Russell's criticisms of "the common-sense view of desire"

by Ibrahim Najjar

BEFORE PRESENTING HIS theory of desire in the third chapter of *The Analysis of Mind* (1921), Russell criticizes a "theory" of desire which he attributes to common sense.[1] Russell's discussion of this theory is very brief, and his criticisms of it have gone largely unnoticed. Even among those who have noticed it, there is disagreement as to whose view Russell is criticizing. Russell himself does not say who the holders of this theory are, but claims that it is "the ordinary unreflecting opinion" (p. 58). However, Anthony Kenny and David Pears suggest differently. Kenny believes that it refers to Hume's theory of desire, while David Pears thinks that it refers to an earlier view of desire that Russell himself advocated in his lectures on logical atomism in 1918. In this paper I present my reasons as to why I find these two claims unacceptable and provide two alternative interpretations: a Meinongian view of common sense and a straw man that Russell created to clear the ground for his own account of desire.

I believe that Russell's criticisms of the common-sense theory of desire deserve our careful consideration and that we should take a closer look at his characterization of that theory. Russell is not concerned with giving a detailed account of the way common sense views desire, but rather with its assumptions. Once Russell has successfully exposed these assumptions, he proceeds to give his own theory of desire secure in the belief that it is committed to less dubious assumptions than those of the view he rejects. Accordingly, my emphasis in this paper will not

[1] *The Analysis of Mind* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1921), pp. 58, 59. The phrase in my title comes from the latter page. Russell alternatively calls it a "theory", a "view", and an "opinion". After sketching the theory he comments cautiously: "I think it is fair to say that this is a view against which common sense would not rebel" (p. 58).

be on providing an analysis of the way common sense really views desire, but rather on Russell's criticisms of it and the reasons that led him to attack it.

Some may prefer concentration on the issue of how common sense views desire, instead of the controversy surrounding the target of Russell's criticisms, but I cannot agree. Russell scholars disagree on the target of Russell's attack on the common-sense view of desire, and this disagreement colours one's understanding of Russell's own theory of desire. In my opinion, clearing the ground as to the target of Russell's attack leads to a better understanding of Russell's theory of desire itself.

Russell published *An Outline of Philosophy* in 1927, some six years after the publication of *The Analysis of Mind*. He offers the same theory of desire in both works. However, he does not discuss the common-sense theory of desire in the *Outline*. It is clear that the discussion of the way common sense views desire is not necessary for the development of Russell's own theory of desire. Indeed at no other place does Russell discuss the common-sense view of desire again. It is important, then, to know why Russell criticizes this view and how it helps us understand his own theory of desire.

It should be mentioned that it is not necessary for Russell's purposes that common sense have only one theory of desire. Nor will I inquire whether common sense has one or more theories of desire. It suffices for our purposes to say that Russell criticizes a common-sense theory which is basically an intentional theory of desire. Moreover, Russell does not discuss the various expressions of desire that are used by common sense. It can be said that common sense allows for various uses of "desire". It is used to refer to a feeling that is not followed by actions, as when one desires to see victims of starvation rescued without being able to offer any assistance. It is also used to express a wish for something that cannot be achieved by a course of action, as when one desires what is physically impossible. It may also be used to refer to a sensation or a feeling that leads to a purposeful course of actions. Given this variety of uses of "desire" in everyday experience, one cannot fail to notice that the use of "desire" that Russell singles out for his attack is one that involves purposeful actions.

