Chapter 7 - Authenticity, Inauthenticity, and the Extremes of Fürsorge

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Authenticity, Inauthenticity, and the Extremes of Fürsorge

Considering Heidegger’s negative descriptions of the type of being-toward others that characterizes leaping-in—one pole of the Fürsorge continuum—one may be tempted to doubt whether the radical distinction between things and persons articulated above genuinely exists on his account. In its extreme forms leaping-in seems to involve no acknowledgment of the other qua world-constituting self. Despite defining both leaping-in and leaping-ahead in terms of a structurally minimal recognition of the other’s way of being qua Dasein, what characterizes the former seems, rather, to be the extent to which my understanding of and behavior toward the other are based on the categories applicable to things. But if the distinction between person and thing is a fundamental ontological dimension of my very being in the world and always involves such minimal recognition, in what way can I treat the other “as if” he were a thing? Stanley Cavell makes a similar query in The Claim of Reason: “Many people, and some philosophers, speak disapprovingly of treating others, or regarding them, as things. But it is none too clear what possibility is envisioned here. What thing might someone be treated as?”

For Heidegger, however, the answer is clear—the other might be treated solely as if she were an innerworldly and intratemporal thing—in other words, in terms of a vulgar conception of time that conceals or forgets the original recognition of the other’s ecstatic originary temporality. This is possible because Dasein have both a worldly and a world-constituting dimension, so to speak—dimensions that we designated in the above distinction between Mitsein and Mitda-sein modes of being. In treating the other as a thing, I treat her only in terms of the worldly—that is, intratemporal—face that she shows me. As we noted earlier, Heidegger recognizes that Dasein’s interpretations “can draw the conceptuality belonging to the beings to be interpreted from these themselves or else force them into concepts to which beings are opposed in accordance with their kind of being” (BT 150/141). In reifying modes of being-toward, the problematic concept into which the other is forced is not simply some worldly aspect of the other’s being—the fact that
she can be defined in terms of social categories or is a physical object in space. Rather, insofar as I treat her simply as an innerworldly entity and not also as temporal co-constitutor of the worldly space of meaning, I am forcing her into a simplistic category opposed to her kind of being. In doing so, however, I do not thereby destroy the distinction between persons and things—I never encounter the other as a thing, or succeed in changing her into an entity that is no longer defined by this status of temporal co-constitutor. Rather, it means that I have fallen into a narrow mode of thinking and acting toward others defined primarily in terms of their intratemporality, forgetting the fact that underpinning this worldly dimension is a world-constituting self expressing its committed, temporalizing having to be in a way that I always immediately recognize.2

The extent to which we tend to focus on either the other’s innerworldly being or on the other’s temporalizing mineness or selfhood represent the poles of the concern continuum within which the different ways of being toward others may fall. “Between the two extremes of positive concern—the one which does someone’s job for him and dominates him, and the one which is in advance of him and frees him—everyday being-with-one-another maintains itself and shows many mixed forms” (BT 122/115).3 Even at the extremes of this continuum, however, both dimensions are always present; one can never encounter the other purely in terms of her intratemporal or her temporalizing dimensions. Leaping-in and leaping-ahead merely articulate the ways in which we can overwhelmingly emphasize one or the other.

Leaping-In

At the innerworldly-focused end of the spectrum is that minimal mode of solicitude Heidegger terms “leaping-in.” In this extreme mode one Dasein “does the other’s job for him”—a way of being-toward the other that encompasses domination and abuse. Leaping-in, he argues, is when my being-toward the other person takes “the other’s ‘care’ away from him and put[s] itself in his place in taking care, it can leap in for him” (BT 122/114). Notice that Heidegger puts care in scare quotes—‘care’—here to indicate that we must always understand care to be what is radically one’s own—the first-person self-responsibility each self has for living into different possible ways for it to be. He recognizes, however, that certain ways that one is oriented toward the other Dasein can make it more difficult for him to recognize or act upon this mineness—on this
responsibility for his own existence: “The other can become one who is dependent and dominated even if this domination is a tacit one and remains hidden from him” (BT 122/114).

Frederick Elliston notes that leaping-in is a mode of solicitude that requires a “placing of oneself in the other’s shoes,” and in keeping with Heidegger’s practical orientation, this occurs “in practice, not in imagination: I literally take over the other’s task, rather than merely picture myself doing so.” The most extreme forms of this displacement and interference in the other’s care include instances in which the tasks I take from the other are basic to her very survival, as in cases of torture or murder. In an everyday way, however, leaping-in exists in more subtle forms—higher up on the concern continuum, so to speak. In all instances of leaping-in, however, there is an element of displacement of the other whereby the other’s expression of his care for who he is to be is inhibited. Concern takes over what is to be taken care of for the other. The other is thus displaced, he steps back so that afterwards, when the matter has been attended to, he can take it over as something finished and available or disburden himself of it completely. In this concern, the other can become one who is dependent and dominated even if this domination is a tacit one and remains hidden from him. This kind of concern which does the job and takes away “care” is, to a large extent, determinative for being with one another and pertains, for the most part, to our taking care of things at hand. (BT 122/114)

The notion of displacement is essential for understanding leaping-in, for it characterizes the interchangeability of one Dasein for another, an interchangeability that can be assumed only when the individuality of the world-constituting temporality of the other is overlooked in favor of worldly, thing-appropriate categories: “In the case of leaping-in, the emphasis falls not on the person but on his world.” Indeed, such a mode of being-toward the other seems to involve forgetting one’s own mode of world-constituting temporality—one’s person in favor of one’s world. A certain degree of symmetry in forgetting is therefore necessary, since taking over the other’s possibilities as my own requires me to forget the uniqueness and mineness of my own possibilities and the way of being through which they arise. Instead, I focus solely on possibilities—the other’s and my own—as if they were innerworldly on-hand things somehow separable from the particularity of the life that is to live them. This leads Theunissen to characterize the displacement characteristic of leaping-in as a type of domination of the other: “By putting myself in his place, I
make his possibilities my own. The Other is ‘thrown out of his place.’”  
Leaping-in is correlative to a type of self-domination, however, insofar as it involves subsuming an appropriate understanding of my way of being to an innerworldly characterization of possibilities as objects for trade. “This leaping-in can only be a domination insofar as it is at the same time a being dominated. In everyday inauthentic being-with-one-another, Others exercise a domination over me in that they dissolve me in their kind of being. I am dominated by the Others in everyday solicitude in that I act in place of the Other or as an Other . . . By putting myself in his place, I make his possibilities my own.”

One may argue that this type of self-forgetting is in fact the purpose of such domination and abuse, since it creates the illusion of an infinity of bald, free-floating possibilities—it allows the abuser to believe herself free from the temporal particularity that anchors her to the responsibility (and limits) of her having to be. Simone de Beauvoir makes a similar point in The Ethics of Ambiguity about those who suffer abuse: she argues that there is, ironically, a certain feeling of safety that can come with being treated as a thing. Things cannot be held responsible for their own existence or feel the anxiety associated with finite freedom—namely, having to act into some possibilities and thereby choose to forfeit others.

The (Il)logic of Deficient Modes?

Characterizing leaping-in as a mode of being-with in which I “acknowledge” the others as non-things but treat them as if they were has led Klaus Hartmann to criticize Heidegger’s position as displaying a fundamental incoherence. Not only does Heidegger want to claim that we always already experience others as persons through our being-with them in the world, but he also seems to want to claim that this “always already” can somehow accommodate instances of the (seemingly) total absence of recognition that this involves. Thus in “The Logic of Deficient and Eminent Modes in Heidegger,” Hartmann notes that Heidegger defines Dasein in terms of existentials with different modes of existentiell manifestation. The problem, Hartmann claims, is Heidegger’s tendency to claim certain “deficient modes” as manifestations of their existential structures—despite the fact that they appear to be negations or absences of the very structures they supposedly instantiate. The difficulty is that “a deficient mode appears to be the negation in concreteness of what the
existential pre-ordains in abstraction. The deficient mode, overtly the flat denial of the existential, is subject to the existential of which it is the denial, for it is still a mode of what it denies.” The question, in other words, is how Heidegger can claim that participatory acknowledgment of the other’s being-in-the-world is an essential feature of my very being and yet that there are cases in which I appear to directly contradict this acknowledgment. How can leaping-in be a mode of Mitsein, if it amounts to the denial or destruction of the other’s status as co-constitutor of the world—and we have defined all modes of Mitsein as involving degrees of acknowledgment of this status? As Hartmann notes, “Clearly such a ‘logic’ is paradoxical as a species cannot be the denial of its genus.”

A fruitful way of understanding a deficient mode may be achieved by comparing it to Heidegger’s discussion of the manner in which the animal is “poor” in world, or “deprived” of world in The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics. There he distinguishes between the deprivation or poverty of world that characterizes animals and the worldlessness that characterizes the stone: “Both represent a kind of not-having of world . . . [but] the possibility of being deprived of world requires further considerations” (FCM 196). Heidegger defines the animal’s deprivation as “not having, yet being able to have” (FCM 209), and “not-having in being able to have is precisely deprivation, is poverty” (FCM 211). The animal’s possibility of having world, but not having it, is a different type of lack than the stone’s absence of ability—the former, unlike the latter, is a sort of absence in presence.

