strength of its motivational base as outlined above, the stronger its causal-powers and the more disposed a person is to act on that desire. The causal-powers of a desire dispose us to act via both *direct* and *indirect* routes

(2012, 18). On the direct route, desires dispose us to act through affecting action selection and production systems. Sripada writes:

> For example, on one plausible and empirically well-supported view, desires are associated with number-like representations that induce an ordering over the relevant set of active desires, and action systems are configured to favor as inputs desires associated with the highest numbers. (Sripada 2012, 18)

On the indirect route, desires dispose us to act through drawing "one's attention towards desire-relevant situations and prospects," and enhancing "certain hedonic attributes of prospects, such as their expected pleasure, pleasantness, or appeal" (Sripada 2012, 18). Returning to the example of Matt, the stronger the causal-powers of Matt's desire to go for a run the more this desire will grab his attention or enhance the appeal of going for a run and, as a result, the more likely Matt will be disposed to go for a run. Sripada labels the causal-powers of emotional-desires and practical-desires as "D-powers" (2012, 20).

Carving out separate motivational systems in the mind can make sense of the idea of conflicting desires. That is, since the emotional system and the deliberative system operate independently and rely on different types of information processing, their outputs can diverge without causing internal consistencies within either system. However, this bifurcation of the mind, on its own, does not explain how FBW is possible. Given the Law of Desire, it seems as if a person will act on whichever output, either the emotional-desire or the practical-desire, is stronger.

In order to model FBW, Sripada posits a third system, which he calls the regulatory system. The regulatory system is separate from both the emotional and deliberative systems and has its own causal powers which Sripada labels "R-powers" (2012, 19).[8] The R-powers of the regulatory

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[8] Sripada's understanding of the strength of the R-powers is, at least in part, derived from the strength (or resource) model of self-control developed by Roy Baumeister and colleagues (Baumeister, 2014; Baumeister, Vohs, & Tice 2007;

system are comprised of the "mental processes that serve to regulate (i.e., attenuate, suppress, block, or otherwise modify the motivational properties of) one's own desires and other motivation-encompassing attitudes" (Sripada, 2012, 3). More specifically, these processes make up the category of emotion regulation and can be divided into antecedent- and response-focused strategies. The former "alter the appraisal or interpretation of the environmental cues that elicit or sustain the wayward desire" while the latter "involve either direct inhibition of motivation or the prevention of action" (Sripada 2012, 3).[9] Importantly, while the emotional, deliberative and regulatory systems are separate from one another, the D-powers of the deliberative system (but not the emotional system) can actively initiate the R-powers of the regulatory system, which, in turn, can regulate the outputs of the emotional system (Sripada (2012, 13) calls this "Thesis (M)"). The relationship among these systems is outlined in *Figure 1* below.

Baumeister et al. 1998; Gailliot & Baumeister 2007; Masicampo & Baumeister 2008). On this model, self-regulatory processes, of which willpower is a sub-type, draw on a central resource of limited capacity. The central tenant of this model is that, when an agent exercises self-control, some of this limited resource is "consumed," leaving the agent in an "ego-depleted" state in which she is less likely to be able to successfully exercise self-control. For recent critiques of the strength model of self-control, see: Inzlicht & Berkman (2015); Lange & Eggert (2014); Job, Walton, Bernecker & Dweck (2013); Beedie & Lane (2012); Shinmack, (2012); Kurzban (2010, 2014)

[9] Emotion regulation, in particular the process of *re-appraisal*, will be discussed in more detail in Section 3.1.
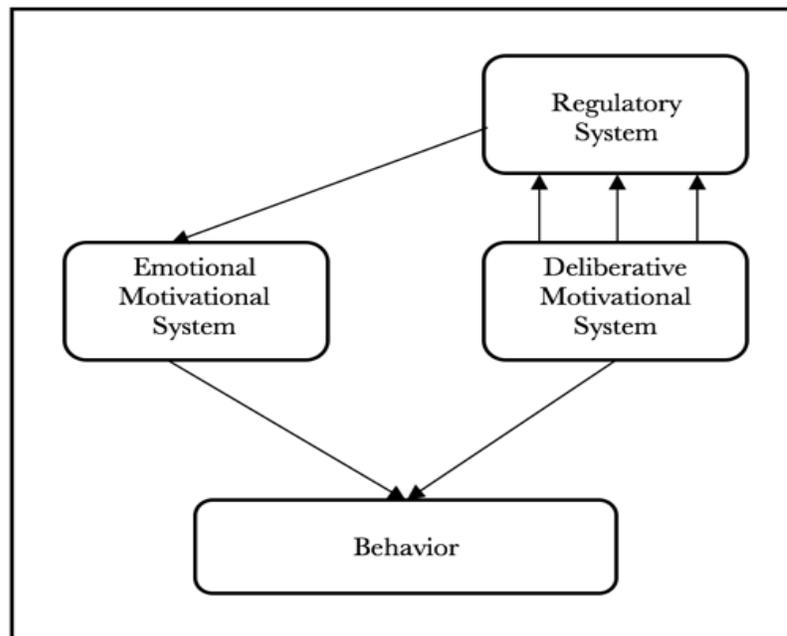
Figure 1. *Sripada's Divided-Mind Model of Self-Control*
This figure outlines the proposed relationship between the emotional, deliberative, and regulatory systems. As shown, the outputs of both the emotional and deliberative systems can directly lead to behavior. In cases where the outputs of the emotional and deliberative systems are in conflict, however, the deliberative system can engage the regulatory system which can regulate the output of the emotional system.

Now that we have discussed all the components of Sripada's solution to the puzzle of self-control, let us apply them to an example. Matt's emotional-desire to stay in bed is stronger than his practical-desire to go for a run. Even though Matt's practical-desire is weaker than his emotional-desire, it is the strongest desire within his deliberative system. Therefore, this practical-desire can initiate the R-powers of the regulatory system which can then regulate (e.g. attenuate) the strength of his emotional-desire. As such, Matt is able to act on his weaker practical-desire rather than his stronger emotional-desire. What does this mean for the Law of Desire? Sripada writes:

Overall then, the Law of Desire is not shown to be false, but rather its domain is restricted. In the type of contest between desires that interests us, i.e., contests involving the exercise of willpower, the Law of Desire fails to apply. (Sripada 2012, 22)

That is, in cases where a person's practical-desire, even if it is weaker than their emotional-desire, actionally initiates the regulatory system, it is possible, contrary to the Law of Desire, for that person to intentionally act contrary to their strongest-desire. Why then, does Sripada say that the Law of Desire is *not* false? The Law of Desire is not false because it still applies *within* both the emotional and deliberative systems and in cases where the regulatory system is not engaged.