The common-sense view of desire embodies a theory the basic tenets of which he describes in the following way:

> It is natural to regard desire as in its essence an attitude towards something which is imagined, not actual; this something is called the *end* or *object* of the desire, and is said to be the *purpose* of any action resulting from the desire. We think of the content of the desire as being just like the content

> of a belief, while the attitude taken up towards the content is different. According to this theory, when we say: "I hope it will rain," or "I expect it will rain," we express, in the first case, a desire, and in the second, a belief, with an identical content, namely, the image of rain. It would be easy to say that, just as belief is one kind of feeling in relation to this content, so desire is another kind. (*Ibid.*)

In Russell's opinion, common sense views desire as an attitude towards something imagined. Moreover, common sense considers desire and belief simple and unanalyzable feelings directed to imagined objects. Without mentioning it, Russell attributes to common sense an intentional theory of desire and belief. However, Russell goes on to say that the analysis of desire and belief requires three elements, namely, a feeling, a mental content and an object, and that the view of desire and belief as attitudes is committed to the position that mind is a substance completely different from any other.

It is clear that Russell is interested in attributing certain characteristics to the common-sense theory of desire without worrying about whether or not these characteristics are consistent with the way common sense actually views desire. As mentioned earlier, common sense uses "desire" in more than one sense, but Russell is interested mainly in one sense, namely, that desire as a mental phenomenon that causes actions appropriate to a certain end. But there remain other cases in which desire is a feeling that does *not* lead to actions. Whether common sense does in fact distinguish between mental content and an object of desire is a debatable point. Some may think that when they desire something, there occurs in their minds images of what they desire. However, one does not expect common sense to provide explanations of distinctions such as those between feelings, images, contents and objects. Nor does Russell probe common sense for such explanations. One, quite naturally, expects philosophy or psychology to provide theories involving such distinctions. Yet Russell attributes such a view to common sense without giving reasons why he does so. All he says in this regard is that it is "natural to regard desire as in its essence an attitude towards something which is imagined, not actual", and that this is "the ordinary unreflecting opinion" (p. 58).

Russell does not identify any particular philosopher as an exponent of the common-sense view of desire, but the question arises as to whether he might not implicitly have meant a certain philosopher or a school of philosophy. Anthony Kenny, who devotes the major part of a chapter in his book *Action, Emotion and Will* (1963) to Russell's theory of desire, believes that the "view which Russell treats with such respect

is not so much 'the natural view' as 'the empiricist view'. The description of desire as 'a feeling' and the content of desire as 'an image' recall Hume's doctrine that desire was a direct passion, an impression which arises from good 'though conceived merely in idea' (*Treatise*, II, 3, 99)."[2] However, David Pears in his article "Russell's Theory of Desire", which is published both in his volume *Questions in the Philosophy of Mind* (1975) and in *Russell in Review* (1976), believes that while this common-sense theory of desire is "related to Hume's theory", it is in fact the theory that Russell himself accepted earlier in 1918 in "The Philosophy of Logical Atomism".[3]

Kenny does not offer any arguments to support his contention that what Russell describes as the *common-sense* theory of desire is the same as *Hume's*. This is all the more puzzling because Kenny believes also that *Russell's* account of desire is a sophistication of Hume's (*Action, Emotion and Will*, p. 111). On closer inspection, however, it is difficult to see on what basis one can attribute the common-sense view to Hume. In the quotation from the *Treatise* that Kenny cites, the context of Hume's treatment of desire is missing. According to Hume, "all the perceptions of the mind may be divided into impressions and ideas", and the impressions are divided further "into original and secondary".[4] Hume makes a further distinction within impressions, namely, between impressions of the senses and passions. Passions are, in turn, divided "into direct and indirect passions". Desire falls "under the direct passions". Hume says that "the impressions which arise from good and evil most naturally, and with the least preparation, are the direct passions of desire and aversion" (Part III, Sec. IX), and sums up his view by saying that "desire arises from good considered simply." When one reflects on the sort of theory that Russell attributes to common sense and compares it with what Hume says about desire, one finds that Hume is interested in explaining how desire arises as a result of the knowledge of what good is. True, desire, for Hume, is a direct passion and hence an impression of the mind or a feeling, but it is misleading to say that Russell's view of the common-sense theory of desire is the same as Hume's. According to Hume, the idea of good arouses a desire for it, but in the common-sense view, according to Russell, the idea of any object may arouse a feeling of desiring. The object need not be

[2] *Action, Emotion and Will* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963), p. 102.