So too must the deficiency of solicitude that characterizes leaping-in be differentiated from the absence of this possibility that characterizes the encounter with things:

For it is part of the essential constitution of human Dasein that it intrinsically means being with others, that the factically existing human being always already and necessarily moves factically in a particular way of being with . . . , i.e., a particular way of going along with. Now for several reasons, and to some extent essential ones, this going along with one another is a going apart from one another and a going against one another, or rather, at first and for the most part a going alongside one another. It is precisely this inconspicuous and self-evident going alongside one another, as a particular way of being with one another and being transposed into one another, that creates the illusion that in this being alongside one another there is initially a gap which needs to be bridged, as though human beings were not transposed into one another at all here, as though one human being would first have to empathize their way into the other in order to reach them. (FCM 206)
On such a reading, a deficient mode that may appear to be a complete absence of a particular condition cannot be read as its total absence and may indeed be the positive manifestations of another mode. Hartmann seems to recognize some variation on this possibility insofar as he notes that Heidegger “rejects the idea that a deficient mode is no more than the denial of an existential structure. It is something positive, too.” The example that Hartmann gives to demonstrate this is the shift from the ready-to-hand to the present-at-hand mode of encounter with things. Though just staring at something is a “deficient mode” of tool use, it too is a way of being toward the thing, a positive mode of encounter. Understood from the perspective of practical orientations, objective presence is deficient—but it is not thereby an absence of encounter; from the perspective of disengaged observation, for example, it too is a positive mode of being-toward the object. Note that both of these modes of engagement are ontological categories specific to the encounter with innerworldly things and represent a type of continuum that allows Heidegger to both claim that objective presence is a positive mode of encounter with the object and that it is deficient in terms of handiness. Thus at BT 75/70 Heidegger notes that when tool use is interrupted “what is at hand becomes deprived of its worldliness so that it appears as something merely objectively present.” Nevertheless, “the character of objective presence making itself known is still bound to the handiness of useful things” (BT 74/69). It is still a positive manner of being-toward an object but its deficiency lies in the fact that it fails to be Dasein’s normal mode of being-in-the-world qua immersion in practical coping. It thereby fails to be a manner of being-toward objects that is consistent with the ontological category through which they are primordially encountered. In other words, the Zuhanden and Vorhanden represent the poles of the continuum characterizing the possible ways of being-toward objects—in terms of their usability or in terms of their objective presence, respectively—and though the former represents the ontologically primary orientation against which behaviors emphasizing the latter are deemed deficient, the entire continuum is characterized by a positive transcending toward the object.

An analogy can perhaps be drawn, then, between the Zuhanden/ Vorhanden continuum with regard to encountering things, and the leaping-in/leaping-ahead continuum with regard to encountering others. Leaping-ahead and leaping-in represent the poles of the continuum characterizing the possible ways of being-toward others—in terms of their co-temporalizing or in terms of their intratemporality, respectively—and though the former represents the ontologically primary orientation against which behaviors emphasizing the latter are deemed de-
icient, the entire continuum is characterized by a positive transcending toward the other. Lawrence Hatab makes a similar point when arguing that the norm in encountering others is a type of “empathic care,” and its absence is analogous to a transfer from a Zuhanden to a Vorhanden mode of encounter with things:

I suggest then that we take empathic moments to be primal, and that indifference (or worse) is noticed as “negative.” Here is an analogy to Heidegger’s analysis of Zuhandenheit, where a breakdown in tool function is noticed as a disruption, which accordingly illuminates the meaning of the more primal mode of involvement. If we notice disengagement as a deviation (recall Heidegger’s description of indifference as a deficient mode of Fürsorge), we might have phenomenological evidence for the primacy of empathic concern.\(^1\)

Hatab’s characterization of the everyday, default mode of encounter as “empathic care” is perhaps too strongly ethical in tone, but his emphasis on a certain primordial mode of being-toward other Dasein—and the fact that generally a behavioral deficiency is judged as such based on whether it is consistent with the other-acknowledgment inherent in this mode—is correct. So too is his recognition of the analogy between the Zuhanden/ Vorhanden and the attunement/disengagement continuums that characterize the encounter with, respectively, things and persons. It is important to note, however, that care must be taken in using such an analogy insofar as Heidegger indicates that the normal way of being-toward objects is simply an immersed practical coping, whereas our everyday encounter with other Dasein falls somewhere closer to the “middle” of the Fürsorge continuum. Thus Heidegger claims that “just as circumspection belongs to taking care of things as a way of discovering things at hand, concern is guided by considerateness and tolerance. With concern, both can go through the deficient and indifferent modes up to the point of inconsiderateness and the tolerance which is guided by indifference” (BT 123/115). This point comes immediately after his observation that everyday being-with maintains itself in mixed forms, and though he does not examine them further, this point seems to indicate that these everyday mixed forms of being-toward the other should be characterized as varieties of considerateness and tolerance—a point that can further support our earlier analyses of temporal accommodation and discursive sharing of the world. Heidegger will later claim that “‘inconsiderate’ being-with ‘reckons’ with others without seriously ‘counting on them’ or even wishing ‘to have anything to do’ with them” (BT 125/118). But despite such reckoning being deficient in a genuine acknowledgment
of the other, this inconsiderateness is nevertheless still reckoning—the manner, we will recall, in which world time is instituted with the others. Thus Heidegger will claim that even inconsiderateness occurs “only by a definite being with and toward one another” (BT 125/118). In light of this, the fact that everyday being-with manifests itself in mixed forms does not undercut the implicit temporal acknowledgment of the other underlying these forms or prevent Heidegger from judging one pole of the continuum as a deficiency in light of this acknowledgment.

It is for this reason that Heidegger generally characterizes the deficient modes as extremely minimal and concealed manifestations of a condition—not as the condition’s complete denial or destruction, despite Hartmann’s claims. Thus Heidegger notes that “the deficient modes of omitting, neglecting, renouncing, resting, are also ways of taking care of something, in which the possibilities of taking care are kept to a ‘bare minimum’” (BT 57/53). Indeed, this is the meaning of the word “deficient”—not an absence, but a failure to fully live up to what is standard or required. It is in the same way that leaping-in must be understood as a deficient mode of Fürsorge—not as an absence of this way of being-toward specific to other Dasein, but as a way of being-toward the other that fails to fully live up to the standard of acknowledgment that is set in the immediacy of Dasein-to-Dasein recognition.

In leaping-in Dasein both registers the other as a being defined by co-temporalizing care, and subsequently acts toward him solely in terms of the intratemporal manner in which he manifests himself in a worldly way. This way of being toward, Heidegger claims, is a type of inconsistency in my way of being that undermines the manner in which my care expresses itself in the world. Thus in *Introduction to Phenomenological Research*, Heidegger will note that “neglecting can be characterized as deficient caring. A being is deficient if, in the manner of its being, it is detrimental to what it is with and to what it, as an entity, is related. The neglecting is thus itself a care and, indeed, a deficient care, in such a way, that the care cannot come to what, in accordance with its own sense, it is concerned about” (IPR 65).

Such deficiencies are essentially an existential discrepancy in which Dasein’s behavior contradicts its fundamental structures of care; a way of being in which it fails to live into the appropriate modes in which care “comes to” what it is concerned about. In the deficient modes of being-toward, care does not lose its concern or cease to relate to the object of its concern, but it ceases to do so in a way that “accords with its own sense.” This is the reason that Heidegger characterizes leaping-in as inauthentic: leaping-in is defined by a profound inappropriateness insofar as that toward which Dasein transcends is recognized as having a particular type of being, but the mode in which this transcending finds worldly ex-
pression is distorted and inconsistent with this way of being—a discrepancy that is both harmful for the other Dasein (“it is detrimental to what it is with,” IPR 65) and prevents one from fully encountering it (“the care cannot come to what . . . it is concerned about,” IPR 65).\(^\text{14}\)

This, then, must be the response to Hartmann’s objection regarding the deficiency of these modes of being-toward the other: that they are the most minimal manifestations of the Dasein-acknowledgment that characterizes the Fürsorge continuum and are characterized as deficient in terms of a model of existential consistency within which Dasein’s behavior and its ontological commitments better coincide. Before turning to an examination of what such coincidence would look like, however—the mode of being-toward others that Heidegger dubs “leaping-ahead”—we must examine further Dasein’s tendency to fall away from behavior consistent with the always already operative structures of its being—including the acknowledgment of other Dasein that characterizes being-with.

Inauthenticity

Leaping-in involves a type of turning away from the world-constituting dimensions of the intersubjective encounter in favor of its innerworldly dimensions—a turning away that involves a mischaracterization of Dasein’s nature as a temporalizing possibility-being. This mode of solicitude is inauthentic because it disguises Dasein’s genuine nature by focusing only on the worldly, intratemporal aspects of Dasein’s being and tending to assume that this worldly dimension simply makes Dasein the same as worldly things. Such a thing-oriented interpretation of Dasein’s being—in both self and other—inhibits the full recognition of this way of being and therefore results in behaviors that are inadequate to it. As François Raffoul notes of leaping-in:

This solicitude is clearly inauthentic, in at least three respects: first, because it treats the other Dasein as something ready-to-hand (as Heidegger notes at GA 2, 122); second, because it consists in taking the place of the other, such a substitution representing for Heidegger an inauthentic relation to others; and third, because it disburdens the other Dasein of his/her care, a third characteristic which represents for Heidegger inauthenticity par excellence, if it is the case that inauthenticity consists of a fleeing of Dasein in the face of its own existence and of its weight.\(^\text{15}\)
Inauthenticity is the tendency to live in an undifferentiated and anonymous way in which one is simply one among many—a tendency enabled and enforced by the interpretation of self and other as thinglike, because it allows us to understand our possibilities not as “mine to be,” but as interchangeable qualities accruing to me and to you like predicates. In such a condition, possibilities are experienced “not for me as me, not for you as you, not for us as us, but for one. Name, standing, vocation, role, age and fate as mine and yours disappear” (FCM 136). By this Heidegger does not mean that you and I suddenly disappear into an undifferentiated super-subjectivity, or a “universal ego in general” (FCM 136). The averageness structures of das Man do “not comprise some abstraction or generalization in which a universal concept ‘I in general’ would be thought” (FCM 136). Rather, Heidegger claims that the self’s individuating, temporally particular mineness is forgotten and thus not explicitly lived as such. Nevertheless, this condition of mineness—the existential responsibility of selfhood—continues to operate despite the fact that Dasein looks away from this toward its own worldly manifestation.

