A theory of the aesthetic appreciation of nature will be well-founded only if it is based on a conception of what it is for appreciation to be aesthetic. If appreciation is understood as consisting in, or at least as being informed by, correct or sound valuation, aesthetic appreciation is, or is permeated by, well-grounded aesthetic valuation, which implies that the basis of a well-founded theory of the aesthetic appreciation of nature will be a conception of what it is for a judgement to be aesthetic. Kant's theory is the most perfect realization of this ideal: his conception of an aesthetic judgement is the theory's foundation; and the classification offered by the theory of different types of aesthetic judgement about natural items is extracted from this conception through reflection on the character of nature. This classification, although somewhat marred by the acceptance of a philosophically conventional taxonomy and, accordingly, incomplete, is, I believe, unsurpassed in the sureness with which basic distinctions are drawn and the various similarities and differences amongst kinds of aesthetic judgement are indicated. Kant's theory is further distinguished by its concern to identify the nature of the pleasures underlying or associated with aesthetic judgements about nature—what exactly these pleasures are pleasures in and what psychological processes or mechanisms give rise to them—and by its articulation and attempted vindication of claims that might be made for these pleasures. But his analyses of the various kinds of aesthetic judgement about natural items and identification of the pleasures on which they are founded are, I believe, not always correct. Furthermore, he fails to establish more than one of the claims he makes about the kinds of pleasure involved in the appreciation of nature. Nevertheless, a firm grasp of the virtues of Kant's theory, which display themselves in an adequate presentation of it, and a realization of its defects, which need to be demonstrated, yield a more profound insight into the aesthetic appreciation of nature than is afforded by any other theory.
II

For Kant, an aesthetic judgement is a judgement whose 'determining ground' cannot be other than 'subjective', which means that its determining ground cannot be other than the feeling of pleasure or displeasure (CJ, §1). What Kant has in mind by an aesthetic judgement is a judgement made about something on the basis of experiencing that thing. His idea is that the nature of your experience of an object provides you with a reason to make a positive or negative aesthetic judgement about the object only if you react to the perception of the object with pleasure or displeasure—your judgement requires this as its ground. In other words, your judgement of something you are experiencing is aesthetic only if your judgement is of such a kind that it must be determined by the pleasurable or unpleasurable nature of your experience of it, so that you would lack any reason to make that judgement on the basis of your experience of the item if you were not to experience it with pleasure or displeasure. This implies that an aesthetic judgement concerns an item's capacity or suitability to provide pleasure or displeasure to someone who experiences it, either to the subject alone or to some wider class—to all adult human beings with normal perceptual capacities, to those with an undeformed human nature, to those who satisfy certain requirements of knowledge, experience, and imagination, to those with a feeling for morality, or whatever. For if the content of an aesthetic judgement did not involve a reference to pleasure or displeasure, it would not be necessary that its determining ground should be the subject's pleasure or displeasure in experiencing the object of the judgement: it is just because an aesthetic judgement asserts the capacity or suitability of an object to give pleasure or displeasure that, given that it must be based on the nature of the subject's experience of the object (independently of other information), the judging subject's experience of pleasure or displeasure must play the crucial role Kant's theory assigns to it.

III

In accordance with this conception of an aesthetic judgement, Kant distinguishes three non-compound kinds of aesthetic judgement concerning the merely material nature of an object or array of objects as this is apparent in perception, this nature being considered independently of what kind or kinds of object they are. These judgements are not based on concepts of the kinds of things being judged or evaluated: such a judgement about an object does not take into account what kind of object this is an instance of. A material object is formed matter: matter that has a boundary, or set of boundaries, however indefinite. Kant identifies, first, an aesthetic judgement about an object's form—a judgement about the pleasantness of its

1 References to Immanuel Kant, Critique of Judgement (= CJ) are by section number and/or the pagination in vol. 5 of the standard Prussian Academy edition of Kant's works. I have consulted the three English translations of the work by J. H. Bernard, J. C. Meredith and Werner S. Pluhar, the last two of which include the pagination of the Prussian Academy edition.
boundary or the set of boundaries of its parts—a pure judgement of taste, the judgement of 'free' beauty. Second, he identifies an aesthetic judgement about the perceptual appearance of any constituent of an object's matter—a judgement about the pleasantness of a colour, taste, smell, or sound—the judgement of what is agreeable. Finally, he identifies an aesthetic judgement that is concerned with neither the matter nor the form of an object but, instead, is about boundlessness, boundlessness in extent or power, in or at least occasioned by the matter of the object a subject is faced with—a judgement about the object's suitability to arouse the feeling of the subject's possession of a quality superior to any of mere sensibility, however immense, and in particular to the immensity of what he or she is now confronted by—another pure aesthetic judgement, the judgement of the sublime. Kant maintains that whilst it is not built into a judgement of the agreeable that it claims to be universally valid for human beings—and no such claim on its behalf would be warranted—a claim to universal validity is intrinsic to both judgements of the beautiful and judgements of the sublime; and for that reason, unlike the beautiful and the sublime, Kant assigns no substantial value to the agreeable and has no real interest in it. But although judgements of the beautiful and of the sublime are alike in claiming universal validity, whereas a judgement of the beautiful stands in need of a 'deduction', the establishment of its credentials as a *bona fide* judgement with a non-relative truth value, or the rightfulness of its demand for universal agreement, a deduction that Kant attempts to provide, Kant claims that the 'exposition' of a judgement of the sublime makes any further deduction of its credentials redundant.