[3] *Questions in the Philosophy of Mind* (London: Duckworth, 1975), p. 251; *Russell in Review*, ed. J.E. Thomas and K. Blackwell (Toronto: Samuel Stevens, Hakkert, 1976), p. 215.

[4] *A Treatise of Human Nature* (London: Everyman's Library, 1966), Bk. II, Part I, Sec. I.

thought of as good, and the way a person evaluates or construes what he or she desires does not enter into Russell's account of the common-sense theory of desire.

There is another consideration why the common-sense theory of desire should not be confused with Hume's. Russell assumes that common sense considers desire a mental phenomenon in which feelings are intentionally directed towards certain ends. He further assumes that all mental intentional relationships are conscious. These assumptions are carried over from his discussion of Meinong and Brentano's theories of mind in the first chapter of *The Analysis of Mind*. Common sense, according to Russell, considers desire an essentially conscious and intentional phenomenon, whereas Hume's theory of desire is not committed to such assumptions, and neither Kenny nor Pears suggests that it is. As is well known, Hume quite explicitly denied the substantial view of the self.

Kenny may have been led to equate the common-sense view of desire with that of Hume because Russell believes that common sense views desire as a feeling. However, Kenny was not led to believe that the view of desire that Russell attributes to common sense is the same as Hume's simply because of the way Russell describes the common-sense view of desire. Kenny tends to emphasize only two views of desire (beside his own): empiricist and behaviourist. And with both of these he finds serious difficulties. Since Russell wants to offer a modified version of the behaviourist view, as Kenny argues, it follows that whatever view of desire Russell is rejecting, it must be the empiricist view of desire. Although Russell is clearly partial to the behaviourist view, it hardly follows that the common-sense theory of desire that he rejects must be the same as the empiricist view of desire.

Pears advocates a different interpretation. According to Pears, the theory of desire that Russell attributes to common sense is related to Hume's, but "the relation is not identity" (*Questions*, p. 251). The common-sense view of desire is an improvement on Hume's "because it allows for the articulateness and definiteness of typical reports of desires." In Pears' view, Hume described a desire as "attached to a single idea, or image" whereas common sense allows for the content to be "a proposition composed of images" (*ibid.*). Pears remarks that Russell earlier advanced such a theory of desire and belief in his "Philosophy of Logical Atomism" and concludes that the view of desire that Russell is rejecting is that of his previous stand.

However, this claim is not convincing either. It is indeed true that in the third chapter of *The Analysis of Mind*, Russell reverses the stand that he took in the fourth lecture of "The Philosophy of Logical Atomism". In that lecture, Russell defends the view that desire and belief are "mental phenomena" and attacks neutral monism and behaviourism because they "explain away belief and desire."[5] The theory of desire and belief that he defends in 1918 considers desire and belief as different attitudes towards the same proposition. Moreover, this theory of desire is quite different from the theory of desire that Russell attributes to common sense. For one thing, in *The Analysis of Mind*, Russell speaks of the content of desire, for common sense, as an imagined object rather than a proposition. In the second place, he describes the desire of common sense as a mental phenomenon intentionally directed to an end. In the third place, if Russell thought that the common-sense theory of desire is the same as his previous theory of desire, he would have made a point of mentioning it especially since he has made similar admissions in connection with neutral monism, and since *The Analysis of Mind* was written only a few years after "The Philosophy of Logical Atomism". And finally, we ought not to ignore the fact (as Kenny and Pears have) that Russell has professed to be portraying the details of a commonly held, *pre-philosophical* (i.e. "unreflecting") view of desire.