This is evident in Heidegger’s point about the manner in which time is lived inauthentically: “one feels timeless, one feels removed from the flow of time” (FCM 141). In inauthenticity these temporalizing structures do not disappear or stop functioning—I do not become an “I in general”—but I do not live in light of them, in light of my way of being qua mineness: “fate as mine and yours disappear” (FCM 136, emphasis mine). Possibilities are no longer mine and yours—given to us by the temporal particularity of our having to be, our “fate”—they become bare, “general” possibilities disassociated from the particularity of our existences. In this way, inauthenticity allows Dasein to forget its responsibility for having to be; it “relieves Dasein of the task . . . to be itself by way of itself. The Anyone takes Dasein’s ‘to-be’ away and allows all responsibility to be foisted onto itself” (HCT 247).

Because of this forgetfulness of Dasein’s mineness, leaping-in is sometimes characterized as involving a category mistake—in which the other is treated in terms of a model of time and possibility appropriate only for innerworldly things, rather than one adequate to her temporalizing having-to-be. Though this is correct, it is important to be clear that characterizing it as a category mistake oversimplifies what is a very complex structure. In the Dasein-to-Dasein to encounter I always already experience the other as both temporalizing and intratemporal, but by becoming too focused on the intratemporal dimension I can slide into a way of thinking and acting that treats Dasein like the other intratemporal things that I encounter. Dasein is essentially intratemporal and inner-
worldly—it is always expressing itself into a world time that relativizes and publicizes its originary temporalizing, but this in itself is not enough to inauthentically mischaracterize Dasein as being *only* this. The distortion characteristic of inauthenticity lies in its tendency to take an interpretive stance equating Dasein’s way of being with things because in focusing *only* on the worldly dimensions of Dasein’s existence, it forgets or ignores that this worldly dimension does not simply make it the same as worldly entities: “Because by its concept understanding is free self-understanding by way of an apprehended possibility of one’s own factical being-in-the-world, it has the intrinsic possibility of shifting in various directions. This means that the factical Dasein can understand itself primarily via intraworldly beings which it encounters . . . It is the understanding that we call *inauthentic understanding*” (*BPP* 279).

A problem arises once we recognize that Heidegger sometimes seems to imply that it is not only this innerworldly dimension but the inauthentic stance that is an inevitable aspect of our *being-with-one-another*—namely, that *all* being-with is inauthentic. His talk of *das Man* certainly encourages this interpretation. As a result, articulating *authentic* modes of being-with—which Heidegger explicitly designates as a possibility—becomes extremely hard to reconcile with this implicit view that being-with-one-another is *inherently* inauthentic. As we have already shown in chapter 5, Heidegger is in fact extremely inconsistent on this point, and the difficulties in interpretation that this produces are significant. As Michael Theunissen notes: “Heidegger, regardless of his recognition of authentic *being-with-one-another*, very often simply equates the inauthentic everyday with *being-with-one-another*."

Though we have already discussed this difficulty somewhat, it will be fruitful to return to it here now that a fuller picture of Dasein’s way of *being qua intersubjective temporalizing* is at our disposal. As I argued in chapter 5, the assumption that all being-with is inauthentic is rooted in Heidegger’s general failure to adequately maintain his own distinction between being-with—the *existential*—and its inauthentic manifestation. By maintaining this difference we can take Heidegger at (some of) his own words and maintain a more logically consistent position. In light of this, the modal indifference of average *everydayness* must similarly be maintained despite the fact that, in placing so much interpretive emphasis on authenticity and inauthenticity, Heidegger encourages us to overlook the range of everyday ways of being that fall between these extreme modes in which being-with can be instantiated. Being-with and its average everyday expressions are not equivalent to inauthenticity, but are modally indifferent conditions that can *become* authentically or inauthentically differentiated.
This move to separate everydayness and inauthenticity is somewhat controversial, considering Heidegger’s tendency to speak of it in terms of inauthenticity—such as his claim that Dasein tends to plunge “into the groundlessness and nothingness of inauthentic everydayness” (BT 178/167). Such inconsistencies between the logical demands of his position and his careless forms of expression lead thinkers like Theunissen to note that “the relationship of inauthenticity to ‘everydayness’ is extremely problematic”—even going so far as to describe it as the “murkiest point in Being and Time.” And as Dreyfus argues, these two aspects can be recognized in Heidegger’s work, “But unfortunately, in Being and Time Heidegger does not distinguish these two issues but jumps back and forth between them, sometimes even in the same paragraph. This is not only confusing; it prevents the chapter from having the centrality it should have in an understanding of Being and Time.”

Despite Heidegger’s tendency to blur the difference between the two, making sense of his position as a whole requires that everydayness be understood as a modally indifferent condition that can be modified in a movement toward inauthenticity (through falling) or in a movement toward authenticity (through resoluteness). Indeed, “indifference” is a term Heidegger seems to use at points to explicitly designate this “between” of everydayness: “Mineness belongs to existing Da-sein as the condition of the possibility of authenticity and inauthenticity. Da-sein exists always in one of these modes, or else in the modal indifference to them” (BT 53/49). And elsewhere he will note: “This indifference of the everydayness of Da-sein is not nothing; but rather, a positive phenomenal characteristic. All existing is how it is out of this kind of being, and back into it. We call this everyday indifference of Da-sein averageness” (BT 43/41). The priority of this everyday “indifference”—which is then differentiated in the direction of either authenticity or inauthenticity—is further supported by his claim in Division Two that “this potentiality-of-being that is always mine is free for authenticity or inauthenticity, or for a mode in which neither of these has been differentiated” (BT 232/215). We can also note Heidegger’s tendency to understand Dasein’s existence as a continuum in which everydayness is stretched between the poles of authenticity and inauthenticity when he claims that “authenticity is only a modification but not a total obliteration of inauthenticity” (BPP 171). Indeed, though he generally tends to equate the worldly range of possibilities articulated by das Man as essentially inauthentic, this too must be understood as modally indifferent: as Heidegger notes in Ontology—The Hermeneutics of Facticity: “The ‘every-one’ [translating das Man] has to do with something definite and positive—it is not only a phenomenon of fallenness, but as such also a how of factual Dasein” (OHF 14). Dasein
essentially expresses itself into a worldly temporality and significance that relativizes and publicizes its originary temporalizing and it is this fact that Heidegger is attempting to articulate with such claims. This notion is more clearly expressed, however, when he characterizes inauthenticity and authenticity as modified grasps of the more basic average *everydayness*: “Authentic existence is nothing which hovers over entangled everydayness, but is existentially only a modified grasp of everydayness” (*BT* 179/167). There will always be a dimension of self and other expressed in the intratemporality of the world, and though this worldly average-ness is an unavoidable aspect of Dasein’s being, this does not allow us to equate average everydayness with an inauthentic stance in which this average-ness is characterized in terms of thingliness.21

**Falling . . . Not Fallenness**

Despite his confused formulations, then, the everyday worldly modes of being with others are not inherently *fallen* but merely display a tendency toward inauthenticity. In this tendency toward inauthenticity “there is a peculiar nonexplicitness, in that the care *falls prey* to the object of its concern. The care as such has no time for any sort of deliberation as to whether what it is preoccupied with is not in the end determined by *it* itself” (*IPR* 61). It has “no time” for such deliberation because having such time would require *taking it*—and thereby acknowledging its way of being qua world-constituting originary temporality. It is, instead, tending toward an absorbed fascination with the intratemporal things of the world itself. In this falling away from itself Dasein “drifts toward an alienation in which its ownmost potentiality for being-in-the-world is concealed” (*BT* 178/166). As we have seen, falling is a covering-over of Dasein’s being-in-the-world that “operates by way of reinterpretation” (*HCT* 316)—a reinterpretation of oneself and other in terms of categories inappropriate for Dasein-being. Falling is a “tendency of being” (*BT* 313/289) or “kind of ‘movement’ of Dasein” (*BT* 178/167), and inauthenticity—or fallenness—is essentially the extreme condition of self-alienation that is accomplished when Dasein has given in to this “constant temptation of falling prey” (*BT* 177/165).