In sum, Sripada is arguing that self-control involves a conflict between *emotion* and *reason*. Even though our emotions may sometimes be stronger than desire to do what reason dictates, we are still capable of acting in accordance with reason, of exercising self-control. The fundamental reason why we are capable of exercising self-control in this way is because our minds are divided.

3   TWO OBJECTIONS TO SRIPADA'S MODEL OF SELF-CONTROL

In this section, I develop two objections to the role emotions play in Sripada's model, the conclusion being that Sripada has not solved the puzzle of self-control and we should look to other models to approach the puzzle.[10] First, Sripada's solution hinges on the three-fold division among the emotional, deliberative, and regulatory systems, a division, I argue, that is only justified if emotions are recalcitrant to reason, that is, if emotions cannot be *directly* influenced by the deliberative system. I then proceed to argue that emotions are not typically recalcitrant to reason, that the deliberative system can directly influence emotions and emotional-desires, thereby challenging Sripada's solution to the puzzle of self-control. Second, I argue that synchronic self-control is not always about regulating our emotions, that there are genuine instances of synchronic self-control in which the motivational conflict is not between *emotion* and *reason*. If I am right, then Sripada's model fails to explain how we exercise self-control in these other cases, as his model is based on the assumption that exercising self-control is about taming our emotions and the behavior they motivate.

3.1   Are Emotions Truly Recalcitrant to Reason?

As I emphasized at the conclusion of Section 2, whether Sripada's model is a viable solution to the puzzle of self-control rests on the three-fold division he draws between the emotional, deliberative, and regulatory systems; if these divisions are unjustified, his solution falls apart. Claiming that emotions are *typically* recalcitrant is a way to justify carving the mind into these

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[10] In Section 4, I consider whether Kentaro Fujita's structural model of self-control is a viable alternative.

separate systems.[11] To illustrate the justificatory role recalcitrance plays on this model, consider the following example:

> *Scenario (4):* While Susan is waiting to board a plane, she stumbles upon a news article recounting a recent plane crash. When it is time for her group to board, Susan feels afraid, resulting in a strong desire not to board the plane. She then begins to deliberate as to what she should do, considering reasons for and against boarding the plane. The process of deliberation culminates in the practical-judgment that she should not be afraid, that she should exercise self-control and board her flight. Susan successfully exercises self-control and boards the airplane.

To use Sripada's language, Susan has an emotional-desire not to board the plane (i.e. a fear of flying; the output of the emotional system) and a practical-judgment that she should board the plane (the output of the deliberative system), which results in Susan successfully exercising self-control and boarding the plane (via the processes of the regulatory system which attenuate, suppress or modify her emotional-desire).

If Susan's fear or emotional-desire not to board the plane is recalcitrant, then the process of deliberation, culminating in the judgment that she should board the plane, cannot influence (i.e. attenuate, suppress etc.) the motivational-strength of her fear. Why does this matter? First, if the processes and output of the deliberative system cannot influence the output of the emotional system, then this provides some evidence for Sripada's claim that they are *separate* systems.[12] Second, and perhaps more importantly, Sripada needs to draw a principled distinction between the

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[11] The question is not whether emotions can be recalcitrant but whether they are *typically* recalcitrant. Sripada could easily maintain that emotions are *typically* recalcitrant and accept that there are instances where emotions fail to exhibit this feature. Likewise, while I will argue that emotions are not *typically* recalcitrant, I am not denying that emotions are ever recalcitrant, the most notable case being phobias.

[12] Importantly, however, even if emotions are recalcitrant, this does not show that they cannot influence the processes and output of the deliberative system. That is, recalcitrance only provides some evidence that the deliberative system cannot influence the emotional system and not *vice versa*.

deliberative system and the regulatory system in order to solve the puzzle of self-control. That is, if the regulatory and deliberative systems are not separate, then we may argue that the causal-powers of the deliberative and regulatory systems should be considered together. And, when we look at the combined causal-powers of these two systems, they are actually stronger than the causal-powers of the emotional-desire. In that case, when a person exercises self-control, they are simply acting on their strongest desire and the Law of Desires applies once more. To illustrate, when we look at the combined causal-powers of Susan's practical-desire and the processes of the regulatory system, they are stronger than her emotional-desire to not board the plane. In boarding the plane then, Susan is simply acting on her strongest desire.

What does recalcitrance have to do with the present discussion? If emotions are recalcitrant to deliberation and practical-judgments then Sripada has a principled way to distinguish the processes of the regulatory system, which are capable of influencing the strength of our emotions, from those of the deliberative system. That is, it is a way to justify the distinction between these two systems. If emotions are not recalcitrant, however, then the processes and output of the deliberative system can directly influence the motivational properties of emotions, thereby doing the job that the regulatory system is supposed to perform on Sripada's model. And, if the processes and output of the deliberative system can do what the regulatory system is supposed to do, then it seems as if the causal-powers of the deliberative and regulatory systems should be combined, thereby vindicating the Law of Desire. In sum, recalcitrance supports both the division between the emotional system and the deliberative system and between the deliberative system and the regulatory system. Emotions, however, are not typically recalcitrant. To make this argument I will have to say a bit more about the elicitation of emotions as well as the mental processes involved in emotion-regulation (i.e. the regulatory processes on Sripada's model).

A dominant view in the scientific literature is that emotion episodes, which are taken to include physiological, phenomenological, motivational, and behavioral components, are elicited by an "*appraisal*" of a given object, event or state of affairs (e.g. Arnold 1960; Clore & Ortony 2000; Ellsworth 2013; Frijda 1986, 2001, 2007; Lazarus 1991, 2001; Scherer 1984, 2001, 2009, 2013; Smith & Ellsworth 1985). The project of defining what is meant by "appraisal" is ongoing, but it is roughly taken to refer to "a process that detects and assesses the significance of the environment for well-being" (Moors et al. 2013, 120) or "an evaluation of the personal significance of what is happening in an encounter with the environment" (Lazarus 2001, 40). While the details of appraisal theories vary, they all involve a number of variables along which appraisals are made and which also serve to differentiate among types of emotions (Moors et al. 2013, 120). A few examples of appraisal variables, from Lazarus' (2001) appraisal theory, include "*goal-relevance*," whether the event is relevant to the person's well-being, "*goal-congruence*," whether the event assists or frustrates a person's desires or needs, and "*future expectations,*" whether the person's relationship to the environment will be improved or worsened (Lazarus 2001, 55-57; Moors et al. 2013, 120). Different appraisals, then, result in different emotions. The last aspect of emotion elicitation to highlight before turning to emotion-regulation is the mechanism underlying the process of appraisal. Again, the details vary among theories, but Moors writes:

> Appraisal theorist generally agree that various mechanisms can underlie appraisal and that they can operate on a wide range of representations: conceptual and/or propositional versus perceptual and/or embodied; symbolic versus sub-symbolic; locationist versus distributed. They believe that appraisal often proceeds automatically…but can also sometimes proceed non-automatically. (Moors et al. 2013, 120)

That is, while an appraisal can be a conscious, non-automatic process, usually it is an automatic process that does not require conscious awareness. Importantly for the present purposes, Sripada adopts some version of appraisal theory and writes "the appraisal process by which an emotion is triggered typically unfolds automatically, and does not require conscious attention or supervision" (Sripada 2012, 12). Though Sripada does not go into greater detail, it is clear that he views emotions as being elicited by an appraisal.