In any case, if one is looking for a theory of desire in Russell's account of the common-sense view, one need go no farther than *The Analysis of Mind* itself. Russell devotes the first chapter of this book to criticizing Brentano and Meinong's theories of mind. According to them, desire is a mental phenomenon, and like all mental phenomena it is conscious and involves an intentional relation between an act of presentation and an object. It is true that Brentano and Meinong differ in their analyses of mental phenomena, but both of them accept the view that all mental phenomena are essentially conscious. Brentano's analysis of desire would differ from Meinong's in so far as Meinong allows for a distinction between the content of a presentation and the object of presentation, whereas Brentano allows only for a distinction between the act of presentation and the object of presentation. The fact that Russell uses terms like "content" and "object of desire" together with the fact that he has explicitly repudiated Brentano and Meinong's theories of mind strongly suggest that Russell may still have had their theories of desire in mind when he was giving an account of the common-sense theory of desire. The temptation of identifying the common-sense theory of desire with that of Meinong is very great not only

[5] *Logic and Knowledge*, ed. R.C. Marsh (London: Allen and Unwin, 1956), p. 221. Reprinted in *The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell*, Vol. 8: *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism and Other Essays, 1914–19*, ed. J.G. Slater (London and Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1986), p. 195.

because of the above points, but also because of the errors that Russell attributes to the common-sense theory of desire. Russell wants to deny that desire is a conscious mental phenomenon, as Brentano and Meinong claim, and points to two sets of evidence derived from psychoanalysis and animal psychology which might be construed as pointing to further weaknesses in Meinong's theory of desire. But here again, if Russell were rejecting only Brentano and Meinong's theories of desire, he would have said so. Of course, Russell might have forgotten to make this link or deliberately wanted to remain vague, but one must not forget that he meant his criticisms to be directed against a theory of desire that is regarded as formulating a common-sense view.

The common-sense theory of desire, according to Russell, cannot be refuted on logical grounds. Nonetheless, he mentions some facts derived from psychology which can be adduced against that theory to make it less plausible, "until at last it turns out to be easier to abandon it wholly and look at the matter in a totally different way" (*Analysis of Mind*, p. 59). Russell mentions two such facts. The first fact is derived from psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysts have shown, in his opinion, that in "all human beings, but most markedly in those suffering from hysteria and certain forms of insanity, we find what are called 'unconscious' desires, which are commonly regarded as showing self-deception" (*ibid.*). Patients suffering from hysteria and insanity are observed to act in certain ways without knowing what the purposes of their actions are. The psychoanalyst attempts to discover what these purposes are and on the basis of such a discovery tries to rehabilitate the patient by making him or her aware of the purposes of his or her actions. What interests Russell is not the psychoanalyst's programme of rehabilitation, but the assumption that not all human actions are caused by conscious desires. Russell accepts the psychoanalyst's premiss that some human actions are caused by unconscious desires, but rejects the psychoanalytical view of unconscious desire.

The second fact that Russell adduces against the common-sense theory of desire is that animals are said to have desires without necessarily being supposed to possess consciousness: "we do not expect them to be so 'conscious,' and are prepared to admit that their instincts prompt useful actions without any prevision of the ends which they achieve" (p. 61). Russell admits that animals "*may* have minds in which all sorts of things take place, but we can know nothing about their minds except by means of inferences from their actions; and the more such inferences are examined, the more dubious they appear" (p. 62). In view of this fact, Russell concludes that "actions alone must be the test of the desires of animals." We observe an animal perform a familiar sort of

behaviour, and we judge on the basis of that behaviour whether "it is hungry or thirsty, or pleased or displeased, or inquisitive or terrified." According to Russell, the verification of our judgment, if it is possible, "must be derived from the immediately succeeding actions of the animal." Common sense errs by supposing that people "infer first something about the animal's state of mind—whether it is hungry or thirsty and so on—and thence derive their expectations as to its subsequent conduct." Russell observes that "this detour through the animal's supposed mind is wholly unnecessary." Our expectations of the actions of an animal should be derived from its previous actions directly. We observe an animal behave in a certain manner, and on the basis of its actions we judge what it wants and what further actions it might perform.