This interpretation allows us to make more sense of Heidegger’s seeming confusion regarding the relationship between everydayness and inauthenticity. Namely, everydayness is a condition in which the *temptation* to inauthenticity—the tendency toward falling—is always present. This does *not* allow us to conclude, however, that everydayness is there-
fore inherently inauthentic. Although we are always exposed to this tendency, we do not always give in to it.\textsuperscript{22} Though everydayness is defined by the temptation of inauthenticity, of itself it is neither authentic nor inauthentic. The notion of inauthenticity as temptation brings to mind Dreyfus and Rubins’s discussion of Division Two of \textit{Being and Time}, in the appendix to Dreyfus’s \textit{Being-in-the-World}. There they claim that “there are \textit{two} versions of falling in \textit{Being and Time}.\textsuperscript{23} One is a structural story, in which Dasein’s absorbed coping in the world tends to “turn Dasein away from confronting itself,” and the other version is a “motivational story that Dasein \textit{actively resists}” the call to authenticity.\textsuperscript{24} The consequence of this, they argue, is

...a double contradiction; inauthenticity becomes both inevitable and incomprehensible. On the one hand, if one holds that falling as absorption is motivated by fleeing, i.e., that absorption is a way of covering up Dasein’s nullity, then, since absorption is essential to Dasein as being-in-the-world, Dasein becomes essentially inauthentic. On the other hand, if facing the truth about itself leads Dasein to equanimity, appropriate action, and unshakeable joy, resoluteness is so rewarding that, once one is authentic, falling back into inauthenticity becomes incomprehensible.\textsuperscript{25}

As Taylor Carman argues, however, falling and fleeing must be understood as a difference of degree, and in this sense his view agrees with my interpretation of inauthenticity as one extreme of a continuum. Carman designates “fleeing” as a condition in which one is, so to speak, further gone in the temptation to be inauthentic, but the two are, “from a practical and phenomenological point of view wholly continuous, differing only in degree. Anxious flight is not just some random psychological aberration, but an ‘intensified’ or ‘aggravated’ modification of falling (\textit{SZ}, 178).”\textsuperscript{26} According to Carman, it is the fact that we “inhabit the shared social and semantic space in which entities are collectively intelligible to Dasein as the things they are” that accounts for the falling of everydayness.\textsuperscript{27} The “\textit{generic drift}” of this public arena pulls Dasein away from recognizing its own concrete particularity, thereby accounting for its tendency to fall further and further toward the completely self-forgetful banality of fallenness. Indeed, Heidegger implies that such inauthenticity is just the \textit{cultivation} of this generic drift: “Insofar as there is in Dasein the tendency to take and do things lightly, this unburdening of being which Dasein cultivates as being-with obligingly accommodates it. In thus accommodating Dasein with this unburdening of its being, the public maintains a stubborn dominion” (\textit{HCT} 247). Dasein’s everyday
way of being is always already characterized by such a generic drift insofar as it encounters a now-saying other than its own; another now that relativizes its own. In the Dasein’s encounter with another mineness and its move to express itself through shared worldly measures evoked by this encounter, Dasein’s way of being opens the possibility of losing itself in the encounter. “Dasein itself presents itself with the possibility in idle talk and public interpretedness of losing itself in the they, of falling prey to groundlessness” (BT 177/165). This possibility is merely presented as a temptation, however—a temptation that Dasein may be prone to act on insofar as it wants to flee the awareness of its own responsible finitude. Acting on this temptation involves cultivating this unburdening; moving from the relativization of possibility inherent in publicity toward the displacement of possibility that this allows.

Even when we give in to this temptation of forgetting and concealing, however, we can never completely elide the status of self and other as Dasein—as temporalizing co-constitutors of the world. This is evident in the fact that Heidegger speaks of inauthenticity as something that inhibits or conceals the fundamental structures of selfhood and its temporal heedfulness—structures that are nevertheless always operative: falling “has the functional sense of suppressing the Dasein in the Anyone” (HCT 278) such that “being toward the world as well as toward others and itself is disguised” (HCT 280). Despite such “suppression” and “disguise,” however, Dasein continues to be characterized by selfhood: inauthenticity’s “‘not I’ by no means signifies something like a being which is essentially lacking ‘I-hood,’ but means a definitive mode of being of the ‘I’ itself” (BT 109/116). Note here the similarity with our discussion of deficiency and lack as a type of minimal or suppressed form of that which is standard or required. Inauthenticity is not a lack of these structures or a total lack of awareness of them—since we must be aware of that from which we are fleeing in order to cultivate stances of avoidance—it is, rather, a way of being that fails to fully live up to the standard of acknowledgment that is set by the structures of its existing.

Ontological Imperatives

Heidegger is clearly aware that we are capable of such ontological inconsistency—that we can focus our behavior solely on the innerworldly “thing-like” dimensions of self and other, despite the constant implicit acknowledgment of our mutual status as world-constituting co-Dasein. But there is nevertheless a certain ontological imperative to appropriate-
ness that generates an obligation to follow through on the immediate Dasein-recognition to which I have always already responded; to act in a way consistent with the always-operative recognition of other Dasein as such. Dasein does not merely seek to meet the standards articulated in public norms—it also seeks to conform to the demands implicit in the very type of being that it is. This imperative to appropriateness is, we can also recall from chapter 2, grounded in Dasein’s having itself to be and the manner in which it attempts to succeed in its being by meeting standards of appropriateness. This is a defining impulse of Dasein’s transcending mineness—an impulse that motivates its heedfulness to public norms, to the temporalizing others, and to its own ontological structures in measuring the success of its having to be.

But if Dasein cannot experience the other as a thing, and this other-recognition necessarily involves responding in terms of temporal accommodation and self-limit—in what way can such ontological constraint be characterized in normative terms such as “respect” or “obligation,” and in what way am I further compelled to do more than rest easy with this minimal level of acknowledgment inherent in all encounters? What compels me to seek, rather, a response that is more appropriate or consistent with the other’s way of being? As we have characterized the Fürsorge continuum, any answer to the other counts as a response to the other’s claim on me, since all encounters involve an accommodation of their temporal claims to a shared now. But as James Mensch notes in Ethics and Selfhood: “Ethics involves more than responsibility—i.e., more than just responding to the other. The necessity for something further comes from the fact that this response need not be ethical in any recognizable sense. I can, for example, respond to the need of the other by turning away . . . [but in ethics the others] do not just call on me to respond, they also raise the question of my response. They invite me to examine its adequacy.”

The apparent absence of minimal conditions for what counts as acknowledging the other is a problem that also afflicts Levinas’s philosophy, argues Bernard Waldenfels. If all responses count as a response, how can we move from this seemingly empty form of responsibility to genuinely ethical constraint? By turning to a brief discussion of possible Levinasian solutions we may find a way toward a Heideggerian answer. László Tengelyi takes up concerns with the unavoidability of the Levinasian ethical claim in The Wild Region in Life-History, where he questions the nature of an ethics in which “one cannot but answer”; an ethics, therefore, that “has nothing to do with any kind of moral ought.” The answer to this problem, Tengelyi argues, lies in Levinas’s articulation of an “ineluctable appeal” that is irreducible but nevertheless deeply related to such “moral oughts”: it is “the source of a responsibility which is not lim-
ited by any law, right, or measure” but is instead presupposed by moral law as “the ultimate source of its own sense.” For Levinas, intersubjectivity is characterized by a certain type of paradox, rooted in the fact that the ethical appeal does not take place in the closed relationship of the I and thou but is always already witnessed by others—third parties—whose human presence also demands an ethical response. This fundamentally public context of my ethical selfhood demands that my immediate, infinite ethical responsibility to one alters to encompass an infinite responsibility to all. Two conflicting forms of responsibility are required: the responsibility of the face-to-face encounter, expressed in the ethical relationship, and the responsibility of justice—which accommodates this multitude of others. As Levinas says in “Peace and Proximity,”

The first question in the interhuman is the question of justice. Henceforth it is necessary to know, to become consciousness. Comparison is superimposed on my relation with the unique and the incomparable, and, in view of equity and equality, a weighing, a thinking, a calculation, the comparison of incomparables, and, consequently, the neutrality—presence or representation—of being, the thematization and the visibility of the face in some way de-faced as the simple individuation of the individual.

Because of the multitude of others that I am called to answer, infinite ethical responsibility demands, paradoxically, that public institutions and meanings be established that can act as shared measures to mediate these infinite responsibilities; measures in terms of which we may navigate this public space of shared presence. In this sense, my account of Heidegger’s establishment of world time—shared significances according to which we can heedfully accommodate the temporal expression of all the others—is not so different from Levinas’s requirement that justice temper ethics. Both thinkers emphasize the necessity of establishing public measures to accommodate the multitude of beings whose way of existing is nevertheless irreducible to such comparison and measure. As Tengelyi describes it: “Although wild responsibility cannot be traced back to the moral law, it still requires this law as a principle which provides its boundary and measure . . . although the moral law cannot be derived from wild responsibility, either, it still presupposes this kind of responsibility as the ultimate source of its own sense.”

In the same way, we can understand the fact that, for Heidegger, Dasein’s temporalizing way of being demands expression into a world time that accommodates the many now-sayers by establishing shared standards of measure. Understood as such, these worldly standards have their ultimate source of sense in the heedful encounter of Dasein to Da-
sein. Nevertheless, their very worldly mode of being qua average and intratemporal means that they can become harmful and inappropriate for understanding and navigating this Dasein being. In such cases, Dasein’s care for consistency and appropriateness in its way of being provokes it not simply to strive to meet such public standards, but also to resist such norms when they are inconsistent with Dasein’s most basic ontological structures—including the Mitsein recognition of others as profoundly different from things. Sonia Sikka thus argues that despite the common view that Heidegger completely rejects all “transhistorical norms for ethical conduct,” Heidegger’s ontology in fact defines “appropriate behaviour toward all entities possessing a certain character.”