Now that I have homed in on the view of emotion elicitation under discussion, I want to say a bit more about emotion-regulation, which "refers to shaping which emotions one has, when one has them, and how one experiences or expresses these emotions" (Gross 2014, 10). James Gross (1998, 2014) discusses different families of emotion regulation strategies which intervene on different points in an emotions episode. The emotion regulation strategy that I want to focus on is "cognitive change," which "refers to modifying how one *appraises* a situation so as to alter its emotional significance, either by changing how one thinks about a situation or about one's capacity to manage the demands it poses" (Gross 2014, 10; italics are mine).[13] One type of cognitive change strategy is *reappraisal*, in which a person tries to alter the way they interpret a given object or situation that is eliciting an emotion.

To illustrate, let us return to the example of Susan who is afraid of flying and has an emotional-desire not to board the plane. In support of her practical-desire to board the plane, Susan exercises self-control and let us suppose that the willpower strategy Susan employs is reappraisal, in which she changes how she interprets flying in an airplane. As a result of reappraising the situation, the motivational-strength of Susan's fear dissipates.

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[13] The other emotion-regulation strategies are as follows: situation selection, situation modification, attentional deployment, and response modification (Gross 2014, 10). The first two, situation selection and situation modification, are involved in exercises of diachronic rather than self-control.

Sripada views reappraisal as an effective form of emotion-regulation, that is, a process whereby the motivational strength of an emotional-desire may be weakened. The problem, however, is that Sripada both accepts that emotion regulation strategies such as reappraisal can alter the motivational strength of emotions and wants to maintain that emotions are recalcitrant to reason. Such a position is not viable, since the process of deliberation, generating reasons for or against some course of action is simply to reappraise one's initial response to the situation. If reappraisal can alter the motivational-strength of emotional-desires, then the process of reasoning and deliberation should also be able to do so, because the process of generating reasons – the culmination of which is a practical-judgment – appears to be functionally the same as reappraising a situation so as to determine the appropriate emotional response. And, if it is the case that the process of reasoning and deliberation can influence the motivational properties of emotions, then emotions, contra Sripada, are not recalcitrant to reason.

To illustrate, let us once more return to the example of Susan. Now, however, I want to focus on the process of reasoning or deliberation whereby Susan comes to the practical-judgment that she should board the plane. In coming to this practical-judgment, Susan considers a number reasons, which include that flying is comparatively much safer than other forms of transportation, such as driving a car and that the flight is not a threat to her well-being but is simply the means whereby she is arriving at her vacation destination. In generating the reasons that support the practical-judgment that she should board the plane, Susan is *reappraising* her initial emotional response. If Sripada accepts that reappraisal is a process whereby we can attenuate the strength of an emotional-desire, then he must also accept that emotions are not recalcitrant, that the process of reasoning and deliberation can directly influence the motivational properties of emotions.

Now that my argument is on the table, I want to remind the reader of the implications that follow if emotions are cognitively penetrable. First, if the process of deliberation can directly influence the motivational properties of emotions, then the idea that the deliberative and emotional systems are separate is called into question. The deliberative system can *directly* influence the emotional system rather than simply being able to *indirectly* influence the emotional system through engaging the regulatory system, as Sripada claims. Second, the cognitive penetrability of emotions challenges the idea that the deliberative and regulatory systems are separate. If they are not separate, then the causal powers of the regulatory processes should be incorporated into the causal powers of the deliberative system. And, if we combine these causal powers, Sripada's model no longer solves the puzzle of self-control. Whether or not we act on our emotional-desire or our practical-desire will be determined by whichever of these two desires is strongest.

3.2 Is Self-Control Always About Taming One's Emotions?

I concluded the preceding section by arguing that paradigm emotions are not typically recalcitrant, that the process of reasoning or deliberation directly influences the motivational properties of emotions. Now I will argue that self-control is not always about taming one's emotions. To make this point, I will first argue that emotions can motivate exercises of self-control. I will then argue that we sometimes exercise self-control to resist desires that are not driven by emotions.

On Sripada's divided-mind model, emotions play a single role in self-control problems; they motivate actions we struggle to resist. The strength of the emotional-desire certainly influences whether an exercise of self-control will succeed (i.e. the stronger the emotional-desire,

the less likely self-control will be successful and *vice versa*)[14], but emotions can never directly motivate an exercise of self-control. Sripada calls this Thesis (M) and spells it out as follows:

(M) The motivational base, both positive and negative, for the exercise of willpower consists exclusively of motivation-encompassing attitudes within the deliberative motivational system. (Sripada 2012, 13)

What Thesis (M) prohibits is that any motivation-encompassing attitude within the emotional system (i.e. emotions, drives and cravings) play a direct role in engaging the regulatory system; emotions neither strengthen nor weaken the motivational strength of a practical-desire to exercise self-control. As with recalcitrance, discussed above, Thesis (M) is intended to preserve the division that Sripada draws between the emotional and deliberative systems and upon which his solution to the puzzle of self-control rests.

I will argue that thesis (M), however, is false. Emotions can motivate the exercise of self-control. To use Sripada's terminology, emotions can be part of the motivational-base for the practical-desire to exercise self-control. Consider the following:

Scenario (5): Mercer and John have been in a monogamous relationship for years and take their sexuality fidelity very seriously. Recently, Mercer has been spending a great deal of time with her business partner and good friend Sam and, while traveling for work, finds herself alone in a hotel bar with him. At that moment, Mercer greatly desires Sam and the thought of cheating on John enters her mind. Considering what to do, Mercer generates reasons for and against sleeping with Sam, most of which are in favor of the act: John would never find out, it would only be once, she has never cheated on him before etc. While the majority of reasons are in favor of sleeping with Sam, Mercer starts to feel very guilty

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[14] For a fuller treatment of how Sripada (2012) thinks emotions influence whether or not an exercise of self-control will be successful, see pg. 14-15.

at the thought of cheating on her partner. This sense of guilt is so strong that Mercer comes

to the practical-judgment that she should not sleep with Sam. Mercer exercises self-control,

says goodnight, and heads to her room alone.

Mercer is resisting an emotional-desire, the desire or, perhaps, drive to sleep with Sam. The

conflicting motivation, however, cannot be characterized as being based purely on "reasons," since

it seems to be driven by an emotion, namely, guilt. The guilt that Mercer feels is part of the positive

motivational-base in her deliberative system; it is one of the motivational attitudes, even the

primary motivational attitude, that supports the exercise of self-control which, in this case, happens

to be successful.