Each of these kinds of aesthetic judgement can be about, or immediately occasioned by, either a natural object (or array of natural objects) or a product of human artifice. But if the judgement is directed towards what is in fact a natural object, it is not integral to the judgement, or the hedonic state on which it is founded, or as if it were, natural, *a fortiori*,

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2 Kant conceives of all pure judgements of taste (and all pure aesthetic judgements) as being singular judgements. A generalization such as 'Roses in general are beautiful' or a universal judgement such as 'All tulips are beautiful' is not a purely aesthetic judgement but a logical judgement founded on an aesthetic judgement (CJ, §§8, 33). Of course, since some tulips are ill-formed, withering, or attacked by disease, the universal judgement that all tulips are beautiful would need some qualification to be at all plausible; and since not all well-developed, flourishing tulips have the same form, and small differences in form can affect beauty of form, even the qualified claim would be exceptionally hazardous.

3 Or, perhaps—there is some uncertainty in Kant's position—a number of such elements, considered independently of their relations to one another. (Kant's notion of form, as defined in the first Critique, is 'that which so determines the manifold of appearance that it allows of being ordered in certain relations' [Critique of Pure Reason, A20/B34].)

4 Although Kant insists that there is an impropriety in not judging a work of fine art under the concept of a work of art, i.e. as a work of art: a work of fine art must be recognized to be art, not nature (CJ, §45, 306); and a judgement of artistic beauty is an assessment of a work as a work of art (CJ, §48, 311).
KANT ON AESTHETIC APPRECIATION: PART I

a natural object of whatever kind it happens or appears to be: the judgement of a natural colour or the colour of a natural object or a naturally produced sound or the taste or smell of a natural substance as being agreeable, the judgement of a natural object's form as being beautiful, the judgement of a natural array or phenomenon as being sublime—none of these is a judgement of its object as being natural. A judgement of free beauty about a flower, say, will be a judgement of the flower that it is beautiful, not a judgement that it is a beautiful flower, or a beautiful morning glory flower (if that is what it is recognized as being): it will be a judgement about what in fact is a flower, but not a judgement of it as being a flower or a flower of a certain type. Likewise, a judgement of the sublime provoked by the star-studded night sky now visible overhead will be a judgement of it, but not as being the natural phenomenon it is or is perceived to be. Accordingly, although an aesthetic judgement of any one of these kinds about nature is a form of aesthetic appreciation of nature—of something that is in fact natural—it does not constitute aesthetic appreciation of nature as nature.5

IV

When Kant asserts that a pure judgement of taste is not based on a [determinate]6 concept, he means that the distinctive pleasure of the beautiful, the pleasure in an object that is the basis, or is constitutive, of the object's being experienced as beautiful, the pleasure in it as being beautiful, is not in any way due to the object's being experienced as falling under a concept, to the object's being experienced as being an instance of an empirical kind.7 Since the judgement concerns only the

5 At least, it does not constitute aesthetic appreciation of nature as nature in the positive sense of that idea: see my 'The Aesthetic Appreciation of Nature', British Journal of Aesthetics, vol. 36, no. 3 (July 1996).

6 A determinate concept is a concept that can be exemplified in experience. In his resolution of the Antinomy of Taste Kant maintains that a pure judgement of taste is based on a concept, but one that is indeterminable (CJ, §37). Given what he here means by being based on a concept, one implication of his view is that a pure judgement of taste does not attribute an empirically accessible property to its object (detectable by perception or science). In other words, there is no empirically accessible property common and peculiar to beautiful forms: the concept of beauty does not bring an object it is applied to under a concept of an empirically detectable property. Accordingly, if we consider only the spatio-temporal world, there is no discoverable property possessed by all beautiful objects by virtue of which they are such as to induce in all human beings the pleasure distinctive of the beautiful.

7 The fact that in a pure judgement of taste, pleasure in a beautiful natural object is not based on a concept of the natural kind the object instantiates does not require—what some take Kant's view to be—that the object must be experienced but without its being experienced as falling under a concept (of that natural kind): all it requires is that the judging subject abstracts from any empirical concept under which the subject perceives the object. Although Kant often writes as though his conception of a pure judgement of taste requires the subject to experience an object without conceptualizing it as being an instance of some kind—a requirement that would render his conception nugatory—he is aware that it does not: 'A judgement of taste about an object with a definite intrinsic purpose would be pure only if the person judging either had no concept of this purpose, or abstracted from it in making his judgement' (CJ, §16, 231).
object's 'form', the pleasure arises only from the perceived spatial structure of the object's matter, the spatial relations perceived to obtain among its elements, the way in which its secondary qualities are distributed across the space-segment it occupies, the form of the sensory appearance of the object considered in abstraction from any concepts it falls under.

Kant's identification of the distinctive pleasure of the beautiful invokes his distinction between (passive) sensibility and (active) understanding, the sensuous as opposed to the intellectual, what is 'given' in perception as opposed to what is 'thought': the first constituting an 'immediate' relation with the object in its singularity, the second relating to the object 'mediately' through a universal characteristic, one that a number of objects may have in common. In what follows, I do not question this distinction. In fact, some form of the distinction is, I believe, essential, as the difference between perception and mere thought suggests. For perception presents its basic content in a different manner from thought: the mode of presentation—the manner in which what is represented is represented—in [mere] thought is different from that in perception, which presents its content sensuously (by means of sensibility, as Kant would say). Whether or not Kant countenanced the possibility of an object's being 'given' in perception without being in any way 'thought' by the subject,\(^8\) as he seems to do,\(^9\) it is clear that for Kant the conceptual content of a perception is only part of its representational content. Consider the example that Kant gives in his *Logic*: a 'savage' who sees a distant house, the use of which he does not know, and another person who sees the house and knows it to be a building in which humans dwell, differ, according to Kant, in that whereas the 'cognition' of the former is mere intuition, that of the latter is both intuition and concept.\(^10\) Whether this is the correct account of the difference between the two perceptions, whether the representational content of a perceptual experience can be partly or wholly non-conceptual, and whether perceptual representation is through and through conceptual or is founded on non-conceptual representation or possesses a non-conceptual dimension,\(^11\) are questions that can be left aside. For it is clear that there is a sense in which the representational content of

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8 I am inclined to believe that Kant conceived of the perceptual states of non-human animals in this fashion: they perceive the world, thus enabling them to react differentially to surrounding objects, but without their perceptions constituting judgements. A passage in *Critique of Pure Reason*, A546–7/B574–5 seems to imply that non-human animals, although they possess sensibility, lack understanding.