Though these public meanings and measures can permit inappropriate interpretations of the other that will nevertheless still count as a “minimal” recognition of her way of being, Dasein’s overarching concern for existential consistency will militate against this: local, contingent, and distorting standards of appropriateness will be rejected—themselves deemed inappropriate—according to the most basic standards established by Dasein’s temporalizing way of being. In this sense, the ontological imperative to appropriateness may demand a transformation in the public norms by which one has been measuring one’s success at being. Indeed, as Heidegger argues, we commonly feel distress over the ways in which our inauthentic modes of solicitude inhibit our genuine encounter with the other; we feel “burdened by our inability to go along with the other” (FCM 206), registering the tension between public standards of interpretation and the immediacy of Dasein-recognition that is their grounding purpose. This feeling of lack is so upsetting, Heidegger notes in the Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics, that overcoming it results in “a new sense of elation in our Dasein each time we accomplish such going-along-with in some essential relationship with other human beings” (FCM 206).

Though Levinas initially appears quite far away from Heidegger’s position, then, upon closer inspection we can recognize significant similarities. Levinas’s notion of infinite responsibility, for example, may appear to be a substantial difference from Heidegger’s view, but insofar as this notion is essentially a refusal to recognize such finitizing third-person institutions of measure as prior to the second-person relationship of claim characterizing the Dasein-to-Dasein encounter, their views do not differ as much as Levinas’s hyperbole appears to indicate. And though it is often acknowledged that Levinas’s characterization of the ethics/justice relationship is one of paradox or “alternating movement” between these different orders of responsibility—the need for third-person comparison vs. Dasein’s resistance to such comparison—Heidegger also recognizes that public norms are infected with a type of contingency or limit for this
very same reason, a contingency that is most fully and explicitly brought to light in anxiety, being-toward-death, and the call of conscience. In light of these considerations, we can understand leaping-ahead as a mode of solicitude aimed at nurturing this second-person other who both sub-tends and interrupts these third-person measures.

Leaping-Ahead

In contrast to the inauthentic tendency of leaping-in—in which I acknowledge but subsequently conceal or turn away from the other’s temporalizing care by focusing only on intratemporal modes of existing—leaping-ahead acknowledges the ontological difference. Leaping-ahead is a way of being-toward another Dasein that takes the complexity of his way of being as its guiding principle. Unlike leaping-in, which conceals, distorts, and resists the other’s status as co-constitutor of the world and the temporal taking-heed that implicitly recognizes it, leaping-ahead explicitly acknowledges and nurtures it: “There is the possibility of a concern which does not so much leap in for the other as leap ahead of him, not in order to take ‘care’ away from him, but to first give it back to him as such. This concern which essentially pertains to authentic care; that is, the existence of the other, and not to a that which it takes care of, helps the other to become transparent to himself in his care and free for it” (BT 122/115). Leaping-ahead involves a more explicit concern for the other in the full complexity and particularity of her being, a concern that builds on the most basic structure of recognition that characterizes all Fürsorge: as Heidegger says in the “Letter on Humanism,” “Every affirmation consists in acknowledgment. Acknowledgment lets that toward which it goes come toward it.” In leaping-ahead, this acknowledgment is an affirmation that frees the other to more fully be the type of being that I have always already recognized her to be. I help to reveal to the other her own nature—this “nature” being the other’s world-constituting originary temporality that is the condition for these innerworldly categories. In contrast to leaping-in’s deflection away from the person toward her worldly concerns, leaping-ahead emphasizes her selfhood, not its worldly manifestations.

In this emphasis on the person Heidegger claims that one Dasein can “give” the other her care back to her—“free” her for it. But insofar as care is the very way of being of Dasein as such, how can it be “given back” to Dasein? As Walter Brogan queries, “What kind of exchange is this that gives the other what it already is—its being as possibility?” There is a clear correspondence here between Heidegger’s talk of “freeing” the
other and his claims about authentic Dasein “untangling” itself from the world to free itself for its own possibility, and it is for this reason that he designates leaping-ahead as an authentic mode of Fürsorge. The problem of how one is to free the other for her own finite and self-responsible way of being, however—and its relationship to the self-freeing of authenticity—is one that we must examine. In doing so it will become clear why it is inaccurate to characterize being-with other Dasein as inherently preventative of authenticity, insofar as other Dasein can in fact serve as a motivating or enabling force for provoking the move toward authenticity. As we will see, it is the discursive manner of authentic disclosure that is of the greatest import here, for it is qua discourse that the authentic mode of being-with explicitly manifests itself. This will become clear insofar as conscience is the discursive mode through which Dasein’s way of being is revealed to it in its mineness and wholeness—as both worldly and world-constituting. It is in terms of the communicative sharing or “giving to understand” of this way of being that Heidegger speaks of one Dasein acting as the call of conscience for another. He is articulating the possibility of a type of authentic discourse whereby one Dasein can bring the other into an orientation toward her own way of being that enables and promotes its authentic grasping. Though only the other Dasein can take on the self-responsibility of her own authenticity—I cannot be authentic for another—acting as her call of conscience can bring her into a position that makes this possible. This is the real meaning of leaping-ahead—I bring the other into an orientation toward her way of being that frees her to exist in light of it.

Before we can examine the manner in which one Dasein can act as the call of conscience for the other, however, we must first understand authenticity as a realization of the other tendency characterizing Dasein’s way of being—not the movement of falling in which Dasein understands itself in terms of innerworldly and thing-appropriate interpretive categories, but the resolute tendency toward an appropriate grasping of Dasein’s way of being in its wholeness. This resoluteness is evoked and instantiated not only in conscience, but in the other modes of disclosure specific to authenticity as well—Angst and being-toward-death.

Authenticity

Heidegger’s discussion of authenticity begins by questioning how Dasein can drag itself out of its tendency toward falling such that it achieves a more adequate understanding of its way of being. He questions how Dasein can get a grip on itself as a unified whole, despite the fact that its very
nature is one of ecstatic transcendence characterized by both worldly and world-constituting dimensions. Dasein is not a finished intratemporal thing that can be simply grasped and defined; its ecstatic temporal expression into world time means that “something is always still outstanding in Da-sein which has not yet become ‘real’ as a potentiality-of-its-being. A constant unfinished quality thus lies in the essence of the constitution of Da-sein. This lack of totality means that there is still something outstanding in one’s potentiality-for-being” (BT 236/219–20). In answering how Dasein can comprehend itself in the face of this ecstatic incompleteness, Heidegger cannot resort to an understanding of the self as simple, monolithic ego—as he makes clear in his rejection of the Cartesian cogito. Nor can this explicit grasping of Dasein’s way of being—authenticity—simply be equated with the existential self-responsibility that Heidegger dubs “mineness,” since “it is only because Dasein in essence is in each instance my own that I can lose myself in the Anyone [das Man]” (HCT 309). What differentiates authenticity from inauthenticity is not the mineness of Da-sein’s existence, then, but the manner in which Dasein lives this condition of temporal ecstasis and existential self-responsibility. In authenticity, Dasein takes this mineness upon itself—making itself responsible for its having to be, so to speak—while inauthentic Dasein gives in to the temptation to flee it.

In keeping with Heidegger’s characterization of the self as way of being—not as a substance with properties—authenticity must therefore be understood not as “having” this “information” about one’s complex ecstatic structure of being, but as a particular way of existing in light of it. To demonstrate this, Heidegger examines the specific manifestations of the three modes of disclosure that evoke and attest to this way of existing: Angst, being-toward-death, and conscience. These are the authenticity-specific manifestations of attunement, understanding, and discourse, and as such each is a way of being that testifies to and instantiates the possibility of existing in an explicit grasping of one’s way of being qua temporally particular having-to-be. They disclose a mode of existing that takes Dasein’s temporalizing mineness as its guiding principle, in contrast to the inauthentic tendency to model Dasein-understanding on the temporal categories appropriate to things.

Being-Toward-Death

The condition through which the temporality and mineness of one’s existence most powerfully asserts itself is mortality, and it is for this rea-
son that Heidegger’s analyses of authenticity focus on death in articulating these aspects of Dasein’s being, describing it as one’s “ownmost non-relational possibility not to be bypassed” (BT 251/232). It is important to be clear, however, that for Heidegger, “death” is not some future event—the moment of my demise—but is his term for the omnipresent possibility of one’s absolute impossibility. Though many commentators misinterpret Heidegger’s use of “death” to mean the end of life,40 Heidegger’s intent is to designate an existential condition of radical contingency and finitude that infects all of the possible ways for Dasein to be—not mere demise.41 As inauthentic Dasein, I conceal from myself the fact that my finitude is “essentially and irreplaceably mine” (BT 253/234) by fleeing into the anonymity of interpretive categories that belong to innerworldly things—precisely because they operate with a vulgar, non-temporally particular notion of time. This applies even when speaking of the event of one’s own future dying: though it is in fact possible at any moment, inauthentic Dasein conceptualizes its “possibility of impossibility” as a locatable event in a linear sequence of undifferentiated nows. Such inauthenticity allows Dasein to focus entirely on the worldly tools and projects with which it is absorbed, thereby concealing the existential responsibility—the mineness—on which the intelligibility of these projects is based. “In not wanting to think about it, however, Dasein bears witness in its being in death itself. Conversely, death is not first in Dasein because it by chance thinks about it. That before which Dasein flees in its falling flight in everydayness, even without expressly thinking about death, is nothing other than Dasein itself, specifically insofar as death is constitutive of it” (HCT 316).