Is such a scenario plausible? Yes. While the idea that emotions can contribute positively to

exercises of self-control has not been extensively explored in the empirical literature, some have

suggested that certain social or self-conscious emotions, such as guilt or regret, may contribute

positively to exercises of self-control (Baumeister et al. 2007; DeSterno 2009; Giner-Sorolla 2001;

Katzier et al. 2010).[15] If the scenario above is plausible, however, then there is some reason to

think emotions, or at least certain emotions, can help rather than hinder our capacity to exercise

self-control.[16] If this is indeed the case, then Thesis (M) – which, again, claims that emotions

cannot directly influence whether or not we exercise of self-control – appears to be false.

Before moving on I want to consider two objections. First, it could be objected that, in the

scenario above, guilt is not part of the motivational-base for Mercer's practical-judgment that she

should not sleep with Sam but, rather, is still part of the motivational-base for her emotional-desire

to sleep with Sam. The argument would be cashed out as follows: The motivational-base for a

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[15] The evidence, however, is mixed. Some previous empirical work has suggested that self-conscious emotions play a disinhibitory role (Herman & Mack 1975; Polivy et al. 1988)

[16] Fujita et al. (2016) also cite the empirical literature suggesting that emotions can sometimes be beneficial for the exercise of self-control. I will address their treatment of this literature in Section 4.

desire, at least on Sripada's account, is both *positive* and *negative*. There are some motivation-encompassing attitudes that can *strengthen* the desire – these form the *positive* motivational base for that desire – while there are other motivation-encompassing attitudes that *weaken* the desire – these form the *negativ*e motivational-base for that desire. Returning to the scenario, guilt is not part of the positive motivational-base for the practical-judgment that sleeping with Sam is *not* the thing to do – which then motivates the exercise of self-control. Rather, guilt is part of the negative motivational-base for the emotional-desire to sleep with Sam. That is, these emotions are weakening the emotional-desire to sleep with Sam rather than strengthening the practical-desire not to sleep with Sam and to exercise self-control. In this sense, guilt is making a successful exercise of self-control more likely, but Sripada's theory does not rule out the possibility of emotions playing this role; he explicitly states that the weaker the emotional-desire the more likely we are to successfully exercise self-control. And, more importantly, emotions can play this role and not contradict Thesis (M).

Such a defense on behalf of Thesis (M) seems implausible. First, Sripada does explain how there are both positive and negative motivational-bases for emotional-desires as he does for practical-judgments. For the latter, he claims that reasons in favor of some action comprise the positive motivational-base while reasons not in favor of some action form the negative motivational base for the practical-judgment. How does this process work for emotional-desires? The answer is unclear. Presumably, it would require an account of how emotions, drives and cravings impact, both positively and negatively, the strength of an emotional-desire. Sripada does not offer such an account. Of course, this does not rule out the possibility of constructing a theory of how emotions, drives and cravings impact the strength of an emotional-desire in some way, but it does give us some reason to question the plausibility of the response outlined above. That is,

responding that guilt is part of the negative motivational base for an emotional-desire does not straightforwardly save Thesis (M).

Second, in the current formulation of the scenario, most of the reasons that Mercer considers as to whether she should indeed sleep with Sam are actually in favor of the act. That is, either because her reasoning is being motivated by her lust for Sam or because there just happen to be very good reasons to sleep with Sam, most of the reasons that immediately come to mind support the act. Rather than being implausible, the idea that Mercer would generate reasons in favor of her emotional-desire is empirically well supported. That is, in self-control dilemmas, and instances of self-regulation more generally, people will often generate reasons that are in favor of acting on their emotional-desire or come up with external justifications for this choice (Huberts et al. 2014; Kivetz & Zheng 2006; Weber et al. 2007). It seems plausible, then, that Mercer may think of more reasons that are in favor of sleeping with Sam than are in favor of not sleeping with Sam, as is stated in the scenario. If Mercer generates more reasons for, rather than against, sleeping with Sam, then we can say that the negative motivational base outweighs the positive motivational base supporting the practical-judgment that she should not sleep with Sam, in the sense that there are more reasons in favor of the act. Guilt, then, cannot be part of the negative motivational-base of her emotional-desire. If guilt were part of the negative motivational-base of her emotional desire, then there would not be sufficient motivation for the exercise of self-control. In the present case, as Mercer generates more reasons in favor of sleeping with Sam, the result should be the practical-judgment that sleeping with Sam is the thing to do; some other motivation-encompassing attitude is needed to make Mercer's positive motivational base stronger than her negative motivational base. That is, guilt must be motivating the practical-judgment otherwise Mercer would not be sufficiently motivated to attempt an exercise self-control. It seems plausible, however, that Mercer

would try to exercise self-control and, as stated, even succeeds. As such, the claim that these emotions are simply weakening her desire to have sex with Sam rather than motivating the exercise of self-control is not a viable option.

A second objection that could be raised has to do with the specific types of emotions that are motivating the conflict in this scenario. Sripada could amend his position slightly and differentiate among the classes of emotions, arguing that some are the outputs of the emotional system which others are the outputs of the deliberative system. For instance, he may suggest that the so-called "basic emotions," which often include happiness, fear, anger, surprise, disgust, and sadness (Ekman 1992), are the output of the emotional system while other, more "complex" emotions, such as pride, guilt, or shame, are the output of the deliberative system. Furthermore, in support of this idea, Sripada could draw on recent dual-process accounts which posit a division along these lines (Evans 2010). In light of this slight amendment to his theory, Sripada could then posit a modified version of Thesis (M):

> (M*) The motivational base, both positive and negative, for the exercise of willpower consists exclusively of motivation-encompassing attitudes within the deliberative motivational system, which includes reasons, practical-judgments and certain emotions such as pride, guilt, shame and regret.

With Thesis (M*) in hand, Sripada could still maintain that there is a motivational division between the emotional and deliberative systems and that certain emotions, such as anger or fear, cannot motivate the exercise of self-control. Other emotions, however, such as guilt, could motivate the exercise of self-control without contradicting Thesis (M*).

Even if we assume that the class of emotions can be divided along the lines suggested above, such a modification does not save Sripada's model. There are two reasons for this. First,

the emotions that Sripada would likely argue are the output of the deliberative system (i.e. pride, shame guilt etc.), and thus capable of being part of the motivational base for an exercise of self-control, also seem to be capable of motivating behavior that we need to exercise self-control in order to overcome. Consider the following:

> *Scenario (6):* Paulina has been spreading a nasty rumor, which she believed to be true, about her co-worker Rose throughout the office. It turns out, however, that the rumor was false and, over the weekend, Paulina comes to the conclusion that she should apologize to Rose. At work on Monday, Paulina sees Rose in the breakroom and realizes this would be as good a time as any to apologize for her behavior. At that moment, however, Paulina doesn't want to admit she was wrong; she is a very proud person and the thought of going up to Rose and asking for forgiveness seems too humiliating. While her pride is motivating her to just walk away, Paulina exercises self-control, overcomes her pride and apologizes to Rose.

