NOTES

Introduction

1. There are so many articulations of this belief that it is difficult to choose whom to quote. I open with this quote as it uses everyday language to describe an idea that is both everyday and philosophical: that happiness is what we aim for. Probably one of the most dramatic philosophical articulations of the principle was offered in the seventeenth century by Blaise Pascal, who argued: “All men seek happiness. This is without exception. Whatever different means they employ, they all tend to this end. The cause of some going to war, and of others avoiding it, is the same desire in both, attended with different views. The will never takes the least step but to this object. This is the motive of every action, of every man, even of those who hang themselves” ([1669] 1910: 138). This rather extraordinary insistence on the universality of happiness as a motive of the will involves an equally extraordinary discussion of the necessary failure of happiness, which clearly anticipated the psychoanalytic enterprise: “What is it then this desire and this inability proclaim to us, but that there was once in man a true happiness of which there now remain to him only the mark and empty trace, which he in vain tries to fill from all his surroundings, seeking from things absent to help he does not obtain in things present? But these are all inadequate, because the infinite abyss can only be filled by an infinite and immutable object, that is to say, only by God Himself” (138–39).

2. The following are some of the key books published in the last few years: Layard 2005; McMahon 2006; Nettle 2006; Gilbert 2006; Haidt 2006; Schoch 2006;
de Botton 2006. See the collection of essays on happiness that I edited in New Formations (2008) for some perspectives from cultural studies, as well as the humanities more broadly.

Examples of recent books on happiness that we could describe as popular psychology or "how-to" manuals include Sumners and Watson 2006, Seligman 2003, Holden 1998, Ricard 2007. One of the most popular books on happiness is based on a series of interviews between the Dalai Lama and Howard C. Cutler (1998).

For example, the Independent on Sunday had a special, "The Secrets of Happiness: Why the Ancients Hold the Key," March 17, 2006. Information about the BBC program The Happiness Formula can be accessed at http://news.bbc.co.uk. Last visited February 11, 2009.


For details of David Cameron's speech about happiness, see http://news.bbc.co.uk. Last visited February 11, 2009.

GDP was first coined by three Californian researchers in 1995. Along with 400 leading economists, business leaders, and professionals, they stated: "Since the GDP measures only the quantity of market activity without accounting for the social and ecological costs involved, it is both inadequate and misleading as a measure of true prosperity. Policy-makers, economists, the media, and international agencies should cease using the GDP as a measure of progress and publicly acknowledge its shortcomings. New indicators of progress are urgently needed to guide our society... The GDP is an important step in this direction." For further information about GDP and the genealogy of the term, see http://www.gpiatlantic.org. Last visited February 11, 2009.

One study reveals what should be obvious: if you ask subjects how happy they are after asking them about positive topics, you are more likely to get higher happiness levels reported than if you ask them how happy they are after asking them questions about negative topics: "Subjects who had previously been induced to think about positive aspects of their present life described themselves as happier and more satisfied with their life-as-a-whole than subjects who had been induced to think about negative aspects" (Schwarz and Strack 1991: 28).

We can see the problems with such an approach when feelings become measures of rights and wrongs. Richard Layard, for example, argues that what makes something wrong is that it makes people unhappy, or even offends peoples' feelings. For Layard, the science of happiness is "inherently" poor and for the redistribution of wealth as inequalities increase unhappiness (2005: 120–21): though the unfortunate implication of his argument is that if inequalities did not increase unhappiness, then he would not be against them. As he describes: "American slaves wanted their freedom, not because it would give them higher incomes, but because of the humiliation of being a slave. Slavery offended their feelings, and that is why slavery is wrong" (124). The idea that slavery was wrong because it hurt people's feelings shows us what is wrong with this model of wrong. It individuates and psychologizes social wrongs. See Lauren Berlant's (2000) important critique of the conflation of pain and injustice, as well as my conclusion to The Cultural Politics of Emotion (2004) for a reflection on the relationship between social wrongs and hurt. Note in particular that one of the problems of the conflation of injustice with hurt is that it presumes access to the other's feelings. Any forms of wrong that are not accompanied by consciously felt suffering that can be spoken about to others would become invisible in such a model.

The implication my suggestion here is that the contemporary moment of the "financial crisis" in which I have completed this book will not mean a withdrawal of public or private concern with happiness but if anything may heighten the cultural preoccupation with happiness (perhaps as an uneasiness in the want of the good life for those who feel they did have and should still have a good life).


Take the following comment from Fay Weldon's book on women and happiness. She argues, "The fight for gender equality is bad for the looks. It makes no one happy, unless you find some reward in struggling for a justice that evolution failed to deliver. It will just develop your jaw, wrinkle your brow beyond the capacity of Botox to unravel, muddy your complexion so much that no amount of Beauty Flash will clear it, and in general do you no good" (2006: 52). Weldon argues that unhappiness will make you look bad, and that unhappiness is caused by fighting for equality. To be happy is to look better. For Weldon happiness means not fighting for equality in order to be more attractive, in order for women to get better men. Happiness becomes a technique for self-promotion (redescribed as evolutionary fitness). As I explore in chapter 2, research into happiness and women tends to promote a return to traditional forms of femininity. Happiness is linked to passivity, which challenges the conventional association of happiness with activity. I discuss the alignment of happiness and activity in the conclusion to this book.

I am not suggesting here that the Aristotelian approach to eudaimonia can be reduced to this critique. I am simply questioning the gesture that idealizes classical happiness over contemporary happiness. The long Aristotelian traditions of writing on happiness as virtue offer alternative concepts of the good life that arguably are based on a less exclusive or particular concept of life. Alasdair MacIntyre's work, for example, describes virtue as "an acquired human quality the possession and exercise of which tends to enable us to..."
achieve those goods which are internal to practices and the lack of which effectively prevents us from achieving any such goods" (1981: 178). See also Maclntyre's preface to the revised tradition of The Unconscious: A Conceptual Analysis (2004), where he develops a defense of an Aristotelian concept of a "teleologically structured life" against psychoanalytic models. Indeed, he suggests that a psychoanalytic critique of neurosis is "not only compatible with but in need of just such a conception of human flourishing." However, Maclntyre's subsequent redefinition of human flourishing as "the actualization of human distinctive potentialities issues in reason-informed activity" might still rely on an exclusive model of what counts as life worth living (34-35).

Thanks to David Glover for suggesting this clarification.

Aristotle argues that the "man engaged in Contemplative Speculation" needs less external goods than other kinds of virtuous men (1998: 193). He suggests that external goods could even be a hindrance to the speculative philosopher in terms of doing the work of speculation but are nevertheless necessary: "he will need such things for maintaining his character as Man though not as a speculative philosopher" (193). Herein lies the political economy: the reproduction of the capacity to live the good life of the philosopher subject, which is to be maintained in your character as Man, may depend upon other people's labor. Such labor would support the philosopher and would thus stay in the background, rather like furniture. See my reading of Husserl, the labor of philosophy, and the "background" of domestic labor in Queer Phenomenology (2006).

However, within queer cultural studies there has been a turn to theorizing positive affects and emotions, as can be seen in the work of Lauren Berlant (2006a, 2006b) and Michael D. Siedker (2009) on optimism, as well as José Esteban Muñoz (2011) on hope and utopia.