In Russell's opinion, common sense considers desire a mental phenomenon that involves consciousness of the desired object or a prevision of that object. According to Russell, this view of desire suffers at least on two counts: (*a*) it does not allow for the possibility of there being unconscious desires, and (*b*) it assumes that animals have minds. In Russell's view, some psychologists, and particularly Freud, have demonstrated that there are unconscious desires. A theory of desire that rules out the existence of unconscious desires on theoretical grounds must be defective. Moreover, the assumption that animals have minds is unnecessary in order to account for desire in animals. It is true that animals behave in a manner similar to us when we desire something, but it does not follow from this either that animals have minds or that the way common sense views desire is the only adequate way. According to Russell, on the basis of the actions of animals, we can say what they want. Here again, as in the case of unconscious desire, the common-sense view of desire appears in an unattractive light.

Russell's whole discussion of the "errors" of the common-sense view of desire is superficial and misleading. By suggesting that animals might lack minds, he gives the impression that animals might have no feelings. Yet almost certainly this was not intended by him, since he maintains that feelings and other mental occurrences do initiate actions in animals. His real focus, despite a clumsy way of presenting the matter, is to isolate and criticize the notion of desire as a feeling "containing" its object within itself or as a feeling intentionally directed towards an end. In its place, he wants to provide a partially behaviouristic orientation in the account of mental phenomena in general and desire in particular. This focus is, in a way, on the "Meinongian" aspects of the common-sense view.

Russell's appeal to facts drawn from psychoanalysis and animal

behaviour does not constitute, as he admits, a logical refutation of the common-sense theory of desire. It may seem that Russell rejects this theory because of these facts, but it is possible for common sense to provide explanations for the same facts and claim the support of other prominent psychologists. It is more plausible to say that Russell wants to reject the common-sense theory of desire on philosophical grounds, and the fact that he mentions unconscious desires and the desires of animals is an attempt to show that a new theory of desire is needed. More specifically, Russell finds the supposition that desire is an intentional mental phenomenon or an essentially conscious phenomenon unacceptable on theoretical grounds and goes out of his way to mention certain areas of psychology where desires are studied without presupposing that desire is a conscious phenomenon.

One may ask how accurate and representative is the theory of desire that Russell has attributed to common sense, while at the same time bearing in mind that Russell, on the one hand, attributes a *theory* of desire to common sense and, on the other hand, claims that this theory is the ordinary and unreflecting opinion. It should be pointed out that Russell concentrates his criticism on the view that desire is a feeling consciously directed towards a certain object and that it is the cause of the actions that a person performs to obtain the desired object. Whether common sense holds that all desires are conscious is a debatable point. From the fact that desire generally involves an idea of the desired object, it does not follow that one always knows for sure what one wants; in many cases one takes wild guesses as to what one wants. One may also be mistaken as to which object might best satisfy one's desire. Common sense allows for the possibility that there may be times when we do not know what we want as when we wander about aimlessly not knowing what to do. Sometimes we act without knowing why we are acting in the way we do. It is possible from a common-sense perspective to consider such cases as unconscious desires, and Russell himself mentions some common examples: a person envies another person and is malicious about him, but unconscious of being so (*Analysis*, p. 62). We also sometimes act "upon the impulse to inflict pain, while believing that we are acting upon the desire to lead sinners to repentance" (p. 60).

True, common sense may view unconscious desire in a way different from Russell or Freud, but Russell's own view of unconscious desire, it might be said, is different from Freud's. Quite simply, there is no universally held view of unconscious desire. Russell's objection does not work against the common-sense view of desire, which does not deny unconscious desire, but it fares better against a theory like Brentano's or Meinong's that excludes the possibility of there being unconscious mental phenomena on theoretical grounds. However, what would be needed before any theory, in any case, is a more complete description of the phenomenon of desire. And this Russell does not give.