In this scenario, Paulina exercises self-control to overcome her pride and apologize to Rose. While, as mentioned above, there is some evidence that pride may, in instances, aid an exercise of self-control, it also seems that it is capable of motivating behavior that needs to be controlled. The implication being that Thesis (M*) also appears to be false. That is, an attempt to preserve the motivational division by bifurcating the class of emotions into two groups, those that are bad for self-control and those that are good for self-control, fails. Of course, Sripada could respond by shuffling around the division between these two groups of emotions, this time placing pride within the emotional system. Such an approach, however, will not work; similar scenarios can likely be constructed for all of the more "complex" emotions mentioned above.

Furthermore, there are cases in which those emotions thought to be "basic" also motivate an exercise of self-control. Consider anger, an emotion that is typically included among the basic emotions:

> *Scenario (7):* Helen is walking home one evening when she sees a group of teenagers tormenting a stray dog. Afraid that they may turn their attention to her, Helen is about to move to the other side of the street. Before she does so, however, she turns and looks again at the poor dog once more and is suddenly angry at the kids for abusing the dog and at herself for not stepping in. Motivated by this anger, Helen judges that she should intervene. While she is still very much afraid, Helen exercises self-control and approaches the group of teenagers to tell them to stop.

The motivational conflict here is, again, between two emotions. Fear is motivating Helen to run away while anger is motivating Helen to intervene. Anger, as mentioned above, is a prototypical basic emotion and, as such, would presumably belong to the emotional system on Sripada's modified account. While anger can certainly motivate behavior we need to inhibit it also, as in this scenario, seems able to motivate us to exercise self-control.

If I am right, then Thesis (M*), the modified version of Sripada's original claim that emotions cannot motivate the exercise of self-control, is also false. That is, it doesn't seem possible to divide the class of emotions into those that only motivate our wayward desires and those that motivate exercises of self-control. The conclusion: Emotions often play the role that the processes and outputs of the deliberative system are supposed to perform on Sripada's model.

All of the cases consider thus far, however, do corroborate one of Sripada's central claims, that self-control is about regulating or inhibiting actions motivated by emotions, drives and cravings. Even though I have argued that emotions play a role in motivating the exercise of self-

control, I have not considered any cases in which we are resisting an action that is not motivated by emotions, drives or cravings. As such, even if Sripada's model cannot explain our capacity for self-control, he is still right insofar as self-control is about resisting emotional-desires.

However, I will conclude this section by suggesting that, contra Sripada, self-control is *not* solely exercised over emotional-desires. To make this argument, I will draw on two recent discussions of self-control by Thomas Connor (2014)[17] and Noa Latham (2016)[18]. Connor is primarily interested in cases where we exercise self-control to overcome a lack of motivation. For instance, he argues that sometimes it takes an exercise of self-control to work up the motivation to drag oneself out of bed on a cold morning to go for a run. Latham is interested in the role self-control plays in regulating our mental actions. In particular, he argues that we oftentimes exercise self-control when practicing two forms of meditation, namely, concentration meditation, in which a person focuses all of their attention on a single object, such as an image or their breathing, and mindfulness meditation in which one pays attention to "whatever mental states occupy the focus of one's consciousness" (Latham 2016). The central ideas that I want to take from both of these treatments are as follows. First, at times the exercise of self-control is not so much about forcing ourselves to *resist* an intense emotion, drive, or craving as it is about forcing ourselves to *perform* some action. Second, the exercise of self-control is sometimes about controlling our higher-order cognitive processes or, more specifically, what we keep at the forefront of our working memory.

Combining these two insights, I believe, generates cases in which the exercise of self-control is not concerned with the regulation of an emotion-driven action. Consider the following:

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[17] Connor (2014) uses these cases to argue that we need to adopt a non-actional account of self-control, along the lines of that originally proposed by Kennett and Smith (1987), in order to solve the puzzle of self-control. While I agree with Connor insofar as he argues that Sripada's divided-mind model cannot explain the exercise of self-control to overcome diminished motivation, I am not following him in arguing for a non-actional account of self-control.

[18] Unlike Connor (2014), Latham is interested in self-control more generally and is neither addressing nor engaging with the literature surrounding the puzzle of self-control.

Scenario (8): Rose is on the subway headed to teach her introductory philosophy class. Though she is usually fully prepared to lecture, as she genuinely enjoys teaching and takes her responsibility to her students very seriously, today is an exception; Rose barely had time to glance at the topic for today's lecture and needs to use the train-ride to construct some examples to use in class. While Rose is sitting there, trying to think through an example, her mind keeps on wandering to other things: She stares out the window at the trees that look so nice this time of year, thinks about her weekend, various menial tasks she has to do this coming week, where to eat for dinner, what to eat for dinner, etc. Knowing that she is not fully prepared for her lecture, however, Rose judges that she should keep her thoughts focused on the task at hand. While it is a struggle to stay focused, Rose is ultimately successful and manages to come up with an illustrative example as the train pulls into the station.

This case is different from the scenarios considered thus far in two respects. First, it involves the regulation of mental-actions rather than overt behavior. Second, it is not plausibly about regulating some emotional-desire but is concerned with keeping focused on a current task. That is, it is appropriate to say that a smoker trying to quit *craves* a cigarette, that a famished person has a *drive* to eat, or that an enraged person in a bar-fight is driven by their *emotions* to drunkenly attack their perceived adversary. It is not appropriate to say that Rose has a *drive* to think about the upcoming weekend, a *craving* to decide between 'Restaurant A' and 'Restaurant B' for dinner, or an *emotion* (e.g. anger, fear, etc.) that is motivating her to stare mindlessly at the trees. Rose is not so much having to resist a particular action as she is having to force herself to perform some action, namely, focus her attention on constructing an example to use in class.

Is Rose exercising self-control? I believe she is. Rose has arrived at the practical-judgment that she should prepare for lecture, which leads to the formation of a practical-desire to perform this action. At the same time, however, Rose is struggling to act in accordance with her practical-desire. While she is not resisting the desire to perform any one action in particular, she is resisting the desire to not focus her attention on a cognitively demanding task. Such a desire is certainly different from the emotional-desires that have been the focus of discussion thus far. On a phenomenological level, it lacks the intensity that is characteristic of emotional-desires, such as craving a cigarette or being motivated to strike someone out of anger. Furthermore, it lacks the specificity of emotional-desires, which tend to be focused on some particular object or performing some particular action. Despite these differences, there still seems to be a motivational conflict that Rose needs to resolve in order to act in accordance with her practical-desire. And, in order to do so, Rose has to exercise self-control. If I am right and Rose has to exercise self-control in order to act in accordance with her practical-desire to prepare for lecture, then, contrary to what Sripada assumes, self-control is *not* always about resisting our emotions, drives and cravings.