I should acknowledge here that in following the word happiness around, I am in some cases following a translation into English from other languages, including classical and modern languages (for example eudaimonia, le bonheur and Glück). There is no doubt we lose things in translation, including an ability to track the specific histories of association for each of these words. To acknowledge this loss is not however to make the act of translation impossible.

In following happiness in translation, I am also accepting a convention: I am accepting how others have translated words into this word.

Colebrook uses Nietzsche's new philosophical concept of happiness to exemplify this distinction: "Happiness is the capacity or power to live one's life actively-affirming the particularity or specificity of one's moment in time" (2002: 19). It is noticeable, however, that this "new concept" does not look very different from old concepts of happiness, many of which are predicated on the idea of happiness as "activity," as I discuss in my conclusion to this book. We can learn from the inheritance of the old in the language of the new: philosophy is not beyond habits in refusing to learn from the everyday but has its own habits.

Two books were published in 2008 that offer substantial critiques of happiness, although both are from outside philosophy: Eric G. Wilson's Against Happiness and Zygmunt Bauman's The Art of Life, representing the disciplines of literature and sociology respectively. I wonder (writing in early 2009) whether the tide of happiness is turning, and whether this tide will also turn (in) philosophy.

I will engage with ethics throughout this book, especially in chapter 1 and the conclusion. In terms of political philosophy it is useful to note that Giorgio Agamben makes happiness crucial to his definition of the political nature of the human being as "the only beings for whom happiness is always at stake in their living, the only beings whose life is irretrievably and painfully assigned to happiness. But this immediately constitutes the form-of-life as political life" ([1996] 2000: 4). In making happiness what is at stake, Agamben does not make happiness into an end but a question, even a painful question. The question of the human becomes a happiness question, as a question of how to live, a question of how to live well.

It should be obvious how much of my work is shaped by my interest in psychoanalysis in part through the vocabularies I use (displacement, conversion, etc.). However, this book does not offer a psychoanalysis of happiness: my questions are not posed at the level of the subject. I am interested in the distribution of happiness in psychic and social fields and have theoretical commitments that include phenomenology and Marxism as well as feminist, anticritic, and queer theories. If anything this book involves a messy sort of empiricism: I am interested in describing our experience of the world in the very forms of its emergence. I cannot have a system in place before I get to the point of description without losing the possibility of description. Psychoanalysis demands too much from me: it is a school of thought I draw on eclectically but will always fail to reproduce. There are places readers can go for a psychoanalysis of happiness: think not only of Freud's Civilization and its Discontents ([1930] 2004) (which was originally proposed as Unhappiness in Civilization [McMahon 2006: 441]) and Lacan's The Ethics of Psychoanalysis ([1986] 1992), but also Slavoj Žižek's critiques of happiness in Welcome to the Desert of the Real (2002) and In Defence of Lost Causes (2008a) and Jonathan Lear's Happiness, Death, and the Remainder of Life (2000), which reads Freud alongside Aristotle.

As Mark T. Conard suggests in relation to philosophy, "There is comparatively little discussion about unhappiness, except as it's seen as simply the result of someone's having failed to achieve happiness" (2007: 53). There are of course exceptions. Jean-Luc Nancy's The Sense of the World offers a powerful consideration of unhappiness that does not make happiness its reference point.
There is nothing to be said of happiness, as the idyllic version of sense, the immanence of sense bought at a discount, the simple denigration of unhappiness” ([1993] 1997: 145). Nancy not only refuses the sublimation offered by happiness but also implies unhappiness is what "makes sense." See also my conclusion for a brief discussion of Nancy on happiness.

23 It is worth commenting on the relationship between my argument and Hegel’s thesis that periods of happiness are “the empty pages of history” as “times when the antithesis is missing,” (1837) 1988: 29, which seems to imply that the very activity of history depends upon unhappiness and negation. I am writing about the history of happiness as a concept-word: happiness provides a horizon for thought. The overdetermination of happiness as a concept-word is not unrelated to how happiness appears and disappears in history. I would argue that happiness in history is not blank or that the blankness is an illusion that preserves the regulative power of happiness as an idea. In other words, the blankness of happiness is not the sign of the absence of struggle or negativity. We just cannot see the signs of struggle or negation when happiness is given. Happiness only appears blank—or as a blank—because we have learned not to notice what happens when things “go along” and we “get along.” This book explores what is erased by signs of “getting along” including the labor which creates the impression of blankness.

24 These definitions are all taken from the Oxford English Dictionary (OED). All subsequent definitions and etymological references in this book are drawn from the OED.

1. Happy Objects

1 This chapter will offer an approach to thinking through affect as “sticky.” Affect is what sticks, or what sustains or preserves the connection between ideas, values, and objects. My argument that affect is a form of stickiness contrasts with Brian Massumi’s work, which suggests that affects are autonomous and distinct from emotions. For Massumi emotion is “qualified intensity” or “a subjective content, the sociolinguistic fixings of the quality of experience which is from that point onward defined as personal” while affects are “intensity” that is unqualified and beyond narrative (2002: 28). I think that the distinction between affect/emotion can understand the work of emotions, which involve forms of intensity, bodily orientation, and direction that are not simply about “subjective content” or qualification of intensity. Emotions are not “after-thoughts” but shape how bodies are moved by the worlds they inhabit (see Ahmed 2004). I would also argue that the intensities that Massumi describes as affect are “directed” as well as “qualified” or even “congealed”; this directedness is not simply about subjects and interior feeling states but about how things cohere in a certain way. While you can separate an affective response from an emotion that is attributed as such (the bodily sensations from the feeling of being afraid), this does not mean that in practice, if in everyday life, they are separate. In fact, they are contiguous; they slide into each other; they stick, and cohere, even when they are separated. The “fear affect” can be separated from the self-conscious recognition of being afraid (the flicker in the corner of the eye signalling the presence of the stranger, which registers as a disturbance on the skin before we have recognized the stranger as a stranger). However, this does mean the “fear affect” is autonomous. Before we are affected, before something happens that creates an impression on the skin, things are already in place that incline us to be affected in some ways more than others. To read affect we need better understandings of this “in place,” and how the “in place” involves psychic and social dimensions, which means that the “in place” is not always in the same place. For example, the flicker is more likely to become an emotion that we retrospectively recognize as fear in places that are already given affective value as fearsome (the “rough neighborhood” is one that we anticipate to be frightening), or for somebody whose body remembers other flickers becoming frightening. See Clare Henning (2005) and Imogen Tyler (2008) for related critiques of the “autonomy of affect.” See also Siânne Ngai, who offers a contrasting approach to the difference between affect/emotion as a “modal difference of intensity or degree, rather than a formal difference of quality or kind” (2005: 27).