It should be kept in mind that there is something definitely misleading about Russell's speaking of a common-sense "theory" in the first place. Common sense has not advanced any theory of desire. Fundamentally, there is no common-sense *theory* of desire. Rather, Russell has tried to formulate an account of desire which seeks to preserve many of our own common-sense beliefs about the phenomenon of desire. This account is certainly not comprehensive, and not fully accurate either. In fact, Russell is not much interested in preserving or rehabilitating a common-sense account of desire, but more in attributing to it certain erroneous views which are suspiciously like those of Meinong. In any case, if there ever was a common-sense theory of desire, it was intended for normal cases and for instances mainly of human desire, not of animal desire.

With regard to animal behaviour, common sense may attribute mind to animals on bases other than merely desires. Animals generally behave, like us, on their own initiative; they come and go and do things that are not predetermined for them by people. They differ from inanimate objects and robots. One cannot control their movements as one controls mechanical devices or programme them like robots. Common-sense operates on the assumption that we have minds and that animals may very well have them, especially since they do what we usually do when we desire something. Common sense attributes minds and desires to animals on the basis of analogy with ourselves. In terms of common sense, to have a mind is not considered a *metaphysical claim*. It is a genuine characterization of those things which are taken to have feelings and experiences of various sorts much like our own.

Russell is aware that his objection against common sense with regard to animal desire does not reveal a fatal weakness in the common-sense theory of desire. After all, the assumption that animals have minds is not an absurd one. However, Russell has succeeded in taking the bull by the horns and revealing a fatal weakness in that theory. Common sense, in his view, holds that desire is a mental phenomenon intentionally directed towards an end and that no further analysis of it is possible. Russell's appeal to animal desire serves partly as a heuristic device. Suppose, it might be said, that we deny that animals have minds, then how are we to explain their desires or their purposeful behaviour? Russell extends the same questions to human desires. What sort of an analysis can we offer of desire once we deny that human

beings have minds which are essentially intentional substances that are *sui generis*? Russell believes that there are no theoretical grounds for assuming that there are minds or substances of this kind and that their existence is not verifiable. Instead of this Cartesian or Meinongian view of mind, Russell advocates a neutral-monist view, according to which mind is a logical construction out of sensations and images.

In conclusion, it can be said that Russell's whole discussion of the common-sense theory of desire and its errors serves to put the problem of desire into focus. If we deny that there are minds or mental substances of the variety that has been widely circulated in the history of philosophy and particularly by Descartes, Brentano and Meinong, then what sort of theory of mental phenomena, in general, and of desire, in particular, is possible? The common-sense theory of desire is intentional, and hence is too close to those of Brentano, Meinong and Descartes to be of any value. Instead, we need to look at the matter from a wholly new perspective and offer a completely new theory of desire. Russell proceeds to fill the gap. It is true that the view of desire that Russell attributes to common sense is more akin to Brentano and Meinong's than to Hume's or to his own logical atomism. But since Russell does not say that the view he is rejecting is that of Brentano or Meinong, one must conclude that the common-sense theory of desire is supposed to reflect the way people ordinarily view desire. Nevertheless, his description of the common-sense theory of desire does not capture sufficiently all the significant uses that people ordinarily make of "desire", because some people may consider desire an intentional mental phenomenon without necessarily assuming that desire is essentially conscious or that all mental phenomena are intentional and conscious. One must conclude, then, that the common-sense theory of desire that Russell rejects in the third chapter of *The Analysis of Mind* is a straw man that he has created to prepare the way for his own view of desire.