In authentic being-toward-death, however, Dasein grasps the contingency of its existence: “In such being-toward-death this possibility must not be weakened, it must be understood as possibility, cultivated as possibility, and endured as possibility in our relation to it” (BT 261/241). In other words, Dasein can exist its radically possible, unfinished, and contingent way of being as such by cultivating, enduring, and understanding itself as being the type of being it is, a condition of explicit self-grasping that Heidegger sometimes characterizes in temporal terms with the word anticipation: “Anticipation reveals to Da-sein its lostness in the they-self, and brings it face to face with the possibility to be itself” (BT 266/245). In authentic being-toward-death, the non-thinglike temporal particularity and possibility of Dasein’s being are illuminated in an anticipatory understanding of “the possibility of the impossibility of existence” as possibility (BT 262/242)—and the “anticipatory” nature of this stance lies in the fact that this “possibility of impossibility” is always present as still to come.42 Adopting such a stance enables Dasein to appropriate this groundless-
ness and hinder fallen interpretations of this groundlessness simply as future “event” waiting to be actualized. This anticipatory appropriation enables a “kind of being of Da-sein in which it can be wholly as Da-sein” (BT 259/239). Grasped “wholly” as Dasein, I understand my being not only in the worldly, intratemporal dimensions I have in common with things, but also in my temporalizing having to be.

Angst

Despite Dasein’s best efforts to forget this condition of responsible finitude by immersing itself in the innerworldly and intratemporal, awareness breaks through from time to time. Angst is Heidegger’s term for this disruptive attunement that discloses the fact that Dasein “has to take over solely from itself the potentiality-of-being in which it is concerned absolutely about its ownmost being” (BT 263/243). What Angst reveals is that “death does not just ‘belong’ in an undifferentiated way to one’s own Da-sein, but it lays claim on it as something individual” (BT 263/243). This “laying claim” individuates by pulling Dasein out of the self-forgetfulness of inauthenticity and bringing it face to face with its own condition as temporally particular having-to-be. This does not mean that Dasein was not an “individual” prior to authenticity—Dasein is always a self defined by mineness; rather, in Angst Dasein is called to an explicit awareness and appropriation of its nature as such: “The fact that Da-sein is entrusted to itself shows itself primordially and concretely in Angst” (BT 192/179). As Haugeland puts it, “In anxiety, a person’s individuality is ‘brought home’ to him or her in an utterly unmistakable and undeniable way.”43 This unmistakable experience reveals to Dasein the different possible ways it can exist in terms of itself—it discloses the possibilities of self-recognition or self-delusion of which it is capable and thereby undermines its ability to focus only on the fallen possibility of self-forgetting. Angst, Heidegger claims, “takes away from Da-sein the possibility of understanding itself, falling prey, in terms of the ‘world’ and the public way of being interpreted” (BT 187/175); it “fetches Da-sein back from its falling prey and reveals to it authenticity and inauthenticity as possibilities of its being” (BT 191/178).

Despite Heidegger’s talk of the world “falling away,” however, we must recall that Dasein is “not a subject or consciousness, which only incidentally provides itself with a world” (HCT 305). We cannot interpret the “distance” from world that Angst induces as a retreat into the autonomous confines of the solitary self, since its transcendent being-in-the-world is
precisely that about which Dasein is anxious: “Angst individualizes and thus discloses Da-sein as ‘solus ipse.’ This existential ‘solipsism,’ however, is so far from transposing an isolated subject-thing into the harmless vacuum of a worldless occurrence that it brings Da-sein in an extreme sense precisely before its world as world, and thus itself as being-in-the-world” (BT 188/176). What characterizes anxiety is that Dasein’s relation to the world itself—the manner in which the world comes to be the meaningful context of Dasein’s temporalizing—becomes a matter of concern, and not the particular meaningful things found within this context. Indeed, the “utter insignificance” of innerworldly beings is revealed in Angst, but Heidegger is clear that this does not thereby “signify the absence of world”; rather, it means that this attunement reveals the insignificance of the particular innerworldly things that normally fascinate and absorb because for the first time “the world is all that obtrudes itself in its worldliness” (BT 187/175). Anxiety thus reveals the conditions and context in which care normally operates by placing the particular instances of its operation out of play and allowing the structure of its normal functioning to become evident. In Angst Dasein is anxious for its being-in-the-world—including the fact that this being-in-the-world is defined by a being-with that makes possible the very world in which it normally finds meaning: “This ‘there’ is first of all being-there-with-others, which is the publicly oriented there in which every Dasein constantly remains, even when it withdraws completely into itself” (HCT 254). Heidegger’s talk of the “worldlessness” of Angst and the “non-relationality” of being-toward-death make it easy to interpret him as advocating a type of solipsism in which the Dasein-to-Dasein relationship is destroyed or bracketed, however, and many scholars read him as articulating just this position. This interpretation is supported by such Heideggerian claims as: “The non-relational character of death understood in anticipation individualizes Dasein down to itself . . . It reveals the fact that any being-together-with what is taken care of and any being-with the others fails when one’s ownmost potentiality of being is at stake” (BT 263/243). When understood in context, however, it becomes clear that the “being-with-others” to which Heidegger refers in such instances is the worldly mode of encounter:

But if taking care of things and being concerned fail us, this does not, however, mean at all that these modes of Da-sein have been cut off from its authentic being a self. As essential structures of the constitution of Da-sein they also belong to the condition of the possibility of existence in general. Dasein is authentically itself only if it projects itself, as being-together-with things taken care of and concernful being-with . . . , primarily upon its ownmost potentiality-of-being, rather than upon the
possibility of the they-self. Anticipation of its nonrelational possibility forces the being that anticipates into the possibility of taking over its ownmost being of its own accord. (BT 263–64/243)

Insofar as we recall that the world in its worldliness is dependent on the encounter with other co-temporalizing Dasein, however, Heidegger’s characterization of the “utter insignificance” of the innerworldly becomes less open to interpretations that emphasize the solipsistic tone of anxiety’s individualizing. This is supported by his explicit claims emphasizing the continuing presence of the others despite authenticity: “The authenticity of Dasein . . . the self that Dasein can be, such that it does not really extricate itself from this being-with-one-another but, while this remains constitutive in its being as being-with, it is still itself” (HCT 248).

In Angst, then, it is in terms of the specifically innerworldly manifestation of being-with that the others “fall away” and lose significance: “In Angst, the things at hand in the surrounding world sink away, and so do innerworldly beings in general. The ‘world’ can offer nothing more, nor can the Mitda-sein of others. Thus Angst takes away from Da-sein the possibility of understanding itself, falling prey, in terms of the ‘world’ and the public way of being interpreted. It throws Da-sein back upon that for which it is anxious, its authentic potentiality-for-being-in-the-world” (BT 187/175–76). The normal roles and measures through which we take heed of the others lose their meaning and familiarity because the entire context of meaning and my commitment to it has come into question. As Rebecca Kukla notes: “In cutting off my capacity for unreflective, fallen action, the uncanny reveals that everyday practices never did simply determine my actions as the laws of nature can determine my movements. I was bound by the norms of the everyday in virtue of my free commitment to them rather than by compulsion, even if this free commitment is only available through hindsight.”

What Angst reveals to me is not that all norms are meaningless or make no claim on me—but that I am implicated in the fact that they do make such claims. Thus Heidegger’s statements about the “non-relationality” of death can be understood as a realization of the contingency of the worldly standards of significance and measure with which we normally operate. Eric Sean Nelson notes, therefore, that “death” for Heidegger is a possibility that is “non-relational in that it can not be ordered in the relationality of the world but places relationality itself into question.”

This point returns us to the above discussion of the relationship between general standards and particular others, where we noted that though the norms governing public life are generally taken to be settled
and law-like, they are nevertheless haunted by a profound contingency due to Dasein’s way of being. In the anxious experience of this contingency of all particular innerworldly norms, Dasein’s way of being—the condition for the possibility of these norms obtaining—is first disclosed. What is revealed is Dasein’s thrown projecting being-with: the fact that its responsive, understanding sharing of time with others is what makes innerworldly significance possible as such. Though he says, then, that “being-with the others fails when one’s ownmost potentiality-of-being is at stake” he also notes that this “does not, however, mean at all that these modes of Da-sein have been cut off from its authentic being a self. As essential structures of the constitution of Da-sein they also belong to the condition of the possibility of existence in general” (BT 263/243). What fail in my being-with the others are the specific innerworldly roles and measures that have been instituted to accommodate our mutual temporalizing. Though these are the manner in which we normally encounter other Dasein, through their failure the others can become evident as co-constitutors of world and world time. As Phillip Buckley notes: “For Heidegger (as well as for Husserl), authenticity has something to do with thematizing properly that which remains unthematized in both everyday and scientific life, with making explicit what was only implicit. For Heidegger, what goes totally unnoticed in everyday, indifferent existence is the ontological meaning of Dasein as temporality.”48 Because Dasein’s ontological meaning as temporality essentially involves an accommodating openness to the others with whom it constitutes the world, the authentic realization of this meaning necessarily involves an explicit recognition of the role of others in creating and maintaining this context of significance. In authenticity Dasein recognizes the way of being specific to Da-sein—but this recognition is not restricted only to its own Dasein being.