2 For an analysis of the contingency of sensations, see chapter 1 of my The Cultural Politics of Emotion. Pleasure and pain could be described as sensations caused by objects (for example the sensation of pain in my foot might be caused by a nail), although as I will argue, via Hume and Nietzsche, such causalities might involve habitual forms of association that are retrospective as well as anticipatory. However, even if we were to assume that sensations were caused by objects, it does follow that sensations can be easily separated from other aspects of human experience. Pleasure has been understood as a complex feeling. For David L. Perry, pleasure is described as a “sort of feeling” and having specific kinds of intentional qualities: we receive pleasure from things that give us pleasure (1967: 98). For J. C. B. Gosling, pleasure “belongs to the class of things which are modifications of our awareness, like sensations and feelings” (1969: 29). Interestingly, the philosopher who offers the queerest definition of pleasure that I have found in my research for this book is the one who is often evoked in quite somber terms as a stark utilitarian: Jeremy Bentham. He describes pleasures as “interesting perceptions” and suggests that “by the bent of a man’s inclinations may be understood the propensity he has to expect pleasure and pain from certain objects, rather than from others” (1797) 2007: 49). He then suggests that a person could be described as having “such or such a bent” if “he is apt to expect more pleasure
from one particular sort, than from another particular sort" (49). If pleasure is how we turn toward certain things, then pleasure is always bent. Pleasure for Bentham is a bodily orientation that reveals a social orientation, a tendency to have a certain tendency. The importance of thinking about happiness as contiguous with pleasure sensations is that it allows us to keep our attention on the bodily dimensions of happiness. I do not want to take the body out of happiness.

3 I should acknowledge here that Spinoza suggests that being affected, even joyfully, is a form of passivity, in which the idea formed is inadequate or confused. An affect "is a passion" which thus "ceases to be a passion as soon as we form a clear and distinct idea of it" ([1677] 2001: 231). The ethical task for Spinoza is thus to become free from "the bondage of passions through reason: "It is therefore most profitable to us in life to make perfect the intellect or reason as far as possible, and in this one thing consists the highest happiness or blessedness of man" (217). To be blessed would be to have adequate ideas, or to be the cause of your own ideas: "he is led adequately to conceive himself and all things which can be conceived by his intelligence" (217). See my conclusion for some further discussion of Spinoza (or to be more accurate, Deleuze's Spinoza), with specific reference to the passive/active distinction.

4 This book draws on phenomenology but I would not say it offers a phenomenology of happiness, as my own points of reference here are primarily outside this intellectual tradition. Or if it does offer a phenomenology of happiness, it would be a rather queer phenomenology (see Ahmed 2006). A phenomenology of happiness is perhaps yet to be written, although of course there is considerable literature on phenomenology and emotion more generally (a classic essay would be Sartre [1939] 2002; see also Solomon 2006 for further references). A phenomenology of happiness might draw on Husserl's later work, in particular his approach to the living body (Leib), affect and value, and the life-world, which is often represented as his shift from a static to a genetic and then generative phenomenology (see Thompson 2007: 28–36). I should note here that Husserl's model offers a quite different model of affect and value than we find in Locke's empirical psychology in which "to be affected" is to give value to things. Henning Peucker suggests that Husserl would be critical of any sentimentalism that would describe feelings as "giving things specific value properties" (2007: 312). Peucker's own task is to show how Husserl critiques the Kantian presumption that all moral feeling is pathological. According to Peucker, Husserl mediates between Kant and the sentimentalists by arguing that things already have value properties: "the ego is thus affected by objects with value properties" (316).

5 In David Hume's discussion of the relationship between ideas and impressions in *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1739–40) 1985: 49–55), he suggests that impressions are more lively. Memory and imagination are described as the two faculties in which we "repeat our impressions" (56) involving the connection or association between ideas in the form of contiguity and resemblance. Hume offers a rich reflection on what we might call empirical psychology and the habits of sense making. See Deleuze's excellent analysis ([1951] 1991) of Hume's contribution. Also note how much the Freudian concern with displacement and condensation and the Lacanian concern with metaphor and metonymy are consistent with Hume's associationism. English empiricism and psychoanalysis can be described as potentially productive bedfellows.

6 See the second section of chapter 5 for an extension of this argument with reference to irritability and cheerfulness.

7 The precarious nature of happiness as a feeling is described very well by John Stuart Mill in his autobiography in an often cited sentence: "Ask yourself whether you are happy and you cease to be so" ([1873] 2003: 100). It is Mill's own unhappiness that leads him to the recognition of precarity, which he also describes as a disillusionment with utilitarianism, and an awareness that "some end external to happiness" needs to be "the purpose of life" (100). For a discussion of happiness as precarious, see also my conclusion, note 16.

8 Although classical and utilitarian traditions are often represented as very different, they share a teleological conception of happiness. For Aristotle, happiness is the end point for individuals, defining what it would mean to have lived a virtuous life. For utilitarians, happiness is the end point for government, defining what it would mean to have the best society.

9 The way in which a teleological model of happiness makes "all other things" "happiness means" is explicit in John Stuart Mill's utilitarianism. As he puts it, "The utilitarian doctrine is that happiness is desirable and the only thing desirable, as an end; all other things being only desirable as means to that end" ([1861] 2001: 35). While there is considerable scholarship on the significance of happiness as a *telos* or end, there has been less attention given to what this means "for all other things," that is, to what it means when other goods become *good as means to the happiness end*.

10 I am not suggesting that Aristotle makes happiness instrumental. Happiness is not an end in the sense of being something imposed from the outside to govern the emergence of life. Rather, for Aristotle, to achieve happiness would be to actualize your potential; the happy man is the man who achieves his ideal form, who flourishes in a biological as well as ethical sense. I am simply suggesting that if happiness is understood organically as the end of life, then other things become instrumental to the achievement of happiness, to actualizing your potential. It would be useful to consider further the relationship between Aristotle's teleological model of biology and his teleological model of happiness. See Challenger 1994: 75–76 and Annas 1993: 139 for some relevant observations.

11 I will be exploring the relationship between freedom and happiness throughout the book and in particular how the freedom to be happy is a fantasy of
freedom that conceals how happiness directs us toward some life choices and not others. In the final section of chapter 5, I explore an alternative freedom as the freedom to be unhappy.

Nietzsche is drawing on David Hume, who argues that causal thinking is itself a form of habit: “This transition of thought from the cause to the effect proceeds not from reason. It derives its origin altogether from custom and experience” (1748 [1975]: 54). I might also suggest here a relationship between the attribution of causality and identification. My sister and I always argued about the causes of road accidents. She would say that slower drivers caused accidents, because they caused fast drivers to feel impatient. I would say that fast drivers caused road accidents because they were impatient. Where we attribute the cause related to our own self-identification as fast drivers (my sister) or slow drivers (myself), which in turn allows us to establish ourselves as occupying the sphere of normality or neutrality. I thought she went “too fast” and she thought I went “too slow.” Note also that attributions of causality are stopping devices; you go back “so far” to establish causality, and you go back as far as you need to go to protect yourself from becoming attributed as the cause of something that is evaluated as negative. So for my sister, her impatience was caused (by drivers who wanted to go slow like me), and for me, her impatience was the cause (because she wanted to go faster than she should).

As I will show in due course, this is why the experience of affirmation is not always conscious but takes place in the background, as it allows subjects to keep going the way they are going.

Clearly, to describe objects as happiness-causes is a stronger claim than to describe them as happiness-means. The latter implies that doing or having certain things will enable you to approach happiness without necessarily causing happiness. For an object to be a happiness-cause is to say that happiness is a necessary effect of doing or having something. I will extend my argument by thinking about the desire to be a happiness-cause in chapter 3.

