

That Intelligible Object of Desire: Spinoza on *Cupiditas*

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While desire is evidently closely related to hedonic experiences and evaluative judgments, the precise nature of these relations and the respective roles that these states play in guiding and explaining action remains contested. Many prominent attempts to work out the relationships between pleasure, motivation, and evaluation fail to provide a fully intelligible account of desire and its role in action. In this presentation, I offer an interpretation of Spinoza's theory of desire that reveals how he overcomes many of the intelligibility problems that dog rival accounts. In the process, I challenge the widely held view that Spinoza is a psychological egoist, presenting him instead as a motivational pluralist whose account of desire incorporates cognitivist and non-cognitivist, hedonist and non-hedonist elements. The result is a theory of desire, its objects, and its role in action that is not only intelligible, but also maybe, just maybe, somewhat plausible.