The temporal nature of authenticity’s Dasein-realization is evident not only in understandingly being-toward-death in anticipation; it is also evident in authentic attunement. This becomes particularly clear when we consider Heidegger’s discussion of profound boredom, which, along with Angst, is a fundamental attunement that allows Dasein’s structures of significance—rather than particular significant things—to become a matter of concern. In his analyses of fundamental boredom, he explicitly characterizes the temporal horizon as his focus, but here too he is articulating the sense in which we can recognize that which “holds beings as a whole open and makes them accessible in general as such” (FCM 147), an accessibility, Heidegger notes, that involves the way in which the temporal horizon “must simultaneously bind Dasein to itself and entrance it” (FCM 147). This normally happens in terms of particular innerworldly things, but in authenticity, this temporal horizon itself grips Dasein—its
own temporalizing way of being is disclosed to it as such, thereby inhib-
iting its engagement with the intratemporal things that this temporaliz-
ing enables. “Time entrances [bannt] Dasein, not as the time which re-
mained standing as distinct from flowing, but rather the time beyond such 
flowing and its standing, the time which in each case Dasein itself as a whole 
is. This whole time entrances as a horizon. Entranced by time, Dasein 
cannot find its way to those beings that announce themselves in the telling 
refusal of themselves as a whole precisely within this horizon of entrancing 
time” (FCM 147). Fundamental attunements such as Angst and boredom 
interrupt the everyday functioning of world and world time such that 
their role as the horizon “which properly makes possible” (FCM 148) 
becomes evident as such. This authentic awareness that interrupts the 
everyday entrancement of time to reveal temporalizing itself is, accord-
ing to Heidegger, “able to rupture it, insofar as it is a specific possibility 
of time itself” (FCM 151). Heidegger characterizes this temporal possi-
bility of rupture as the authentic now, or the “Augenblick” (FCM 149). 
But as we will see in the next section, it is the third authentic mode of 
disclosure—conscience—that primarily accounts for the rupturing qual-
ity of the authentic now; it calls us into this moment of authentic time 
and demands authenticity of us.

The Call of Conscience

After discussing Angst and being-toward-death, Heidegger asserts that 
“the question hovering over us of an authentic wholeness of Dasein and 
its existential constitution can be placed on a viable, phenomenal basis 
only if that question can hold fast to a possible authenticity of its being 
attested by Dasein itself” (BT 267/246). The call of conscience is the 
mode of discursive disclosure that attests to the possibility of authen-
ticity such that Dasein in the whole of its existing can be brought into 
the existential fore-having necessary for understanding this existence. 
Understood as discourse, then, we can recognize that conscience articu-
lates the intelligibility of the basic structures of Dasein’s way of being; the 
call gives to understand Dasein’s temporalizing existence in all its mineness 
and particularity.

Because inauthentic Dasein resists this self-understanding, authen-
ticity demands that Dasein be brought back to itself from its fallen im-
mersion in worldly understandings, and “this bringing-back,” Heidegger 
says, “must have the kind of being by the neglect of which Da-sein has lost 
itself in its inauthenticity” (BT 268/248). As we noted, it is neglect of the
temporalizing mineness and finitude of existence that leads Dasein to take its interpretive guidance from intratemporal things that are not defined by possibility and self-responsibility. In doing so, Dasein fails to live into these possibilities as its own, drifting along instead in the anonymous and inherited roles and interpretations that have, so to speak, chosen it. Inauthenticity lulls Dasein into going along with the roles that are given to it such that it not only fails to choose specific possibilities as genuinely its own, but also fails to recognize its way of existing as a being capable of such self-responsible choice. Thus becoming authentic involves overcoming a condition in which one both fails to be a free self and forgets that this is even a possibility. Grasping its own potentiality of being cannot, therefore, involve a straightforward choice to resist fallenness. Heidegger realizes that Dasein cannot simply “decide” to be authentic, since this capacity is itself concealed and evaded in fallenness. Conscience therefore has the task of uncovering—awakening—the very potential for authenticity that is ordinarily forgotten. The difficulty, as Heidegger recognizes, is how this neglected capacity for responsibility can become a possibility for actualization if Dasein has given in to the tendency to fall away from itself: how to choose choice when the capacity for choosing has been forgotten?

The answer involves a certain type of “self-finding”: “Because Dasein is lost in the ‘they,’ it must first find itself. In order to find itself at all, it must be ‘shown’ to itself in its possible authenticity” (BT 266/248). But what is the form of this authentic self-showing that can, paradoxically, occur from within inauthenticity? Heidegger points the way forward in querying: “How is the authenticity of existence to be defined at all if not with reference to authentic existing? Where do we get our criterion for this? Obviously Dasein itself in its being must present the possibility and way of its authentic existence, if such existence is neither imposed upon it ontically, nor ontologically fabricated. But an authentic potentiality of being is attested in conscience” (BT 234/216). Conscience plays the role of giving Dasein’s way of being to it to be understood. But insofar as existential understanding is a way of being for Heidegger—not simply an abstract knowing—for conscience to bring Dasein’s potential authenticity into the space of understanding is not simply to grant Dasein information about a capacity. Rather, it must itself be an initial or inaugural realization of the capacity itself. This, indeed, is the reason “attestation” is the term used to describe the role of conscience: attestation generally means a substantiation or corroboration of something. Conscience attests to Dasein’s potential authenticity by first demonstrating or manifesting this possibility—by first existing it. The call that brings Dasein back from its fallenness must reverse the neglect of this capacity
by first engaging it, then, but it must do so in a way that doesn’t illicitly presuppose that this reversal has already occurred. It is for this reason that Heidegger describes inaugural instances of authenticity as “making up for not choosing . . . choosing to make this choice—deciding for a potentiality-of-being, and making this decision from one’s own self” (BT 268/248). The possibility of Dasein inaugurating an authentic way of being despite the fact that this very authenticity seems necessary to resist falling—a seemingly vicious circle—lies in the nature of conscience as call. In conscience one is summoned to one’s own structure as temporalizing care in a type of double movement, a “calling back that calls forth”: “forth to the possibility of taking over in existence the thrown being that it is, back to thrownness in order to understand it as the null ground that it has to take up into existence” (BT 287/264). Understood as such, Heidegger makes room for an initial choosing of one’s being in the face of the groundless conditions out of which all such choices must be made and the self-forgetfulness that this motivates. Conscience is a self-summoning to responsiveness that creates the very responsiveness that it needs in order to be heard. As Rebecca Kukla puts it: “This call discloses Dasein, by uncovering the implicit normative structure of Dasein’s fallen dealings, but in doing so it also constitutes Dasein in its individuated being. While fallen, Dasein has ‘forgotten’ that it is not merely the They, and it must remember this through its recognition of conscience’s call. But since, in a chronological sense, we are ‘first’ lost in the everyday, this remembering has to be of a funny sort.” This “remembering” occurs through conscience’s unique structure as a calling of the self to a resolute choosing of the way of being that it nevertheless must always be.

Hearing the Call

What is it about the call of conscience that allows for this initial “making possible” of Dasein genuinely living into its way of being in its wholeness? The answer to this question lies in the fact that Heidegger understands conscience as a discursive call. The notion of “the call” is a recurring theme in many of Heidegger’s works—in “Language,” in “Letter on Humanism,” and other texts it plays an important role. In What Is Called Thinking? Heidegger plays with the verb “to call,” exploring other verbs that it evokes—summon, demand, instruct, direct, command—as approximations to its meaning. He clarifies that the sense of call with which he is concerned does not just imply demand, however, but “rather implies an anticipatory reaching out for something that is reached by our
call, through our calling” (WCT 386). The nature of such an “anticipatory reaching out” is clarified further when he asserts that to call is “to command,” which “basically means, not to give commands and orders, but to commend, entrust, give into safekeeping, to shelter” (WCT 387). Understood in this manner, conscience is a type of anticipatory reaching out and evocative nurturing of one’s ability to live in light of one’s being qua worldly and world-constituting mineness. These explorations are also instructive in that each characterization of “calling” involves a type of bringing into relationship; calling is a summoning and granting “bringing together”—a relation, indeed, in which the relata are not clearly reducible to “agent” and “recipient”: “The call is precisely something that we ourselves have neither planned for nor willfully brought about. ‘It’ calls, against our expectations and even against our will. On the other hand, the call without doubt does not come from someone else who is with me in the world. The call comes from me, and yet over me” (BT 275/254). Such a middle-voice structure is particularly evident in Heidegger’s emphasis on the dimension of hearing that belongs to conscience. Further examination of the “choice” that makes choosing possible leads Heidegger to argue that such an inaugural authentic existing is essentially a certain type of “hearing” or responsiveness in the face of the call that grants Dasein an understanding of its way of being. Dasein’s being in its wholeness qua worldly and world-constituting can be disclosed when the capacity to hear the disclosure has been awakened. Conscience’s status as call both grants Dasein an understanding of its way of being and evokes the type of open listening that makes it capable of receiving such a “giving to understand”: “Da- sein fails to hear itself, and listens to the they, and this listening gets broken by the call if that call, in accordance with its character as call, arouses another kind of hearing which, in relation to the hearing that is lost, has a character in every way opposite. If this lost hearing is numbed by the ‘noise’ of the manifold ambiguity of everyday ‘new’ idle talk, the call must call silently, unambiguously, with no foothold for curiosity” (BT 271/250–51). Heidegger’s account of conscience as “alternative” hearing allows us, then, to clarify the structure of this inaugurating instance of a forgotten or hidden capacity, a structure that he first characterizes with his claim that conscience calls Dasein to choose choosing. Better: conscience calls Dasein to hear its own forgotten way of being.