The promise of happiness imposes (implicit or explicit) conditions: you are promised happiness in return for fulfilling certain conditions. For an extension of the argument about how happiness involves conditions (what I call simply conditional happiness), see the first section of chapter 2.

Earlier on in How To Do Things with Words, Austin suggests that even an insincere promise is still a promise: it is not void even if it is given in bad faith (11). He later describes any failure of intention as an infelicity (40): so a promise can not promise even if it has been worded as a promise. A promise can thus be an explicit performative and be unhappy if the right conditions are not in place. I should note here that in this book, I will consider happiness and unhappiness in language not simply in terms of the effects that words have, whether they succeed or fail in doing what they say, but also as being in the words; happiness when named in speech is in on the act.

It is useful to compare Locke and Kant on this point. Locke, despite his emphasis on happiness as intrinsically good, offers an empirical psychology that makes uneasiness more compelling. Kant, despite his refusal of the relationship between happiness and the good, describes happiness as the basis of the pragmatic law, as what is most compelling. Kant thus has a stronger thesis on happiness as the motor of human action than Locke. This is one of the reasons I find the Lacanian alliance with Kant somewhat perplexing (see Lacan 2006: 645–70, Zupančič 2000), even though I understand that they share a thesis that ethics must be thought outside happiness and that this requires a certain formalism (whether defined in terms of the law of duty or desire). Even if Kant defines the moral law as beyond happiness, he does so only by making an overly strong thesis of happiness as a pragmatic law, which does not really allow us to go beyond the pleasure principle. See also my conclusion, note 13.

I find Hobbes’s definition of desire in Leviathan helpful for its emphasis on bodily motion. He defines desire as a motion-endeavor that “is toward something which causes it” ([1651] 1968: 119). I consider affects as evaluation that turn us toward and away from objects that are attributed as the cause not only of the affect but also of the motion. So I turn toward or away from the other given they have affected me, where the turning is assumed to be caused by the other.

I am reminded here of Adorno and Horkheimer’s critique of the empty promises of the culture industry. They argue that “the culture industry perpetually cheats its consumers of what it perpetually promises. The promissory note which, with its plots and staging, it draws on pleasure is endlessly prolonged; the promise, which is actually all the spectacle consists of, is illusory” ([1944] 1997: 139). One might be tempted to wonder whether the location of false promises within the culture industry allows us to sustain the fantasy that there is a full promise, a promise that can keep its promise that resides elsewhere. My reading of the promise of happiness will question this fantasy of fulness, suggesting that promises are always in some sense empty; they can never keep their word, as what is sent out does not simply return.

Narratives after all are “directed.” The narrative “moves forward” toward something; the ending. The shape of the narrative could be described as its plot; events are sequenced in time to explain how things happen: how as if were one thing leads to another. As Peter Brooks argues, plot is “what shapes a story and gives it a certain direction or intent of meaning” (1984: x): it is “the activity of shaping” which allows us to “read forward” (xiii). Indeed, Brooks relates the act of plotting to a form of desire that moves us through the text: “Narratives portray the motors of desire that drive and consume their plots, and they also lay bare the nature of narration as a form of human desire: the need to tell as a primary human drive that seeks to seduce and to subjugate the
listener, to implicate him in the thrust of a desire that never can quite speak its name—never can quite come to the point—but that insists on speaking over and over again its movement toward that name” (61). This rather thrusting language of desire gives us a very specific version of the movement of narrative. Putting this point aside for one moment, however, we can see the forward movement of narrative is what might give us its point, even when we don’t reach that point. Reading for narrative is reading for the direction of its point. If happiness is the point, then it must always be deferred. As D. A. Miller argues in his classic account of narrative and its discontents: “The narrative of happiness is inevitably frustrated by the fact that only insufficiencies, defaults, deferrals, can be ‘cold.’ Even when a narrative ‘prepares for’ happiness, it remains in this state of lack, which can only be liquidated along with the narrative itself. Accordingly, the narration of happiness might be thought to exemplify the unhappiness of narrative in general” (2002: 274). See Colebrook 2008 for a discussion of narrative happiness. In this book, I am interested in happiness not only as a narrative ending but as a conversion point within narrative. In particular, I will attend to how happiness speech acts such as “I just want you to be happy” are crucial to the twists and turns of narrative.

21 In The Cultural Politics of Emotion, I examined happiness as a form of waiting. Happiness might be how waiting for something can acquire a sense of meaning or purpose and can thus be endured, as it points toward something (see Ahmed 2004: 166–97). The failure to achieve happiness in the present can even extend one’s investment in a certain path of action: if the more one waits, the more one gives up, then the more one waits, the harder it is to give up. The more one persists unhappily on a path of happiness, the harder it is to give up on that path. Unhappiness can thus be what makes happiness harder to give up.

22 My qualification of the chanciness and contingency of happiness suggests that happiness involves a way of being directed, such that we will find happiness in some places more than others. However, I am not arguing that happiness does not involve contingency. Even if you have been directed a certain way, we do not always know what will happen, how we will be affected, by what comes near. The hap of happiness does matter. See my conclusion for more reflections on the politics and ethics of the hap. We might need to recognize how the hap has been taken out of happiness before we can put the hap back in.

23 See chapter 4, where I explore the civilizing mission in terms of giving the other good habits. I note in this chapter how bad habits of the natives are identified with their confusion of the object that causes pleasure with the good. Good habits are thus distinguished from primitive fetishism. What we could call civilized happiness projects fetishism onto the other, failing to recognize how much it still locates the promise of happiness in proximity to objects, even if those objects are valued through their apparent refusal of insistence on proximity.

24 Annas also provides a very useful discussion of Kant’s rejection of the model of habituation. She shows how Kant equates habit formation with moral passivity, such that to form habits would be to lose your freedom (1993: 52). Annas argues that Kant presumes habituation is purely mechanical and thus fails to acknowledge the role of activity, purpose, and agency in virtue-based ethics. I am suggesting that the Kautan contrast between habit and freedom is what allows freedom to be secured as a fantasy: the moral subject is the one for whom freedom has become a habit, such that the habitual nature of this freedom disappears from view.

25 We could ask some speculative questions here about the relationship between moral feeling and action. To feel bad about what is bad would be a sign of virtue in this model. But feeling bad can also be a way that people allow themselves to do what they otherwise know they should not do. Someone can feel bad about something even as a way of giving him/herself permission to do something. Bad feeling thus can allow someone to maintain a good idea of him/herself (I felt bad or guilty about doing x, which shows that I am “really” not bad in doing x). Bad feeling can lead to a moral permissiveness: you can do anything as long as you feel bad about it! Such uses of bad feeling could be described in terms of the politics of good feeling: you can feel good about yourself because you feel bad about x. So, for example, a nation could feel good, or retain its ego ideal as being good, because it feels bad about its racist history.