9 At, for example, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A89–91/B122–3.


the two perceptions might be alike in every respect except that the one has an additional content determined by a concept present in it but absent from the other; that the difference in the contents consists in the concept of a dwelling under which one person, but not the other, sees the house; and that the content of each perception is, partly or wholly, determined by a component defined by analogue elements, such as colour, shape, size, direction, and distance, which component the perception acquires by virtue of an aspect of the experience different in kind from one that involves or imports such a concept as that of a dwelling, even if this component is not properly thought of as being non-conceptual. Kant's thought that the full representational content of a perception accrues to it by virtue of distinct kinds of aspect is spot on, although there certainly are difficulties in forming an adequate and precise conception of the contribution made by sensibility.  

But Kant's identification of the distinctive pleasure of the beautiful depends on a rather murky conception of the mental mechanisms at work in perception of the world. For Kant identifies the distinctive pleasure of the beautiful as being the product of the two cognitive powers: the imagination, the function of which in perception is to connect and arrange the data provided by the senses to form an accurate image or perceptual representation of the object as a piece of formed matter as the object appears from the subject's point of view; and the understanding, the specific function of which in perception is to introduce unity into this synthesis of the sensory manifold by bringing the object under a concept of the kind of thing it is, so that the object is perceived not just as something coloured and shaped in a certain way, but as being a flower, or seashell, or whatever. His claim is that the pleasure of experiencing something as being beautiful is the feeling engendered by the imagination and the understanding operating together in a particular manner, the feeling of this interaction, which he often characterizes in an abbreviated form as their free harmonious play. More precisely (in terms of Kant's faculty psychology): the imagination plays freely under the sole restriction that what it produces must be in harmony with the understanding's function in cognition of conceptualizing the imagination's product. But even this formulation is an inaccurate representation of Kant's real view. For in the perception of a beautiful object the imagination is not truly free, since it must produce an accurate representation of the object's form on the basis of what is

12 See, for example, my later discussion of the judgement of the sublime in Part III (forthcoming) §V.
13 Kant's explanation of the pleasure that grounds a pure judgement of taste is notoriously difficult to understand—he himself was aware of its obscurity (CJ, 170)—and to understand in such a way that it can be reconciled with the doctrine of perceptual judgement advanced in the Critique of Pure Reason. Such a reconciliation is rendered impossible if Kant is interpreted as claiming that in a pure judgement of taste about an object the object is perceived without even being brought under the pure concepts of the understanding (the categories). (This interpretation is rightly and convincingly rejected by Dieter Henrich in 'Kant's Explanation of Aesthetic Judgment' in his Aesthetic Judgment and the Moral Image of the World [Stanford: Stanford U.P., 1992]). The way in which I have chosen to represent Kant's position is determined by my rejection of this interpretation.
given in intuition: the image must be a representation of the way the object actually is, and, accordingly, the imagination is not free to manufacture whatever form it pleases but is tied to the production of a determinate form. But Kant conceives of a beautiful form as being just the kind of image that the imagination would produce if at play, under the sole constraint of conforming to the lawful nature of the faculty of understanding, i.e. under the sole restriction that its product is conceptualizable. So beautiful forms are just those that, under this restriction, the imagination would delight in producing if it had no other aim than to please itself. Hence, when it is required to produce such a form by a given object that confronts the perceiving subject, it freely does so in the sense that it does exactly the kind of thing that it would be disposed to do if it really were free. For this reason it is unsurprising that the subject delights in the exercise of the imagination demanded by an object with a beautiful form; and because the demands on the understanding are exceptionally slight, being required to exercise only a monitoring function, it is relatively at ease in the perception of an object as being beautiful. Putting these two factors together we reach Kant's conception of the experience of beauty as the facilitated play of imagination and understanding, mutually quickened (and so made pleasurable) by their reciprocal harmony.

This is connected with Kant's characterization of beauty as 'an object's form of purposiveness insofar as it is perceived in the object without the representation of a purpose' (CJ, §17, 236). Since the form of a beautiful object is one that the imagination would delight in producing if in free play, an object with a beautiful form is just as it would be if it had been skillfully designed with the express purpose of engaging the cognitive powers in free harmonious play in the contemplation of it, and in this sense the object is as though it has been designed for the express purpose of facilitating the exercise of our cognitive powers upon it. But a pure judgement of taste is not based on a concept of the object, in particular a concept of the object's purpose (or natural functions). Hence we experience a beautiful natural object as if its form were purposive for our cognitive powers but without taking that actually to be the case (for then we would be experiencing it as art, not nature).

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14 CJ, 240-1. In order to effect his deduction of judgements of free beauty it is clear that Kant requires each person's imagination to favour the production and contemplation of precisely the same perceptual forms.