In sum, self-control does not necessarily involve a conflict between *emotion* and *reason* as Sripada claims. There are instances in which the motivational conflict is driven by competing emotions and, more tentatively, there may be instances in which emotions play very little role at all.

4   AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH? FUJITA'S STRUCTURL MODEL OF SELF-CONTROL

In the preceding section, I raised two arguments against Sripada's divided-mind solution to the puzzle of self-control: first, that emotions are cognitively penetrable and, second, that self-control is not always about taming our emotions. If my arguments are sound, then Sripada's model is not a viable solution to the puzzle of self-control, because the division between the emotional and deliberative systems, as well as the latter, but not the former's, access to the regulatory system hinges on the assumptions that emotions are recalcitrant and hinder our capacity for self-control. Where do we go from here?

There are, I believe, two options. The first would be to construct a modified, divided-mind model that utilizes a more plausible understanding of emotions and has the flexibility to account for the various roles emotions play in exercises of self-control. Sripada writes:

> It bears emphasis however that the more important point being made in what follows is that dividing the mind into motivational compartments in some way or other is a necessary condition for the existence of full-blooded exertions of willpower. Thus even if the particulars for my own favored account of the divided motivational structure of the mind turn out to be partially or even entirely wrong, the more general point that motivational division is required for full-blooded willpower should nonetheless survive. (Sripada 2012, 11)

In light of my objections in the preceding section, however, such an approach does not seem promising. To reiterate, a divided-mind model in which some emotions help self-control needs to somehow divide the classes of emotions; the same type of emotion cannot both hinder and help the exercise of self-control. Following the dual-process theorist Evans (2010), I considered

whether emotions can plausibly be divided between the self-conscious or social emotions (e.g. guilt, pride) and the basic emotions (e.g. anger, fear), the former helping and the latter hindering the exercise of self-control. Such an approach, however, runs into problems as self-conscious emotions and basic emotions both seem to help and hinder self-control in different circumstances. Sometimes pride may help motivate self-control while, at other times, we have to exercise self-control to overcome our pride. Likewise, sometimes we have to exercise self-control to overcome our anger while, at other times, anger may help motivate self-control. While divided-mind models can say that *some* emotions are good for self-control, they cannot say that the *same* emotion is both sometimes good and sometimes bad for self-control, assuming that the emotion is triggered by the same type of information processing in both cases.

Even if we bracket the issue of the role emotions play in our capacity for self-control, divided-mind models face a number of additional challenges, as Kentaro Fujita and his colleagues (2016) have recently suggested. As I briefly mentioned in the preceding section, engaging in deliberative reasoning (i.e. the deliberative system) is oftentimes used to justify our initial impulse (i.e. emotional desire). Imagine a smoker, who is trying to quit, is offered a cigarette. If she deliberates as to whether she should accept the cigarette or not, it is very likely that she will actually come up reasons for why she should accept the smoke. Fujita writes:

> One reason that people fail at self-control is that they focus first on articulating reasons why they should indulge in temptation, only after which do they articulate reasons why they should not. Due to cognitive interference in memory retrieval, people's ability to engage in the latter is limited. Thus, even when asked to think carefully and deliberately, people are better able to generate reasons to indulge than not to indulge – prompting choices for smaller-immediate over larger-delayed rewards. (Fujita et al. 2016, 2)

That is, the process of reasoning or deliberation is oftentimes used simply to justify giving into our emotional-desires. Such findings are hard to reconcile with divided-mind models on which the processes of reasoning or deliberation comprise the deliberative system, the system that is thought to underlie our capacity for self-control.

Furthermore, while divided-mind models posit that the output of our automatic, low-level processes are what drive our emotional-desires, Fujita points to a body of empirical literature suggesting that relying on our "more efficient, automatic mechanisms" can aid the exercise of self-control. He writes:

> Research on implementation intentions, for example, suggests that people can automatize distal goal-promoting responses to proximal temptation by generating simple if-then plans…such plans create a cognitive link between the temptation and the goal-promoting behavior, which subsequently serves to initiate the desired behavior once the critical situation is encountered. Once linked to the situation by an if-then implementation intention, the initiation of the cued behavior no longer appears to require any deliberative effort or monitoring. (Fujita et al. 2016, 3)

For instance, imagine a smoker who is trying to quit. The smoker may create an implementation-intention such as "If I am offered a cigarette, then I will refuse it." The next time that the smoker is offered a cigarette, rather than deliberate as to what she should do, she will implement her prior intention and simply automatically refuse the cigarette.

The general theme arising from both my critiques of Sripada's model and Fujita's critiques of divided-mind theories more generally is that trying to understand self-control problems in terms of a conflict between two systems is a futile task. Divided-mind models of self-control are committed to the claim that the mind is partitioned into (at least) two, separate systems and that

one of these systems is good for self-control and the other undermines self-control. Given the objections that I have raised on the various roles, both good and bad, that emotions play in self-control and Fujita's further objections regarding the ways in which reasoning is sometimes bad for self-control and, conversely, relying on automatic processes can be good for self-control, the claim to which divided-mind models of self-control are committed seems implausible. That is, in order to justify dividing the mind into separate systems, divided-mind models have to posit that these systems are comprised of different types of information-processing. As emotions, the outputs of automatic processing more generally (i.e. implementation-intentions) and reasoning can all play both good and bad roles in terms of our capacity for self-control, the idea that one system is good for self-control and the other system is bad for self-control is not a viable claim.

Given the problems facing divided-mind models of self-control, it seems worthwhile, then, to consider a second, alternative option. Kentaro Fujita and his colleagues (2016), some of whose objections to divided-mind models I mentioned above, have recently developed a novel way of conceptualizing self-control problems which they call the "structural" or "whole-vs-parts" model of self-control. Unlike dual-process or divided-mind theories on which self-control problems are understood as instances where one part of the mind is coming into conflict with another part of the mind, Fujita argues that self-control can be best conceptualized as a problem of structure. Fujita writes:

> Rather than model self-control as an issue of competition between elements of the mind, we propose instead that self-control reflects a coordination problem. We suggest that self-control is a problem of structure – the integration of fragmented constituent elements around coherent wholes. (Fujita et al. 2016, 3-4)

That is, self-control is not about emotion competing with reason or automatic impulses competing with effortful deliberation. Rather, self-control is about organizing the various elements of the mind, which include any "thoughts, feelings, and behavior that are necessary to engage in goal directed action," so that they are working together to pursue our superordinate goals (Fujita et al. 2016, 4). They write:

> Structure requires creating hierarchical structures that organize these disparate elements to cohere around unifying, superordinate goals. In any given system, the implementation of these superordinate goals requires action by subordinate units. To function, these units must work together. Structure reflects both the process and resulting state whereby these units work together to advance (rather than undermine) superordinate goals. (Fujita et al. 2016, 4)

For example, Fujita would say that if my superordinate goal is to live a healthier lifestyle, then I should have positive thoughts about and feelings towards going to the gym and eating a balanced diet. Likewise, I should have negative thoughts about and feelings towards such behavior as taking the elevator rather than the stairs or eating at McDonalds rather than drinking my kale smoothie.