26 The idea that we have a moral duty to be happy can rest on a contagious model of happiness: because others can catch happiness from us, we must be happy for them. For an early argument that links contagion and duty, see Daniel Garrison Brinton’s The Pursuit of Happiness, published in 1893. Brinton argues that we have a moral duty to promote our own happiness in order to be able to promote the happiness of others: “Mental moods are contagious and a man who enjoys little will prove a killjoy to others . . . But as a rule people are not happy whose pleasures are assigned them by others . . . Before we are qualified to make others happy we must compass happiness in some degree for ourselves; and our success with others will be just to that degree and no more. The quality and intensity of enjoyment which we ourselves have is alone that which we are able to impart to others” (12–13). I will take up this association between the killjoy and the joyless in the following chapter. For a more recent example which links contagion with duty, see Gretchen Rubin’s website (http://www.happiness-project.com; last visited February 9, 2009), which is dedicated to her research on happiness. As she describes: “Emotional contagion is the psychological phenomenon by which we ‘infect’ each other with our moods. The fact that my friend was so happy to be at the concert lifted all of us up. Remember the Second Splendid Truth: One of the
best ways to make yourself happy is to make other people happy; one of the best
test ways to make other people happy is to be happy yourself." I should also note
here that the happiness duty does not necessarily rest on a contagion model:
we can have a happiness duty if it is assumed that through being happy we
can better influence or promote the happiness of others (through suggestion,
involvement, compassion, as moral leadership, or by example). As I will explore
in the following chapters, the happiness duty can involve not only the duty
to be happy in order to cause the happiness of others but also the duty to be
happy in order to fulfill one’s debt to others.

27 My model of sociable emotion is quite different because I think of affects as
already directed toward and shaped by contact with objects. I thus place a
strong emphasis on reception as a form of conversion: I might be affected
in quite different ways by your happiness, or what I feel is your happiness,
depending on my mood, depending on my relation to you, depending on
my view of what you are happy about (which may or may not be consciously
held), and so on. So your happiness does not necessarily make me happy, even
if I love you and I imagine that my happiness is conditional on yours. I will be
exploring the complex relation between love and happiness in the following
three chapters, especially in the first section of chapter 3.

28 Hume argues in his Enquiries Concerning the Principles of Morals that we
are more likely to catch happiness from others because happiness as such
is agreeable to us: the happy person "is a more animating spectacle; his
presence diffuses over us a more serene complacency and enjoyment; our
imagination, entering into his feelings and disposition is affected in a more
agreeable manner than if a melancholy, dejected, sullen, anxious temper
was presented to us." ([1748] 1975: 251). I should acknowledge here that Hume
do not rest his theory of compassion on contagion or infection: rather he
emphasizes the role of imagination, involvement, and interest (for a good
discussion, see Swanton 2000, especially 162–63). David Hume’s use of af-
factive contagion as the basis for sympathetic happiness does contrast in
interesting ways with Adam Smith’s A Theory of Moral Sentiments. In Smith’s
model, sympathetic happiness is more explicitly conditional: even if hap-
piness is agreeable, and even if it is agreeable to be sympathetic, you enter
into another’s happiness only if you agree with it, in the sense that you think
such happiness is appropriate and is expressed appropriately. As he describes
quite dramatically: “It gives us the spleen, on the other hand, to see another
too happy, or too much elevated, as we call it, with any little piece of good
fortune. We are disoblige ed even with his joy; and, because we cannot go along
with it, call it levity and folly." ([1759] 2000: 13; emphasis added). For Smith,
to be affected sympathetically is dependent on whether emotions “appear
to this last, just and proper, and suitable to their objects” (14). His model
of conditional happiness thus derives from his model of conditional sympa-
thy. I would also argue that sharing emotion involves conditional judgment.
Rather than saying that we share happiness if we agree with its object (which
makes the agreement secondary), I would say that to share in the happiness
of others is how we come to have a direction toward something, which is al-
ready an agreement that the object is appropriate. To get along is to go along
with a certain direction.

29 Brennan explains this tension between these two aspects of argument by sug-
gest ing that if I am picking up on an affect, “the thoughts I attach to that affect,
remain my own” (2). The distinction between feeling and thought exercised
here suggests that even if feelings are social or shared, thoughts will remain
individual and private. I am interested in what follows when this distinction
does not hold: when affects are not shared or picked up by others, and when
thoughts are shared with others. For example you and I might have the same
thought “come to mind” but be affected differently by that very thought, the
affects attached to it “remain our own.” Memory can work like this: we might
both be reminded of somebody by what a third party says, but the thought of
that person will affect us differently, depending on our relation to that person.
To explore this opacity of social thought and feeling we need to think more
about our models of the social. We might assume that affects are social and even
sociable insofar as they are shared, or transmitted from one to another. But we
need to think about the social as an experience, as well as object of experience,
that is not always shared: feelings of tension, antagonism and even “apartheid”
be understood as part of the fabric of social life rather than a sign of its
failure or absence. What “remains my own” in the case of not being given or
available to others (although what “remains my own” is not necessarily given or
available to myself as psychology would teach us) would be what connects
us to others. My reading of Mrs. Dalloway in chapter 2 offers such a model.

30 Of course that it is the bride who must be happy, who must bear the burden
of the happiness of the day, teaches us something about gender and its un-
ever distributions of what we might call “happiness hopes.” It teaches us to
notice what might seem obvious. If we search for the happiness of the bride
to confirm the happiness of the day, then happiness hopes for women re-
main tied to marriage, even if the scripts of gender have become more flex-
ible. See the following chapter for further discussion of the relationship be-
tween happiness scripts and gendered scripts. I also want to recognize here
the importance of Arlie Hochschild’s The Managed Heart to my own project.
Hochschild stresses the role of “feeling rules” and “emotional labor.” Feeling
rules are “what guide emotion work by establishing the sense of entitlement
or obligation that governs emotional exchanges” ([1983] 2003: 56; see also
Hochschild 2003). My own model, which focuses on how we are directed
by the promise of happiness, shares key premises with her work, as we can
see for instance in my description of happiness as a good habit. But rather
than considering emotions in terms of rules that govern behavior (by being enforced by others and eventually incorporated by subjects), I will be focusing on the more subtle processes of affirmation, encouragement, and support through which subjects are turned toward certain objects, which become social goods that circulate and accumulate value, thus acquiring the "capacity" to turn subjects. I would describe the difference as a difference in emphasis rather than a difference in argument. Further work on happiness as a project or technique of management (including the management of organizations as well as self-management) that draws on Hochschild’s model would provide a major contribution to the literatures of happiness studies.

31 Affect aliens are those who do not desire in the right way. As I suggested earlier, classical conceptions of happiness involve the regulation of desire. Appropriate desire is expressed in an appropriate way toward appropriate objects. Of course, desire is regulated precisely because we often fail to desire in the right way. You might want to want x. But as soon as you want something you are admitting that you don’t really want that thing. You cannot always make yourself want what you want to want (just as you cannot always make the other want what you want or what you want them to want). Rather than simply becoming disappointed, or full of wretchedness, affect aliens might give up wanting what one wants to want, and want other things.

32 Happiness can convert very quickly into anger in political as well as psychic life. One discourse of citizenship, for example, turns happiness into an entitlement. The failure of the nation to deliver its promise of happiness converts very swiftly into anger toward others (foreigners, migrants, asylum seekers) who have stolen the happiness that is assumed “by right” to be ours. This conversion is often expressed through the language of deprivation: the other has deprived us of the good life. This narrative of stolen happiness is what allows the fantasy of happiness (as what would have come to us if only they had not arrived) to be preserved.