15 According to Kant, to judge whether an object is beautiful is, in one of his formulations, 'to judge whether freedom in the play of imagination harmonises or clashes with the lawfulness of understanding' (Immanuel Kant, Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View, trans. Mary J. Gregor [The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974], p. 190), the judgement being based on whether the subject experiences pleasure in the contemplation of the object's form, the subject's experience being thought of as exemplary or definitive for human beings. For a fuller account and an evaluation of Kant's attempted deduction of pure judgements of taste, see Paul Guyer's outstanding work, Kant and the Claims of Taste (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U.P., 1979), especially chs 7-9; Anthony Savile, Aesthetic Reconstructions (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987), chs 4 and 5; and Malcolm Budd, Values of Art (London: Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, 1995), pp. 26-38.
The fundamental difficulty with Kant's identification of the distinctive pleasure of the beautiful is that it seems to be no more than a rendition of what is undoubtedly true of the experience of finding something freely beautiful in terms of a supposed specific manner of operation of the mental mechanisms postulated in Kant's theory of perceptual knowledge—a rendition that fails to illuminate the experience. It is characteristic of the experience of finding something's form beautiful that one's attention is captured by it, so that one continues to look at the object, delighting in its appearance for its own sake—an appearance in which each part seems to answer perfectly to each other part, so that the variety in the appearance is perfectly unified, the elements manifestly according with one another or belonging together. This contemplation of the object's form requires the form's continued representation, different features of it being salient or focused on from moment to moment as one's eyes move back and forth within the object's contours as one wills. The fact that the object's delightful form continues to be represented to the subject as her eyes play over it corresponds with one feature of Kant's account, the imagination's favouring in its free play the construction of this form over non-beautiful forms, and the fact that the experiencing subject is unconcerned to identify what kind of thing the object is that possesses such a rewarding form, or unconcerned with its being the kind of thing it is recognized as being, the object in any case exhibiting a wonderfully unified array of elements, a perfect combination of unity and heterogeneity, is construed by Kant as the understanding's lacking its usual task of imposing unity by conceptualizing the imagination's product. And Kant merely adds to this the idea that since the activity of each of the cognitive powers (as described) requires so little of or imposes so little constraint on the activity of the other, the activity of each is such as to quicken the activity of the other, with the result that the manner in which they jointly operate is felt as unusually delightful. Insofar as Kant's specification of the pleasure definitive of the experience of finding something beautiful is only a picturesque redescription of the experience, it is unenlightening; insofar as it is a matter of a priori speculation about psychological processes that occur in perception, it needs to be replaced by an empirically well-founded account.

Another kind of judgement—a certain kind of non-aesthetic judgement—plays a significant role in Kant's thoughts about beauty. This is a judgement about an object as being an instance of kind K—a judgement that, when it assumes a certain form, might mistakenly be identified with a pure judgement of taste—the judgement that the object and its parts are in harmony with, or appropriate or well-suited to perform, the functions or purposes of things, or the parts of
things, of that kind—the judgement of qualitative perfection. A thing's qualitative perfection as a K is the suitability of its formed matter to its purpose or function as something of kind K and to the purposes or functions of its parts: to be qualitatively perfect as a K an object must be so formed that it satisfactorily discharges whatever purposes are integral to the nature of a K (CJ, §§15, 16, 48). The mistaken identification Kant is concerned to oppose is that of a pure judgement of taste with a judgement of qualitative perfection when this judgement is thought confusedly. A concept figures in a person's judgement in a confused fashion if the person is not aware of and so is unable to expound the properties contained in the concept. For a judgement of qualitative perfection to be thought confusedly is for the concept of qualitative perfection to figure in the judgement in a confused, rather than distinct, fashion, much as, so Kant believed, although the philosopher and the man in the street base their moral judgements concerning the wrongfulness of deceit on the same rational principles, the philosopher's are distinct, the common man's confused (CJ, §15, 228). For Leibniz, Wolff, and their followers, the 'sensory representation' of a characteristic was a confused concept of that characteristic, so that, accordingly, an item's qualitative perfection as presented in perception—its looking to be, or presenting the appearance of being, well-suited to discharge or perform the functions integral to the kind it exemplifies—was a confused concept of it. But a pure judgement of taste is not a cognitive judgement, not even a confused one, whereas a judgement that an object possesses qualitative perfection is a particular kind of cognitive judgement, namely a teleological judgement; and a pure judgement of taste about an object is an aesthetic judgement, based on the subject's pleasure in perceiving it, whereas a judgement of qualitative perfection is not an aesthetic judgement. Seeing an object as a qualitatively perfect specimen of kind K does not imply finding it beautiful, and seeing it as being beautiful does not imply, for some K, seeing it

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16 It is clear that Kant intends the concept of qualitative perfection to be applied at the level of the parts of a thing, as in the case of a flower, which is only a part of a plant. In fact, Kant argues that a natural object is a natural purpose only if each of its parts has a natural function (see CJ, §§65, 373-374).

17 Insofar as the manifold is not well-suited to the object's 'purpose', or presents features antagonistic or opposed or poorly suited to it, it lacks qualitative perfection or detracts from whatever qualitative perfection the object possesses. Note that 'perfect' does not mean 'could not be better'. It implies only that the object is not deformed or defective in some way that precludes a part from performing its natural function satisfactorily.

18 See, for example, Immanuel Kant, Logic, trans. Robert S. Hartman and Wolfgang Schwarz (New York: Dover, 1988), Introduction, §V.

19 For Kant's critique of the view of Leibniz and Wolff that the distinction between the sensible and the intelligible is merely a matter of confused as opposed to clear representation of things, see Critique of Pure Reason, A43-4/B60-2.