Maintaining structure, then, requires both "bottom-up" and "top-down" processes. Self-control conflicts on this model are instances in which one element of the mind, or a few elements of the mind, are threatening the structure of the whole. To exercise self-control is to act in accordance with the whole rather than the parts. In clarifying this idea, Fujita uses the metaphor of "self-governance," in which the mind is viewed as a senate, with the individual elements of the mind, whether it be our emotions, drives, cravings, thoughts, etc. representing different senators. They write:

In a well-functioning senate of the mind, each senator has the opportunity to be heard…but special interest groups do not dominate policy to the detriment of the whole. Policy is driven by consensus. Senators must work to build this consensus, finding ways to band together to promote common interests. Senators do not all need to agree on the desired outcomes, but it is necessary that they accept the decisions of the senate and acknowledge that such decisions represent the senate's collective will. (Fujita et al. 2016, 4)

To illustrate Fujita's proposal, let us return to the example of Susan who has to exercise self-control over her fear of flying in order to board an airplane (See *Scenario (4)*, Section 3). Susan's fear, which motivates her emotional-desire not to board the plane, represents one senator. Susan's practical-judgment that she should board the plane represents another senator. The interests of the senator advocating for boarding the plane, however, are related to the interests of a number of other senators, such as the senator who values going on vacation or the senator who values safety. That is, Susan's practical-judgment that she should board the airplane is part of a larger whole, a number of related thoughts and feelings. To exercise self-control, then, is to promote the interests of the whole rather than in accordance with one part of the mind.

Now that this alternative proposal is on the table, I want to look at whether Fujita's model is a viable contender for solving the puzzle of self-control. I will start by looking at the objections that I raised against Sripada's model in the preceding section. What does Fujita say about the role of emotions in self-control? Fujita does not go into any detail regarding the prototypical features of emotions and, as such, it is not possible to say with any certainty whether or not he views emotions as recalcitrant or as cognitively penetrable.

Fujita does suggest, however, as I indicated in the preceding section, that *some* emotions play a beneficial role in exercises of self-control. The emotions that Fujita has in mind are those

that "require an appreciation of the broader, more abstract implications of an event," that is, those emotions that shift our perspective to considering the wider implications of an action and how it relates to our goals more broadly understood. Or, to return to the senate metaphor, those emotions that promote a perspective that takes into consideration the interests of a wider range of senators will aid in the exercise of self-control. One such emotion, according to Fujita, is pride and he writes, "pride reflects the positive affect that results from embedding the present into a broader context" (2016, 9). For example, imagine Gwen, who is trying to quit smoking, is offered a cigarette. Gwen's craving for the cigarette represents the interests of a single senator. If Gwen happens to think about the fact that she has not smoked a cigarette in two weeks, she may experience pride. Such pride may shift Gwen's perspective away from focusing on the single senator who is advocating a smoke and towards the interests of the senate more broadly, which may include the senators who are interested in long-term health, financial well-being, and physical appearance. Exercising self-control, then, would be to act in accordance with the interests of the senate more broadly rather than the single senator who is craving the cigarette. As pride shifts Gwen's perspective to the wider implications of having a cigarette, it plays a beneficial role in Gwen's ability to exercise self-control.

At first blush, then, Fujita's model may seem like a promising alternative to Sripada's divided-mind account of self-control, as it does not rely on the false assumption that emotions always undermine the exercise of self-control. Fujita's account of the role emotions play in self-control, however, is still too limited. The reader may recall that, in the preceding section, I considered a modified version of Sripada's central claim that emotions cannot motivate the exercise of self-control (i.e. Thesis (M)). On the modified version that I considered, the self-

conscious emotions (e.g. pride, guilt, etc.) can motivate the exercise of self-control while other emotions, the basic emotions (e.g. fear, anger, etc.), cannot (i.e. Thesis (M*)).

Fujita's proposal seems to be along the lines of Thesis (M*); certain emotions play a beneficial role in self-control while other emotions undermine self-control. Those emotions that shift our attention towards considering the wider implications of an action or an event can help motivate the exercise of self-control while those emotions that focus our attention on the action or the event itself undermine our ability to exercise self-control. Fujita's theory then is not a significant improvement over that proposed by Sripada and is open to the same objections that I originally raised against Thesis (M*).

To illustrate, I raised two objections against Thesis (M*), the claim that certain emotions, such as pride, are beneficial for self-control. First, I argued that self-conscious emotions, such as pride, are not always beneficial for self-control. In doing so, I considered a scenario in which Paulina has to exercise self-control over her pride in order to act in accordance with her practical-judgment that she should apologize to her co-worker (see *Scenario (6)*, Section 4). As mentioned above, Fujita claims that emotions, such as pride, aid the exercise of self-control because they shift our focus of attention to the wider implications of an action. In this scenario, however, pride is motivating the behavior that Paulina has to exercise self-control in order to overcome. That is, it is not the case that certain self-conscious emotions are always playing a positive role in self-control problems and, as such, Fujita's model also seems vulnerable to this objection.

Second, I argued that the so-called basic emotions can sometimes be good for self-control. Here I considered a case in which Helen's anger at the abuse of an animal motivates her to exercise self-control over her fear and advocate on the animal's behalf (see *Scenario (7)*, Section 4). In this scenario, it does not seem to be the case that Helen's anger is necessarily widening her focus of

attention to the broader implications of the event, namely, the animal abuse; Helen's anger seems to be focusing her attention on the event itself. Even so, if this scenario is plausible, then the anger Helen experiences is still motivating the exercise of self-control. As such, it does not seem necessary, as Fujita claims, that the only way in which emotions can motivate the exercise of self-control is via a widening of our attention to the larger implications of some action or event.

In sum, Fujita has not provided a promising account of the positive role that emotions can play in self-control. Emotions, such as pride, that widen our perspective can, at times, motivate actions that we need to exercise self-control in order to overcome. Furthermore, emotions that narrow our focus of attention to the event or action at hand can motivate the exercise of self-control.

A further problem facing Fujita's model is that it is not a viable solution to the puzzle of self-control.[19] Recall, that the puzzle of self-control is based on the Law of Desire re-stated here:

> If a person most desires to perform some action A, and if she believes herself free to A, then she will A, if she does anything at all intentionally.