33 As I argued earlier, via Nietzsche, objects can lag behind feelings (in the sense that one might feel pain and then look for the object, which becomes the pain cause after the event), and feelings can lag behind objects (once we associate the object with an affect, then the object can cause the affect). Feelings and objects can switch places in this causal economy. The point of the lag is that it teaches us about the temporality of what we might call affective mediation.

34 The word passing is of course also used to refer to death (to “pass away”). Passing can thus describe a cessation: when something passes it ceases to exist. Perhaps there is a little death in each moment of passing if what passes ceases to be itself in passing. A little death is also a little birth of something, an emergence of something that was not there before.

35 The name of this game is of course problematic. Rosalind Ballaster argues that “the sinophobic name points to the centuries-old tradition in Europe of representing spoken Chinese as an incomprehensible and unpronounceable combination of sounds” (2005: 202–3). In the United States, the game is typically called “Telephone” reminding us perhaps of the role of technology in the perversion of affect.

36 Of course, the threat of contagion resides not only in transmission but also in mutation; as the virus spreads (through touch), it can reproduce itself such that it becomes other.

37 Nostalgia involves affective conversion. Nostalgia is an affective state that resists the presence of a happy object that is no longer or that imagines something as being happy insofar as it is no longer. Things can be happy not only as projections of the future but also as imaginings of what has been lost (if only things are as they were, we would be happy). I will discuss the relation between happiness and utopianism in chapter 5.

38 Tolstoy famously opens Anna Karenina with the sentence “All happy families are alike; but an unhappy family is unhappy after its own fashion” (1875–77/1985: 13). Perhaps the likeness of the happy family relates to how families are predicated on likeness. When things go happily, the family recedes into the background, as that which is familiar.

39 Of course, sometimes when we are nervous, unsure or lacking in confidence, then we wait for affirmation, we wait for “the yes.” In this case, affirmation is audible as it allows us to embrace what we are doing with greater confidence. Hesitant subjects might quicken their pace at the sound of the “yes” although they would still be going the way they were going.

40 The violence of the image of the killjoy is significant. As R. D. Laing shows us, those who do not preserve the idea of the family within themselves, who do not identify with the family, are represented as the cause of violence: “To destroy the ‘family’ may be experienced as worse than murder or more selfish than suicide” (1971: 14). To break with the family is to risk breaking everything up: “In some families, parents cannot allow children to break the ‘family’ down within themselves, if that is what they want to do, because this is felt as the breakup of the family, and then where would it end?” (13). The demand that we reproduce the family thus reveals the vulnerability of its form: it is because the family is not fully secure (to break up the family is imagined as anarchic) that there is a demand that we retain it as our happy object through acts that demonstrate our love and loyalty. Not to do so is to risk being perceived as killing the family by killing its association with joy.

2. Feminist Killjoys

1 Although as Robin Barrow points out happiness and education do not necessarily involve each other: “one can be educated and miserable” (1980: 1).
2. However, as Jane Roland Martin discusses, *Republic* and *Émile* provide very different models of education for women: "The question naturally arises of how such radically different accounts of the education of women could be given by philosophers who make the same fundamental assumptions about education" (1995: 59).

3. I am particularly interested in the influence of *Émile* on Immanuel Kant. Famously, the one occasion on which Kant was reported to have forgotten his routine of a daily walk was when he was reading this book. In the "Fragment of a Moral Catechism," which appears within the first section of his "Doctrine of the Method of Ethics" in *The Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant writes about how to teach ethics, which is immediately translated into classical terms of teaching the pupil how to be virtuous: "The very concept of virtue already implies that virtue must be acquired (that is it is not innate). . . . That virtue can and must be taught already follows from its not being innate; a doctrine of virtues is therefore something that can be taught" ([1797] 1996: 221). The style of the conversation between teacher and pupil has clear resonance with *Émile*. Kant seems to offer a different account of the relationship between happiness and virtue, given that he separates the pragmatic law of happiness from the moral law of virtue. And yet both Rousseau and Kant suggest that the virtuous subject does not pursue happiness but will get happiness in return for following nature's path (Rousseau) or becoming worthy of happiness (Kant), although Kant describes this as a hope rather than guarantee. See also note 13 in my conclusion for a further discussion of Kant's "Fragment of a Moral Catechism."

4. I would like to acknowledge that I first developed this argument about conditional happiness as a result of reading *Émile*. Conditional happiness usually refers to the process whereby individuals define for themselves various conditions that need to be in place before they can be happy. The clinical psychologist Alan Gettis argues that "the conditional happiness notion doesn't really work" and cites Joan Borysenko's work to show how such a model for happiness will always lead to disappointment, as new conditions will always be set: "How many times has your mind told you that you could be happy if you lost ten pounds. Made more money? Then, even if these things come to pass, you just move on to the next set of conditions for happiness. The conditions are like the proverbial carrot that dangles in front of the donkey. You never reach them" (Gettis 2006: 41). I want to offer a different angle on the idea of conditional happiness by describing how conditions of happiness include the happiness of others, such that we will only be happy on condition that they are happy. I will not be evaluating whether or not we should make our happiness conditional in this way but rather will be exploring what follows when other people's happiness becomes a condition of our own.

5. For more reflection on happiness and compromise, see the final section of chapter 4.

6. You might be asked to disregard your views on x in order to make someone happy. I have found this especially true in the case of weddings. You are asked or even instructed to join the happy event of the wedding because it would make someone happy for you to share in their happy occasion even if they know that you are not happy with the very idea of marriage that is celebrated in weddings. You are often judged as selfish when you refuse to participate in the happiness of others, especially in cases when such happiness is sanctioned by law, habit, or custom.

7. More recent feminist critiques of *Émile* exist, although they do not attend specifically to Rousseau's arguments about happiness and gender. See, for example, Penelope Deutscher's (1997) analysis of sexual difference within *Émile*.

8. In thinking of happiness as a technology one might consult Foucault's essay "The Political Technology of Individuals." Foucault begins this essay by reflecting on a historical coincidence between World War II and public welfare and public health, suggesting that "life insurance is connected with a death command" (1988: 147). He then considers the police as "the specific techniques by which a government in the framework of a state was able to govern people as individuals" (154), offering an analysis of the manual or "systematic encyclopedia" written in France in the early eighteenth century by N. Delamare (156). Foucault analyzes how this document conceives of happiness as "a requirement for the survival and development of the state. It is a condition, it is an instrument, and not simply a consequence. People's happiness becomes an element of state strength" (158). Happiness can be a technique of governance: life insurance could be described as happiness insurance. When individuals assume responsibility for their own happiness, and the happiness of others, they are adopting such a technique. As Nikolas Rose argues: "The regulation of conduct becomes a matter of each individual's desire to govern their conduct freely in the service of a maximization of a version of their happiness and fulfillment that they take to be their own" (1996: 58–59).