20 This is easy to see from the fact that it is possible that nothing of kind K is, or is experienced by the judging subject as being, beautiful—as, perhaps, with spiders or octopi. (Note that to judge that something is beautiful for a K, or as far as Ks are concerned, is not the same as to judge that it is a beautiful K, i.e beautiful as a K.) Hegel located the distinction between beautiful and ugly animal
as being a qualitatively perfect thing of kind K. It is therefore easy to see that the perception of an object as being beautiful is not the same as the sensory representation or 'sensuous intuition' of the qualitative perfection of the object.\textsuperscript{21}

VI

In addition to the previously mentioned non-compound kinds of aesthetic judgement, Kant acknowledges the combination of a pure judgement of taste about something with a judgement of qualitative perfection about that thing, the latter (as already indicated) being concerned with a concept of the kind that the object instantiates—the kind of thing it is or is meant to be. This combination of judgements constitutes another aesthetic judgement—the judgement that something is a beautiful thing of kind K—an impure judgement of taste, the judgement of 'dependent' or 'adherent' beauty.\textsuperscript{22} Kant does not construe 'beauty' as a predicative adjective in the judgement that O is a beautiful K in the sense that he does not analyse this judgement—the judgement that O is dependently beautiful (as a K)—as the combination of the judgement that O is a K and the judgement that O is beautiful. Rather, he analyses it as the combination of the judgement that O is a good specimen of kind K and the judgement that the sensory manifold of O has a beautiful form.\textsuperscript{23} In other words, ‘O is a beautiful K’ = ‘O is a qualitatively perfect K and O is [freely] beautiful’, where the first conjunct (like the second) is asserted on the basis of the look of O, so that it is apparent or manifest in O’s appearance that it is a qualitatively perfect K.\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{21} For Kant’s justified rejection of these ideas see, for example, First Introduction to the Critique of Judgement, VIII, ‘Note’ and Cf., §15.

\textsuperscript{22} In fact, it is not entirely clear that Kant understands a judgement of dependent beauty as a combination of these two judgements. It is possible that he requires in addition delight that the object judged is qualitatively perfect (or even delight in its qualitative perfection).

\textsuperscript{23} For Kant, beauty is always predicated of the mere form of an object, both in judgements of free and dependent beauty. The criticism that Kant’s acknowledgement of judgements of dependent beauty in addition to judgements of free beauty (pure judgements of taste) introduces a contradiction into his account of beauty is easily seen to be wide of the mark. Even in a judgement of dependent beauty, the pleasure that grounds the aesthetic judgement it contains is not based on a concept.

\textsuperscript{24} Note that even though Kant recognizes impure aesthetic judgements about natural objects in which objects are judged under a concept, e.g. judgements of dependent beauty, this is not tantamount to countenancing the aesthetic appreciation of nature as nature (in the positive sense I have distinguished—see n. 5). A judgement of dependent beauty made about an item of natural kind K as being an instance of that kind falls short of constituting a form of aesthetic appreciation of nature as nature: even if the kind is recognized as being a natural kind, the fact that the kind is natural is not integral to the pleasure that grounds the judgement, for only one component of a judgement of dependent beauty is itself an aesthetic judgement, and this component is just a judgement of free beauty. Accordingly, the aesthetic element of a judgement of dependent beauty is not a judgement of the object as being natural.
The notion of qualitative perfection, as it figures in a judgement of dependent beauty, suffers from a number of obscurities. The attribution of qualitative perfection in a judgement of dependent beauty will be based on the perceptual appearance of qualitative perfection. But this is susceptible of two interpretations, a weaker and a stronger, a negative and a positive. The weaker requires only that the appearance should not be such as to indicate an imperfection in the proper functioning of the parts. In other words, it does not look as if some part of the object is not well-suited to perform its natural function. The stronger demands more: the object must display signs that its visible parts are well-suited to discharging their natural functions. But now consider the body of an animal, for example. Which parts with natural functions can visibly be performing (or appearing to perform) their function well? The skin, the nose, the ears, the eyes, the lips, the arms? It is easy to see that a bodily part is deformed or missing, but the lack of such defects does not constitute qualitative perfection. Does the sheen of a young person's hair or the bloom of his or her complexion, each an indicator of health, signal that the hair and skin are performing their own specific natural functions well? Moreover, the natural function of a bodily part, e.g. the arm, can be manifold, and the part can be well-suited to perform some, but not all, its functions. Furthermore, the stationary or momentary appearance of an animal's body is not in general a good guide to whether certain of its visible parts are in good condition—to whether the eyes can see or the hands can grip—this being manifest only in movement. In what follows I shall ignore all such difficulties (except the last).

Note that the combination of judgements that constitutes a judgement of dependent beauty does not, as such, involve a twofold pleasure. For the perception of an object as being qualitatively perfect need not occasion pleasure. A qualitatively perfect specimen of natural kind K is one in which each part is performing satisfactorily or outstandingly well its natural function or 'purpose'. To see a natural object as a qualitatively good or perfect specimen of its kind is to see the various manifest parts of the object as being well-suited to perform their natural functions. But seeing a natural item as being a qualitatively perfect instance of its kind implies neither of the two forms of delight that might be occasioned by its qualitative perfection: pleasure that the item is a qualitatively perfect specimen of kind K or pleasure in the item's qualitative perfection as a K. To take pleasure in its qualitative perfection as a K, in its being a good specimen of its kind, is to take pleasure in the perception of its various parts as being well-suited to perform their natural functions, to delight in its manifold as being good for a K (CJ, §16, 230–231); and such a pleasure is not an inevitable consequence of the perception of its qualitative perfection. And the perception that something is a qualitatively perfect thing of its kind need not occasion pleasure that it is such a specimen. Nevertheless, although the combination of judgements that form a judgement of dependent beauty does not, as such, involve a twofold pleasure, it allows for such a possibility. The possibility that Kant
recognizes is that delight in an object's beauty might be conjoined with delight that the object is a qualitatively perfect K. But for Kant pleasure that something is qualitatively perfect is an intellectual, rather than an aesthetic, pleasure: a pleasure is aesthetic only by virtue of being the determining ground of a judgement, and pleasure that an object is a qualitatively perfect thing of its kind is not the determining ground of the judgement that it is such a qualitatively perfect specimen. Accordingly, this twofold pleasure is a combination of pleasures of different kinds, neither of which, Kant maintains, is enhanced by being combined with the other, although the union of the two pleasures constitutes a heightening of the subject's total experiential state (CJ, §16).