Given the Law of Desire, some have argued that the exercise of self-control is either impossible or unnecessary. Using an example from above, if Gwen most desires to smoke, and believes herself free to smoke, then she will smoke if she does anything at all intentionally. If, however, Gwen most desires to not smoke and believes herself free to not smoke, then she will not smoke if she does anything at all intentionally. On Fujita's model, if the senator representing the desire to smoke has more motivational strength than the senators who, based on their various interests, come to the consensus that smoking is not the thing to do, then it is not clear how an intentional exercise of self-control is possible. Conversely, if the senators who have come to the consensus that smoking

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[19] The reader should be aware that Fujita (2016) does not address the puzzle of self-control. As such, I am applying their model to the puzzle to see if it provides a solution.

is not the thing to do have more motivational strength than the senator who desires to smoke, then it does not seem that an exercise of self-control is necessary. In sum, Fujita's model cannot explain how it is possible to intentionally exercise self-control and act contrary to our strongest desire.

5   HOW TO SOLVE THE PUZZLE OF SELF-CONTROL: THREE DESIDERATA

Neither Sripada's divided-mind model nor Fujita's structural model are able to solve the puzzle of self-control and respond to all of the objections that I have raised in this paper. In particular, neither of these models is a promising account of the positive role that emotions can play in motivating the exercise of self-control. As such, in this section I will outline three desiderata to help orient future attempts at solving the puzzle of self-control.

First, theorists should devote more attention to understanding the types of motivation-encompassing attitudes that drive or constitute our "wayward-desires" that we resist in exercises of self-control. In both the philosophical and scientific literature, theorists posit that self-control is about resisting *drives*, *cravings*, *impulses*, *emotions*, *temptations* etc. without attempting to home in on the defining properties of these motivational states or their relationship to one another. Theorists in the sciences have devoted most of their attention to the mechanisms whereby we exercise self-control and theorists in philosophy have focused on solving the puzzle of self-control, but neither research program has given much thought to the motivational attitudes that we are trying to resist.

As I argued in the preceding section, part of the reason that Sripada's theory fails is that he mischaracterizes the nature of emotions. That is, he falsely assumes that emotions are recalcitrant to reason and uses this assumption in justifying the division he draws between the emotional, deliberative, and regulatory systems on his model. I argued, however, that emotions are typically cognitively penetrable, thereby challenging the division Sripada draws been these three systems. That is, the types of motivational attitudes driving our "wayward desires" and the properties attributed to them is not tangential to the project of understanding self-control, it plays an central role in determining the processes whereby we can successfully exercise self-control and any

attempt to solve the puzzle of self-control. It is not enough to simply posit that self-control is about reining in our emotions, drives and cravings without examining the properties of these motivational states or assuming that this motley collection of motivational states can be understood in the exact same way.

Second, while self-control may often be exercised over emotions, drives and cravings, as Sripada says, further work needs to be done to understand the role that these motivational states may play in aiding the exercise of self-control. Even in cases where the action we are resisting is motivated by an emotion, it is still possible that other emotions are motivating the exercise of self-control. As I considered in Section 3 (see e.g. *Scenario (7)*), it is possible for emotions to play a positive role in motivating the exercise of self-control even when our "wayward desire" is being driven by some other, competing emotion. That is, we can accept that emotions sometimes undermine self-control while also maintaining that emotions sometimes assist an exercise of self-control. Future attempts to model self-control and to solve the puzzle of self-control should take into account the various roles that motivational states, such as emotions, can play in the exercise of self-control.

In doing so, however, theorists should be careful to avoid the approach seemingly taken by Fujita (2016), on which certain emotions are singled out as *always* promoting the exercise of self-control or *always* undermining the exercise of self-control. If the various scenarios that I considered throughout this paper are convincing, then it is unlikely that certain emotions, such as pride, always help us exercise self-control while other emotions, such as anger, always hinder our exercise of self-control. It seems more likely that the same emotion, whether it be pride, anger, or guilt, can play different roles in the exercise of self-control across different types of scenarios.

Furthermore, as I attempted to show in *Scenario (8)*, I believe that we should take seriously the idea that self-control is not always about resisting our emotional-desires. That is, sometimes self-control may be exercised over our higher-order cognitive processes themselves rather than some emotional-desire (e.g. the desire to strike someone out of anger) or craving (e.g. the desire to smoke a cigarette). Even if the particular example I considered, involving Rose regulating her focus of attention so as to be able to prepare for her philosophy lecture, is not convincing, I believe that more work needs to be done before we rule out the idea that self-control can be exercised over motivational states beyond emotions, drives and cravings. In sum, future attempts to understand our capacity for self-control should explore both the positive role that emotions can play in exercising self-control and cases in which self-control is not about taming our emotions.

Third, and finally, we should shift our attention away from dual-process or divided-mind approaches to self-control. That is, I believe that we should challenge Sripada's central assumption that a motivational division is necessary to solve the puzzle of self-control. To clarify, however, I am not saying that we should jettison dual-process or dual-system theorists of cognitive architecture altogether. Rather, I am simply saying that such models may not be a fruitful way to understand our capacity for self-control, a claim that is entirely consistent with these models playing important explanatory roles in other domains, such as moral psychology (e.g. Cushman 2013; Greene 2013, 2014). While, as I argued above, Fujita's (2016) recent attempt to develop an alternative way of understanding self-control may not be able to solve the puzzle of self-control, it is a step towards developing a way of conceptualizing self-control problems that does not rely on dual-process theory. A central task, then, for future models is to develop an account of the motivational-bases for a desire that does not rely on dividing the mind into separate motivational systems.

6   CONCLUSIONS

In this paper, I have argued that Sripada's divided-mind model of self-control is vulnerable to two objections. First, I argued that Sripada relies on a mischaracterization of the nature of emotions, namely, that emotions are recalcitrant to reason, in order to justify the crucial division between the emotional, deliberative, and regulatory systems. If my argument is successful and emotions are not recalcitrant to reason as Sripada assumes, then the distinction that Sripada draws between these systems begins to appear *ad hoc*. Second, I argued that self-control problems do not necessarily involve a motivational conflict between emotion and reason, that emotions can sometimes motivate the exercise of self-control. I then considered two different options for how we should proceed if my arguments against Sripada's model are sound, namely, a modified divided-mind account and Fujita's recently developed structural account of self-control. I argued that, while Fujita's model is a slight improvement over Sripada's divided-mind model, as Fujita does posit that *some* emotions play a beneficial role in exercises of self-control, I ultimately concluded that it too fails to account for the various ways in which different types of emotions can motivate self-control. Finally, based on the shortcomings of both Sripada and Fujita's accounts, I outlined three desiderata for future attempts to solve the puzzle of self-control.

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