However, I do not want to leave the impression that Russell's criticisms of the common-sense theory of desire are directed at a fictitious entity. Kenny and Pears have maintained that his criticisms are directed against particular targets. I have shown above that Russell did not intend his criticisms to be directed against any specific philosopher. Furthermore, Russell made it quite explicit that he was offering a new theory of desire which is different from the mainstream theories of desire. Russell was not unaware of theories of desire offered by some of his contemporaries like Ward, McTaggart, Stout, Moore and Broad. His criticisms of the common-sense theory of desire succeed in striking against their theories as much as they succeed in striking against followers of the intentional theory of desire. My claim that the theory that

Russell attributes to common sense is a straw man is not meant to imply that his criticisms do not have any targets at all. Indeed, his criticisms inflict a heavy damage on theories of desire that were held by some of his contemporaries, and particularly those who believed that desire is an intentional mental phenomenon.

One can allude briefly to C.D. Broad's short comment in his book *The Mind and Its Place in Nature* (1923), on Russell's theory of desire. Broad accuses Russell of "extraordinary confusions which I seem to find in Mr Russell's argument about Desire in the first chapter of his *Analysis of Mind* [which are] due to a failure to distinguish between psychological and epistemological introspection."[6] Broad believes that all mental situations "have internal complexity; there is an objective constituent, a subjective constituent; and a characteristic relation between the two. But, in addition to this internal complexity, some, if not all, of these situations refer to an epistemological object which is not a constituent of the situation." According to Broad, in order to analyze desire as a mental situation, we rely on introspection in much the same way as we rely on introspection to analyze desires for specific objects such as "I am wanting my tea" (p. 292). Accordingly, Broad distinguishes between psychological introspection and epistemological introspection. The first is used to analyze the mental phenomenon of desire and the latter to analyze specific desires. Russell, in Broad's view, stands accused of confusing the two types of introspection.

Broad's disagreement with Russell goes far deeper than desire to the nature of mind itself. Broad agrees with Meinong and Brentano that mental phenomena or mental situations are irreducibly complex. Furthermore, Broad agrees with the view that Russell attributes to common sense, namely, that the analysis of mental situations requires a subject, an object, and an intentional relationship connecting them. However, this is the main problem, according to Russell. In Russell's view, there are no valid reasons for assuming that mental experiences are essentially complex or directed towards objects. In his review of Broad's book, Russell points out that this "is, of course, the orthodox view, but Dr. Broad seems not to have understood the position of those who question it."[7] In *The Analysis of Mind*, Russell advances the view that the directedness in mental phenomena is due to beliefs and not to their inherent nature as mental phenomena. In the third chapter of *The*

[6] *The Mind and Its Place in Nature* (London: Kegan Paul, 1925), p. 294.

[7] Review of Broad, *The Mind and Its Place in Nature*, *Mind*, 35 (1926): 72–80 (at 74). Reprinted in *Collected Papers*, Vol. 9: *Language, Mind and Matter, 1919–26*, ed. J.G. Slater (London and Boston: Unwin Hyman, forthcoming 1988), pp. 58–67 (at 60).

Analysis of Mind, Russell offers an analysis of desire from this perspective. However, before offering such a theory, Russell wanted to clear the ground and criticize the ordinary unreflective common-sense view of desire.

Broad confines his attention to Russell's preliminary remarks about desire in the *first* chapter of *The Analysis of Mind* and leaves out the more developed theory of desire in the *third* chapter. Furthermore, Broad gives the impression that Russell is interested mainly in determining the mode of knowing objects of desire. Russell's interest goes far deeper. Russell is interested in giving an analysis of mental phenomena from a neutral-monist perspective, that is, from a stand which does not start by assuming that mind is an irreducible entity. Russell's criticisms of the common-sense view of desire are part of his strategy to discredit this common approach, hence they are very far from being directed at a fictitious theory. They strike against widespread and common views, even though it is rather difficult to pin-point their target.[8]

Toronto, Ont.

[8] An earlier version of this paper was read at the Canadian Philosophical Association meetings in Winnipeg, May 1986. I would like to acknowledge comments made by Nicholas Griffin, David Raynor, Robert Tully, and *Russell*'s anonymous referee.