VII
Kant claims that aesthetic judgements about the beauty of natural objects are typically pure judgements of taste (judgements of free beauty). Accordingly, he insists (rightly) that judgements about the beauty of flowers characteristically do not involve a judgement about the suitability of the flower to its discharging its natural function (as the reproductive organ of the plant) (CJ, §16), a function that a great many who experience flowers as beautiful might be ignorant of. Kant recognizes, however, that our aesthetic judgements about the beauty of natural objects are not always pure judgements of taste: he acknowledges that our aesthetic judgements about the beauty of certain kinds of natural objects, above all sentient things (horses or human beings, for example), are usually judgements of dependent or adherent beauty (CJ, §§16, 48). But in cases where an aesthetic judgment about a natural item's beauty is not a judgement of free beauty, Kant's account does not in fact seem to be an accurate analysis of the judgement's content, for it is not a constituent of the judgement that someone is a beautiful man or woman that his or her form—considered independently of its being the

25 CJ, §16. Note that, for Kant, pleasure that something is a qualitatively perfect K can never be universally valid, for he often stresses that there is no necessary connection between the applicability of a concept and the feeling of pleasure—no rightful demand that everyone should experience pleasure—except in the case of the morally good, and he characterizes pleasure that an object is qualitatively perfect as pleasure based on a concept. This would also apply to pleasure in an object's qualitative perfection.

26 It has often been argued that Kant is mistaken about this. But in fact it is not important whether Kant is right about the normal application of the concept of beauty to natural items. The crucial issue is not whether our normal aesthetic judgements about flowers, for example, are in conformity with Kant's view, or, indeed, whether we ever judge flowers as free beauties. For even if we rarely or never judge natural objects, or natural objects of a certain kind, as free beauties, this would show only that Kant was mistaken about the frequency of pure judgements of taste about natural objects. What matters is not whether our aesthetic judgements about natural objects are typically pure judgements of taste, but whether Kant's classification of aesthetic judgements about natural objects accurately identifies all significant forms of the aesthetic appreciation of nature. In what follows I indicate my scepticism.
form of a man or the form of a woman—is beautiful. This defect stems from Kant's conception of a judgement of dependent beauty as a conjunction of two judgements, one being aesthetic—a pure judgement of taste—and the other non-aesthetic, which is forced upon him by his leading idea that beauty is properly predicated only of an object's form. Accordingly, in a judgement of dependent beauty about an object of natural kind K, beauty is related to the natural kind only externally, not internally: Kant cannot acknowledge the idea of an object's being beautiful as a K. Although this is a consequence of Kant's conception of beauty as properly predicated only of an item's form, considered in abstraction from the kind of thing it is, it reveals a gap in Kant's classification of aesthetic judgements, perhaps a twofold gap, even if his doctrine about the proper subject of beauty is accepted.

For what this classification fails to recognize is the possibility of a certain kind, or more than one kind, of non-compound aesthetic judgement about a natural object as being an instance of kind K. First, there is a kind of aesthetic judgement about a living thing as being an instance of its natural kind, a judgement that concerns its qualitative perfection. Now for there to be a distinctive judgement for which the subject's pleasure is a determining ground—the judgement that something is funny, for example—the thought-content of the judgement must be resistant to specification independently of the nature of the subject's hedonic reaction. Unlike the judgement that something is pleasant or the judgement that something is beautiful, the thought-content of the judgement that something is qualitatively perfect can be specified independently of the nature of the subject's response to the object and so of any reference to pleasure. Hence it is not an aesthetic judgement. But a judgement that asserts the capacity or suitability of a natural item's qualitative perfection to give pleasure has the required response-dependent thought-content. A judgement of this kind satisfies Kant's criterion for a judgement to be aesthetic, but is missing from Kant's classification. Of course, not all qualitatively perfect objects are likely to be judged as suitable to give pleasure by virtue of their qualitative perfection, no matter what natural kind they belong to. Rather, a judgement of this sort—one that expresses delight in an object's qualitative perfection as a K—will depend on the character of the natural functions of a certain natural kind and the ways in which they are realized in the appearance of something of that kind. Furthermore, if the natural function of a

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27 In one place Kant claims that the content of 'That is a beautiful woman' is just 'Nature displays in that woman's form a beautiful presentation of the purposes inherent in the female figure' (CJ, §48, 312). In short: to judge a woman to be a beautiful woman is to judge her figure to be a beautiful presentation of the purposes inherent in the female body. And this means that her figure is such as to satisfy the natural functions of the female body and it is beautiful. Note that Kant here omits any reference to the expression of morally desirable qualities as a requirement of female beauty (see §VIII below).

28 My 'The Aesthetic Appreciation of Nature', British Journal of Aesthetics, vol. 36, no. 3 (July 1996) is in part an exploration of this possibility.
part or parts of the body of an animal or insect is to enable the creature to move around its environment, as with the wings of a bird or butterfly, the fitness of the parts to perform their natural function will be manifest only when the creature is in motion. In such a case, delight in the qualitative perfection of a creature with respect to these parts will be taken not so much, or at all, in the creature's stationary appearance but in the display of the parts' fitness to discharge their natural function; and the delight will be dependent on the creature's manner of movement, as with the gracefulness of a gazelle's leaping motion, or the manifest suitability of the bodily parts to the creature's ability to flourish in its natural environment, as with the wings of an eagle or a hummingbird. Second, not every kind of natural thing is, as such, a thing with natural functions: natural items divide into those that do possess natural functions—living things, things of a kind that have evolved by natural selection—and those that do not. Clouds, rivers, valleys, rainbows, stalactites, and many other natural items do not have natural functions and are not composed of parts that perform such functions. And yet aesthetic delight in them can be delight in them as things of such kinds. Kant's aesthetic theory fails to countenance the possibility that aesthetic pleasure might be derived from the formed matter of an object seen as falling under a non-purposive, non-functional, concept, so that its being something of that kind is integral to the pleasure. But there is nothing in his conception of an aesthetic judgement as a judgement whose determining ground cannot be other than the feeling of pleasure or displeasure that implies that an aesthetic judgement must be based on a consideration of an object in abstraction from what kind of thing it is or any concepts under which it falls.