10. *The Mill on the Floss* was one of my favorite texts from the nineteenth-century women's writing course that I took in 1988 at Adelaide University, which was the first course in which I was introduced to feminist theory. I wrote my honors dissertation about the narrative ending of this book in 1990. When I thought more about the figure of the female troublemaker in relation to killing joy, this was the first book that came to my mind. When I reread it, I was struck by how explicitly it engages with happiness in the dialogue between characters as well as in its narrative development. This of course should not surprise us: the genre of bildungsroman, with its focus on moral development, is inevitably bound up with ideas of happiness.
11 Rousseau links the danger of reading for girls to their inability to distinguish between imagination and reality. Sophy become unhappy, the narrative suggests, because she has fallen in love with a character from a book (440). The implication here is that girls lack the epistemic skills to distinguish fantasy from reality; they have a tendency to fancy the fanciful. But we could also read this narrative differently. Sophy’s unhappiness might be caused by an infatuation with a fictional hero, but the infatuation is also what causes her to be disappointed with what life has to offer: in reference to her suitor, she says to her mother, “I am dissatisfied with everyone” (439). The danger of reading for girls is a danger not so much to their own happiness but to the happiness of others: its reading which leads to a refusal to be satisfied with reality. The happiness of the ending thus requires Sophy to give up her books so that she can be satisfied with the prospect of marriage to Œmile. It is also interesting to note that a sequel was published to Œmile after Rousseau’s death, in which the happiness of their fate is rewritten. Sophy commits adultery (with the implication that she was a victim of a crime) and Œmile abandons her and their children. See Rousseau 1783.

12 I should point out here that the novel is presenting Maggie’s solution in a paradoxical way by showing her as willfully giving up her will or as desirously giving up desire rather than fully renouncing her will or desire (see Shuttleworth 1984: 104). Maggie has her epiphany after reading Thomas à Kempis’s Imitation of Christ, a book whose spirit George Eliot reportedly much admired (see Cooke [1884] 2007: 236). The implication of the novel might even be that true renunciation of the kind called for by Imitation of Christ is an ethical ideal. For an extended discussion of this episode and the idea of renunciation in The Mill on the Floss, see Carroll 1992: 123–39. I should note as well that the idea that happiness can be achieved through the renunciation of desire has a long history. Despite their differences, both Epicurean and Stoic models of happiness rest on the strict limitation of desire. For a discussion, see McMahon 2006: 55–56. See also my reflections on happiness and fortune in the conclusion to this book. The idea that we should give up desire (as a desire for something that exists outside one’s self) relates to the perceived necessity of becoming indifferent to that which is beyond our control. Happiness becomes tied to self-control: you have self-control if you make your happiness conditional upon only what is within your control.

13 Maggie’s identification as racially other makes sense of an earlier episode, where she runs off to be with the gypsies, with whom she feels a sense of kinship. Her kinship with gypsies functions to express her lack of kinship feeling for her family. For a good discussion of race within Victorian novels, including the significance of the figure of the gypsy, see Meyer 1996. Clearly, the use of racial trouble to describe female trouble does involve an act of appropriation that can vacate the whiteness of the troublemaker. We can also see how trouble one category can also put others into trouble.

14 I say Kantian subject, as the opposition that Maggie shares with Kant is between duty and inclination—as if without duty all we have is inclination. But note here that Maggie says she cannot sacrifice others for her own happiness. The paradox that I will explore is how happiness becomes a duty as a duty to promote the happiness of others.

15 Writing this book on happiness has sparked my interest in theorizing the sociality of the will and the ways in which people are described as willful insofar as they will too much, or too little, or in “the wrong way.” In other words, if willful subject is the one who makes explicit her disagreement.

16 See Ritter Felski’s excellent description of feminist killoys in her Literature of Feminism (2003: 1–3). She reads various caricatures of feminists as puritanical, bitter, and mean in writing by male literary critics intent on defending the value of literature against feminism. I will suggest that the figure of the feminist killjoy can be exercised in a wide variety of contexts, wherever there is a perception of a need to hold onto forms of power that are challenged by feminism.

17 Feminists are regularly diagnosed within popular culture as sublimating the disappointment through politics. This is why there is a kinship between the feminist and other figures such as the spinster or lesbian, who likewise en body the risk of disappointment (which is presumed to be the proper affective consequence of the “failure” to achieve heteronormative happiness). It is absolutely necessary that we continue to discuss the sexism and homophobia of such caricatures.

18 I am using the very recognizable figure of “the angry black woman” as referent to all women of color. Sometimes words can fail to capture the complexities of the history, especially in translation. In the UK context, to talk about “black feminism” would automatically reference work by all feminists of color, and I am aware that this is not the case in the United States. But the figure of “the angry black woman” has been written about in different contexts. See, for example Suneri Thobani’s reference to this figure in relation to women immigrants of color in the Canadian context (2003: 401), and Aileen Moreton-Robinson in relation to indigenous women in the Australian context (2002: 6). When discussing the figure, I keep the shorthand of “angry black woman,” and when discussing our relation to that figure, I have adopted the U.S. term “color.”

19 It might seem here that I am placing my hope in capacity, as that which is restricted by gender. Capacities are not simply about the joy of opening things up. Capacities also make some things possible at the expense of others— even if we don’t know yet what a body can do, we can recognize there is only so much this body can do at a given point in time. There is a little misery and
loss in every capacity—which does not make capacity miserable. I have been very struck in my participation in conferences by how much "opening up the body’s capacity to act" as a kind of weak inheritance of Spinoza has become a mantra in affect studies, as if such openings are necessarily good, or as if they should be installed as an agreed telos for politics. We always need to ask: what capacities for what, and capacities to do what? See the first chapter of my book *Queer Phenomenology* (2006) for a reflection on capacity as a mode of directionality.

20 Mrs. Dalloway's stream of consciousness offers itself as a consciousness of death: "Did it matter, then, she asked herself, as she walked towards Bond Street, did it matter that she must inevitably cease completely; all this must go on without her; did she resent it; or did it not become consoling to believe that death ended absolutely?" (12). I am offering my own slant by associating consciousness of death with consciousness of gender: so Clarissa in becoming Mrs. Richard Dalloway "must inevitably cease completely."

21 To be hopeful can defer recognition that one is not experiencing happiness by following a certain path. You can feel sad but be hopeful that "along the way" things will get better. The more you are hopeful the more you give up by not giving up. In recognizing that situations are hopeless, all those forms of deferred sadness can hit you. Recognition of loss can thus be one of the hardest forms of recognition. It often means being prepared to be undone.

22 Another, more recent book which could be described as an ode to Mrs. Dalloway is Rachel Cusk's *Arlington Park* (2006). This book approximates the form of Mrs. Dalloway: we have multiple points of consciousness, a sense of an unhappiness that is worldly, that is around; the action of the book takes place on a single day; there is a party, and the different characters of the book meet at the party.

23 This sense of how realizing possibility does not make things possible haunts Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*. The heroine becomes aware of a life outside the confines of domestic happiness, which is redescribed as an "indescribable oppression" (1899: 1993: 6), only to realize that what is outside that life would also involve becoming a possession. You recognize that what you gave up was not necessary but that you cannot take back what you have given up without giving yourself up. Her awakening to life thus leads her to death. Her death could be considered as liberation from happiness, a feminist refusal to be taken, to be given away by happiness scripts. For the significance of unhappy endings in women's writing, especially in the genres of romance, see Radway 1984 and DuPlessis 1985.