VIII

A further judgement of beauty that Kant identifies is the judgement that an item of kind K is an ideally beautiful K. It might be thought that, since the judgement that O is dependently beautiful as a K includes the judgement that O is

29 Of course Kant recognized that there are natural objects which are not purposive (in form) (see, for example, First Introduction to the Critique of Judgement, §6); but he does not seem to have contemplated the possibility that any such objects might be aesthetically attractive as being instances of their kinds—that their aesthetic appeal might be dependent upon their being seen as certain kinds of thing.

30 Paul Guyer has suggested that it follows from Kant's definition of an aesthetic judgement as a judgement the determining ground of which cannot be other than subjective, which therefore cannot be a concept, that the determining ground of an aesthetic judgement must be pleasure in the mere representation of an object (Kant and the Experience of Freedom [Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1996], p. 103). But the fact that a concept cannot be the determining ground of an aesthetic judgement does not imply that the determining ground must be pleasure in the mere representation of an object. For pleasure taken in the representation of an object under a concept is subjective, not objective, and the determining ground of a judgement based on such a pleasure would be the pleasure, not the concept.
qualitatively perfect as a K, the judgement that O is dependently beautiful as a K is the same as, or at least implies, the judgement that O is an ideally beautiful K. But this is not so: an object can be a dependently, but not an ideally, beautiful K. In fact, even if there are innumerable many dependently beautiful Ks, no one of them might be an ideally beautiful K, the idea lacking any application. For there is an ideal of beauty for things of kind K if and only if it is possible for there to be a maximally beautiful thing of that kind, a unique, exemplary archetype of beauty—something that is such that, unless a thing of kind K matches it in appearance, that thing is a less [dependently] beautiful thing of kind K. In other words, there must be a specific form that something of kind K can possess, which is such that anything of kind K that possesses that form is more beautiful than anything of kind K that does not. This requires that the natural functions or 'purposes' of things of that kind must so constrain the appearance of those things whose parts perform these functions well as to determine a particular form that such a thing must assume, if it is not to fall short of the beauty attainable by things of that kind.

Kant denies that there are any natural kinds other than humanity that are subject to such a severe constraint, so that there is just one kind of thing that admits of an ideal of beauty, namely a human being. Clearly, as Kant asserts, there cannot be an ideally beautiful tree, a tree with a form more beautiful than any other possible form that a tree might have: the requirement of presenting the appearance of satisfying the natural functions of the elements of a tree allows too much latitude in form for trees to admit of an ideal of beauty. And the same is true for other natural kinds that have many different varieties. But the more specific the species, the less numerous the possible variations in form among equally beautiful instances of the species; and the concept of an ideally beautiful thing of a certain kind appears not to contain anything that would in principle rule out an ideal of beauty for a highly specific type of organism, each part of which has a natural function.

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31 In fact, Kant does not spell out exactly what he means by an ideal of beauty for things of kind K. That he means a maximally beautiful K is indicated by his asserting that 'the highest model, the archetype of taste', the ideal of the beautiful, 'does indeed rest on reason's indeterminate idea of a maximum' (CJ, §17, 232). I ignore the possibility that Kant's conception of an ideal of beauty is less demanding, allowing that there is an ideal of beauty for things of kind K if there are maximally beautiful Ks—things of kind K than which nothing of kind K can be a more beautiful K—of quite different forms. This appears to be ruled out by various details of Kant's thoughts about an ideal of beauty; and if this were his conception, these thoughts would be even less compelling than, I believe, they are.

32 This formulation is an accurate representation of Kant's thought only if the notion of purpose is not restricted to natural functions of bodily parts but has the wide scope given to it by Kant, for whom it includes the idea of humanity's moral 'vocation'. In fact, Kant considers human beings to be an exception to the rule that no natural kind admits of an ideal of beauty just because human beings are persons, moral agents: this is their sole relevant distinguishing feature. His introduction of the appearance of moral goodness into the ideal human figure is, of course, motivated by the requirement of qualitative perfection, not by beauty of form.
Furthermore, Kant’s claim that there is an ideal of human beauty is unconvincing in a number of ways. There is some uncertainty in his conception of an ideally beautiful human being, but he appears to represent the ideal of human beauty as being the product of two factors, the ‘aesthetic normal idea’ of the animal species *Homo sapiens* and the visible expression in the human body of the qualities of a person who has a morally good soul. The normal idea of the adult human body, which a human body must not violate if it is to be beautiful, is a kind of stereotype of the appearance of a human being, formed in the imagination, Kant speculates, in a manner similar to the way in which the image in a Galtonian composite photograph is created. But he himself acknowledges that different races and cultures will form different normal ideas of the adult human species, a particular body that conforms to one such idea violating another, and he ignores the obvious fact that humanity comprises both men and women, whose bodies possess parts with different natural functions. And even if there were to be a unique normal idea of the human species, this would not secure the desired consequence that there is a maximally beautiful form of a human being, even leaving aside what Kant considers to be the all-important contribution of morality to the ideal beauty of a human body. For the inevitable indeterminateness of the normal idea of a natural kind—a feature that Kant’s position requires—will accommodate different but equally beautiful forms of instances of that kind, thereby violating the requirement of uniqueness of form for ideal beauty. Moreover, there are many features of the human body that the requirement of qualitative perfection does not determine: size or shape of head, length of neck, relative proportions of lower to upper leg, of trunk to legs, and so on. Hence, indefinitely many qualitatively perfect human bodies will diverge from the form given by the normal idea, and Kant fails to establish that any such human body must be less beautiful than a human body of the form realised by the normal idea. Furthermore, unless there is only a single way in which the qualities of a morally good soul can be manifest in any form (above all, that of the human face) that is