24 I am indebted to Sarah Schulman for this point.

25 I am not saying here that Richard's inheritance of sadness does not matter. It does. The injustice of his sadness needs to be recognized. Throughout history, women who deviate from the paths of happiness (who do not care in the right way by preserving "family happiness" at all costs, whatever their own unhappiness) have paid high prices: they have lost access to their children, they have lost their freedom, and they have lost their lives. The unhappy consequences for their children are part of this history. It is wrong to blame mothers for such unhappy consequences. The work of feminist critique is not to deny the unhappy consequences of acts of deviation but to offer better explanations of how they happen. When thinking about Richard's sadness, I was reminded of the relatively happy ending of the lesbian novel *The Price of Salt*, which was first published in 1952 (see chapter 3, note 2, for a discussion of its ending). This ending is happy in the sense that the lesbian lovers Therese and Carol get to stay together; or at least plan their lives as if they are staying together. But the cost of their happiness is high: Carol loses the custody battle for her child. Beyond the frame of this ending, her child might inherit the unhappiness of the life they leave behind. We should also remember here that children often bear the burden of the desire to maintain the appearance of family happiness. When parents stay in unhappy relationships "for the sake of the children," the consequences for children are often unhappy. Some forms of inherited unhappiness are less visible because they challenge the myth of where and how happiness should be given.

26 In describing Claudia as an affect alien, I am not suggesting that she simply persists in her feeling of alienation; such persistence could, after all, compromise her capacity to live. In order not to be compromised by alienation one might learn to compromise, to be strategic about how one lives. Claudia's own survival strategy is love: "The best hiding place was love. Thus the conversion from pristine sadism to fabricated hatred, to fraudulent love. It was a small step to Shirley Temple. I learned much later to worship her, just as I learned to delight in cleanliness, knowing, even as I learned, that the change was adjustment without improvement" (16). I would describe such learning as falling short of an identification: she might learn to find the right things delightful, but in describing such self-learning as adjustment without improvement, she is not "really" agreeing that the cause of delight is what is most delightful, nor is she considering herself as having become more delightful. Some adjustments are not about becoming well-adjusted by accepting what exists and believing in the good of its existence; they can involve pragmatic reorientations to what does exist in order to make an existence possible. The word adjustment suggests not only to get used to, but also to bring near. Claudia's compromise allows her to become a subject of knowledge; she learns about whiteness—by tracking its genealogy through domesticated objects—through what is brought near. There is hope generated by the very proximity of an adjustment. For good discussions of the complexity of Claudia's relationship to whiteness see Cheng (2001: 18) and Yancy (2008: 214–16).

27 The ending gives Pecola her blue eyes, at the cost of her sanity. It takes away
the potential of her child. And yet, there is hope in this ending, expressed in Claudia’s conversion from rage against white dolls to care for an unwanted black baby: "More strongly than my fondness for Pecola, I felt a need for someone to want the black baby to live—just to counteract the universal love for white baby dolls," Shirley Tempest and Maureen Peals" (1949). Of course, to convert deficiency into desire does not necessarily reinsert unhappy lives into happy ones. As Claudia acknowledges: "The soil is bad for certain kinds of flowers. Certain seeds it will not nurture, certain fruits it will not bear, and when the land kills of its own volition, we acquiesce and say the victim had no right to live. We are wrong, of course, but it doesn’t matter. It’s too late. At least on the edge of my town, among the garbage and the sunflowers of my town, it’s much, much, much too late." (164). It might be too late for a happy ending, too late even for possibility, but at least someone wanted that child. To want the unwanted is a moment of political hope, however much the moment passes by.

28 See also Barbara Ehrenreich’s "Welcome to Cancerland" (2001) for a related critique of the requirement that cancer patients be cheerful. Ehrenreich suggests that "so pervasive is the perniciousness of the breast-cancer world that unhappiness requires a kind of apology" (48) as if "the disease offers more than the intangible benefits of spiritual upward mobility" (49). What Ehrenreich offers, dissenting from this obligation to be cheerful, is an account of her "purifying rage" (53).

29 I develop this argument about happiness and false consciousness in chapter 5.

30 For a good critique of affirmative feminism, see McRobbie 2008. See also my critique of affirmative ethics in the conclusion of this book.

3. Unhappy Queers

1 Anxiety about happy queers is crucial to the enforcement of heterosexuality. For instance, the Section 28 Law in the UK, which was introduced in 1988 and repealed in 2003, forbade any "promotion" of homosexuality by local authorities. By "promotion" the law included "the publishing of materials with the intention of promoting homosexuality" or "of the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship." It is interesting to note that a children’s book, Jenny Lives with Martin and Eric, was a key reference point in the moral panic leading to Section 28: in 1983 the Daily Mail reported that a copy of the book was in the collection of a school library. This novel begins: "Jenny is a little girl. Martin is Jenny’s dad and Eric is Martin’s lover. They all live happily together." (Börsche 1983: 1). Happiness is read here as a form of promotion: to tell the story of a queer family as "happy" is read as promoting homosexuality.

That some stories of happiness are visible as forms of promotion shows how happiness is already presumed to reside in specific ways of living: in this case, in the form of the nuclear family. It may also involve an anxious belief that there is something dangerously promotable about queer family forms.

2 One novel stands out as quite exceptional for giving its lesbian characters a relatively happy ending: Patricia Highsmith’s The Price of Salt, first published in 1952 under the pseudonym Claire Morgan, in her reflections on the significance of the book in an afterword to the new edition, Highsmith explains: "The appeal of The Price of Salt was that it had a happy ending for its two main characters, or at least they were going to try to have a future together. Prior to this book, homosexuals male and female in American novels had to pay for their deviation by cutting their wrists, drowning themselves in a swimming pool, or by switching to heterosexuality (so it was stated), or by collapsing—alone and miserable and shunned—into a depression equal to hell" (1952: 261). However, the costs of this happiness are high: Carol loses custody of her child.

3 The happiness duty thus becomes a duty not to cause unhappiness by speaking about your disappointment (your failure to be made happy by x). For example, say you are out having a meal with someone you love, someone whose happiness matters to you. You really want her to enjoy her meal. You don’t want her to be disappointed. If she is disappointed, you will be disappointed. Her disappointment will even cause your disappointment. She might experience this anxiety about the possibility of her disappointment as a pressure not to be disappointed. She might have to perform enjoyment to avoid causing you disappointment. Your desire for the happiness of your beloved can create an illusion of happiness ("false impressions"), which involves the negation rather than expression of desire. In raising questions about the intimacy of love and happiness, I am not saying that we do not experience love as a care for what happens to loved others (whether in the form of wanting their happiness, wanting what is good for them, wanting them to get what they want, wanting good things to happen to them). We can, and we do. I am just raising concerns about some of the less happy effects of love as wanting happiness for the beloved. Of course, having another want your happiness can also generate happiness.

4 This principle that to love makes the other’s happiness essential to your own is widely articulated. But does this principle always hold true? I would say that there is a desire for this principle to be true but this desire does not make the principle true, as a psychoanalytic approach might suggest. If love is to desire the happiness of another, then the happiness of the subject who loves might depend upon the happiness of the other who is loved. As such, love can also be experienced as the possibility that the beloved can take your happiness away from you. This anxious happiness, you might say, forms the basis of an