33 Kant omits the requirement that the normal idea of the human body as it figures in the ideal of human beauty should be the normal idea of the qualitatively perfect human body. But unless this condition is imposed, his idea that ‘conformity’ with the normal idea of the human body is a necessary condition of human beauty is unpersuasive. Kant maintains that to be a beautiful K is to be a qualitatively perfect K and to have a beautiful form. Hence, conformity with the normal idea of a K is a necessary condition of being a beautiful K if and only if every qualitatively perfect K must conform with the normal idea of a K. But this will not be so unless the normal idea of a K is understood as the normal idea of a qualitatively perfect K—if even then.

34 The normal idea of the human body does not constitute the complete ideal of human beauty but ‘only gives the form that constitutes the indispensable condition of all beauty’. Moreover, Kant maintains, the reason we are pleased by the normal idea is only because ‘it does not contradict any of the conditions under which alone a thing of this kind can be beautiful’, not because it is itself beautiful (Cf, §17, 235). Accordingly, Kant conceives of the normal idea as a template that an object must ‘fit’ if it is to be a beautiful instance of its kind.

35 I ignore the fact that the form of the human body varies as its limbs and other movable parts are differently disposed, an important feature for Kant given the fundamental role of form in his account of beauty.
consonant with the normal idea, the essential contribution of morality to the ideal of human beauty will further undermine the required uniqueness of the type of an ideally beautiful human being.

IX

Kant maintains that the pleasure expressed in a pure judgement of taste is disinterested. He explains an interest in an object as pleasure in the [representation of the] object's existence (CJ, §2, 204, §4, 209, §41, 296). What he means by this is that an interested pleasure in an object is pleasure that such and such is the case with respect to the object: it is pleasure that the world is a certain way, pleasure that something is true of this particular object, pleasure in a fact (or apparent fact) about the object; in particular, pleasure that a certain kind of thing, which the given object exemplifies, exists. His claim about a pure judgement of taste is therefore that the pleasure it expresses is not pleasure that the represented object exists, or that it is of a certain kind or possesses certain properties, which implies that the pleasure is not the satisfaction of one of the subject's desires. Given Kant's understanding of a pure judgement of taste as a judgement about an item's form based on the pleasure experienced in the contemplation of that form, this is clearly correct: pleasure in the perception of an object's structure is not the same as pleasure that the elements of the object are structured as they are.

It is unclear whether Kant conceives of pleasure in an object's qualitative perfection as being an interested pleasure. But given his concept of an interest, it would be wrong to construe this pleasure as an interest: pleasure in O's qualitative perfection is not identical with pleasure in the fact that O is qualitatively perfect (which pleasure could arise for a variety of reasons), and implies neither this nor any other merely propositional pleasure. However, it is clear that Kant must allow for the combination of pleasure in the beautiful and an interested pleasure—as he does when delight in an object's beauty is conjoined with pleasure that it is a qualitatively perfect thing of its kind. Consider another case: you are delighted at or in seeing your first instance of something of a certain kind, which you also find beautiful to behold. Your pleasure has a double source

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36 In fact, as a number of commentators have pointed out, Kant explains the notion of an interest in a number of different, and apparently non-equivalent, ways, or appears to operate with more than one sense of the notion; and to many his meaning has not appeared obvious.

37 Pleasure at the existence of O = pleasure that such-and-such is (positively) the case with respect to O = pleasure at a fact (or apparent fact) about O. Kant passes freely between the conception of an interest as a propositional pleasure and the conception of an interest as a desire or concern that something should be the case, a desire determined by a concept (e.g. CJ, §4, 209, §10, 220). This move is easy to understand, for if you are pleased that p you want it to be the case that p, and if you want it to be the case that p and you believe that p, then you are pleased that p.

38 Kant certainly claims that pleasure based on the concept of a purpose is interested: 'Whenever a purpose is regarded as the basis of a delight, it always imports an interest as the determining ground of the judgement about the object of the pleasure' (CJ, §11).
and a double object: it derives both from your awareness of the fact that you are seeing for the first time an object of kind K, and from the inherent beauty of the specimen before you; and you are delighted by both the fact and the beauty of the item. But there is no need to argue that Kant must allow for the combination of an interested pleasure and pleasure in the beautiful, for Kant construes the lover of natural beauty—someone who has an immediate interest in natural beauty—as deriving pleasure not only from a natural object’s beauty but from the object’s existence. And Kant’s thoughts about the conditions of an immediate interest in natural beauty and its importance in human life form the final part of his account of the aesthetic appreciation of nature, as far as beauty is concerned.

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39 In fact, leaving aside pleasure in the agreeable and pleasure in the morally good, Kant should allow for a threefold combination of pleasures, two being disinterested and one an interest: pleasure in an object’s qualitative perfection, pleasure in its beauty, and pleasure in the existence of the object—as, for example, when you are delighted by the manifest suitability of a bird’s make-up to the performance of the various natural functions of its parts, by the beauty of its form, and by the fact that your long-standing desire to see a bird of that kind has at last been realised. Additional pleasures are also possible, e.g. higher-order pleasures (pleasure in the communicability of one’s pleasure, for example).