Interestingly, the use of the concept of “hearing” is not experienced as being nearly so circular, and its greater palatability lies, I believe, in our inability to conceive of “choice” as anything other than explicit, self-conscious, willful act. The concept of choice resists the middle-voiced structure that Heidegger attempts to attribute to it—the reason, per-
haps, that he is so often accused of a willful decisionism. But for Heidegger, Dasein’s resolute “taking action” in authenticity “would have to be so broadly conceived that ‘activity’ also encompasses the passivity of resistance” (BT 300/276). The concept of hearing as an existential openness to the discursive giving to understanding of Dasein’s way of being more adequately captures this notion than “choosing to choose” can. Its ambiguous status as a type of active receiving or passive activity is more appropriate for characterizing this inaugural instance in which Dasein allows itself to resist the tendency toward falling. It is for this reason, I would argue, that Heidegger describes hearing as the most “primary and authentic openness” (BT 163/153). As John Llewelyn notes:

The voice of conscience is a middle voice, akin to the Greek voice that Heidegger finds most suitable to express the mood of the phenomenological thinking called for in Being and Time, a thinking which must be cooperative and vigilant listening obedience. “Listening-to . . . is Dasein’s existential way of Being-open as Being-with for Others” (BT 163). Here and in the paragraph immediately following this sentence in Being and Time the words used are hören and horchen, where along with the idea of hearkening there are overtones of heed, gehorchen.

As we will argue below, this notion of heed—a concept we have seen before in terms of accommodating the foreign temporality of the other—applies not only to the self-calling of conscience, but characterizes the other-calling and responsive openness characteristic of leaping-ahead. What Heidegger is articulating here, however, is a self-calling characterized by a type of unity of activity and passivity evident in his claim that despite the fact that the “tendency toward disclosure of the call lies [in] the factor of a jolt, of an abrupt arousal” it nevertheless only reaches “him who wants to be brought back” (BT 271/251). Understood as such, we can understand conscience not simply as offering Dasein the possibility of authenticity, but summoning it to live in light of this disclosed way of being. Such a summoning accounts for the manner in which conscience differs from Angst, which simply “fetches Dasein back from its falling prey and reveals to it authenticity and inauthenticity as possibilities of its being” (BT 191/178). Conscience is not simply a revelation, however, but a type of invocation and demand. Thus in introducing the discussion of conscience, Heidegger notes that “we must investigate to what extent at all and in what way Dasein bears witness to a possible authenticity of its existence from its ownmost potentiality-of-being, in such a way that it not only makes this known as existentially possible, but demands it of itself” (BT 267/246). Conscience is the mode of disclosure in which Dasein’s pos-
sible authenticity is given to it as a certain imperative, an imperative whose “content” is not given by the particular worldly roles and measures that have been called into question, but by the very structures of Dasein’s being qua temporalizing mineness. In this sense the call of conscience is the normative injunction that I live in light of the way of being that I have to be, rather than fleeing it into thingly-interpretations. Though authenticity is not, in this sense, a worldly or a contentful norm—it does not tell me specific things to do—neither is it empty. Instead, it demands that I meet my potential of taking responsibility for these worldly norms by recognizing and acting consistently with my way of being as a shared world-constituting with other Dasein. In this regard, it counteracts falling’s tendency toward inauthenticity.

Thus Rebecca Kukla notes that conscience’s call is “such that hearing its call constitutes subjects as responsive and responsible negotiators of normative claims.” As Kukla makes clear, however, we always already are responsive negotiators of normative claims—the claims of everyday standards of appropriateness, and, on a more fundamental ontological level, the claims of attuned understanding and the temporal constraints of the shared now. This responsiveness is always operative in our everyday way of being with others, though it is not recognized and “owned” as such: “This responsiveness could not exist if we were fully and irretrievably fallen. The problem is that if we were merely carried along by the everyday, then our relationship to it would not be normative at all. The norms of the They would function for us like laws of nature, compelling us immediately at the level of blind impulse, rather than binding us in virtue of our recognition of their force and our commitment to them.”

It is for this reason, argues Kukla, that Heidegger’s project must be understood as a transcendental one: he is “arguing from the existence of normative responsiveness to the conditions of its possibility, not proving the possibility of such a responsiveness from a starting point that makes no appeal to it.” What conscience expresses, then, is a demand for a type of existential consistency in which Dasein explicitly recognizes and takes responsibility for—lives in light of—these always already operative existential structures of being-in-the-worldly space of significance. Because Dasein is subjected to this summons to resolute existing, we can recognize the source of the demand that I act in ways consistent with my way of being, an imperative that appeared problematic when we considered the fact that on a minimal and unavoidable level, Dasein is always acting in ways consistent with its way of being—since it cannot help but do so. As Bernhard Radloff notes, with this notion of a “having to be” that I both always am and yet must “live up” to being, Heidegger is demonstrating the significant influence that Aristotle had
on his thinking: “Heidegger—following his retrieval of Aristotle—understands this being of a being as the movement (kinesis) of a being into its own proper limit and form, as determined by the principle of unfolding (arche) inherent in it.” Unlike Aristotle, however, Heidegger’s only articulation of this “proper limit and form” is in the structure of its temporal ecstasis qua thrown projecting being-with. Thus with the notion of ontological imperatives to appropriateness, Heidegger may offer a middle way between a robust perfectionism and a pure formalism: in the call of conscience, “‘rising’ to the occasion of existence” is demanded of Dasein, but meeting this norm occurs only by Dasein taking responsibility for the constraints that are, qua existentials, always already operative. Thus Heidegger notes that if Dasein does so, he will “successfully” and adequately “respond to what presses upon him as a necessity, namely not acting counter to what is essential in Dasein. Not acting counter to the essential here means being held to oneself” (FCM 174). With the notions of authenticity (self-holding) and inauthenticity (self-forgetfulness) Heidegger makes room for the fact that Dasein can succeed or fail at a being that it nevertheless cannot help but be:

Yet do we not all know this? Yes and no. We do not know it to the extent that we have forgotten that man, if he is to become what he is, in each case has to throw Dasein upon his shoulders; that he precisely is not when he merely lets himself set about things in the general fray, however “spirited” this may be; that Dasein is not something one takes for a drive in the car as it were, but something that man must specifically take upon himself . . . Man must first resolutely open himself again to this demand. (FCM 165)

Successfully responding to what “presses upon it as a necessity” therefore requires that Dasein is in a certain sense “held to itself” such that the response is adequate to the appeal. This being held to oneself—a formulation that doesn’t entirely capture its middle-voiced structure of a self-holding/being held—is the essence of authenticity, in which Dasein takes on the responsibility of the claims inherent in its having to be.

Ethical Implications

The foregoing points allow us to better understand our earlier discussion of the Levinasian “ineluctable appeal” of ethics—a claim to which I cannot help but respond, but for which my response can nevertheless be
deemed inadequate. It returns us to Kant, as well, since Kant defined the human being in terms of a fundamental rationality whose claims one is still blameworthy in failing to meet. Heidegger is further in agreement with Kant insofar as he ties the moral status of an action to the degree to which Dasein takes explicit responsibility for the original claims of its having to be: “Self-responsibility is the fundamental kind of being determining distinctively human action, i.e. ethical praxis” (EHF 180). Heidegger’s appreciative interpretation of Kantian ethical theory finds particular expression in The Essence of Human Freedom, where he examines this essential dimension of existential self-responsibility that is its heart:

Unless pure willing, as the genuinely actual of all ethical action, actually wills itself, a material table of values—however finely structured and comprehensive—remains a pure phantom with no binding force. This willing is allegedly empty, but at bottom it is precisely this which is most concrete in the lawfulness of ethical action. The ethicality of action does not consist in realizing so-called values, but in the actual willing to take responsibility, in the decision to exist within this responsibility. (EHF 190–91)

Unlike Kant, however, Heidegger takes this self-responsibility to encompass all of the dimensions of ecstatic being-in-the-world—not just Dasein’s rationality. For Heidegger, authentic resoluteness is Dasein deciding to “exist within the responsibility” of its way of existing as attuned, understanding, and in relation with others—an existing that it is always already compelled to be. He therefore makes room for appropriating dimensions of Kantian theory and rejecting others when, in his analysis of the will as “nothing other than practical reason and vice versa” (EHF 187) he claims that “to actually will is to will nothing else but the ought of one’s existence. Only in this kind of willing is that actual within which the fact of the ethical law is actually a fact . . . The factuality of this fact does not stand over against us but belongs with us ourselves such that we are claimed for the possibility of this actuality, not just in this or that way, but in our essence” (EHF 196). Insofar as Heidegger understands the ought and the essence of one’s existence differently, he is not a Kantian, but the structure of claim and responsibility-taking is similar, as he recognizes: “This fact of an unconditional obligation may well exist, and if so is obviously connected with what we call ‘conscience’ ” (EHF 197). Thus despite the fact that talk of self-responsibility and “self-binding” has led some to accuse Heidegger of reducing norm-responsiveness to a type of arbitrary self-relation, he is clear that the claims to which Dasein must bind itself are not merely accidental or arbitrary objects for selection, but essential
dimensions of Dasein’s being-in-the-world—including the fact of being heedful to the other Dasein’s temporalizing being-in-the-world. Authentic self-responsibility is “to bind oneself to oneself, but not egotistically, i.e. not in relation to the accidental ‘I’” (EHF 199).

Characterizing such normative claims in the absence of this moment of self-responsibility would turn them into a type of natural law that simply compels obedience. On the contrary, “a genuinely normative call must serve as an authoritative source of action, but it must not complete the determination of the action, so that it leaves its target free to responsibly and authoritatively respond to its authority.”

Normative claims can always be refused, evaded, covered over—as Dasein’s tendency to falling makes clear. In the absence of this responsibility-taking such claims will not cease being obligations—but they would fail to bind me to them. As Rebecca Kukla notes:

Transcendental conscience discloses the normative demands made upon us as binding, rather than leaving them to sit passively in experiential space, as some perhaps do for the psychopath, who is perfectly capable of internalizing moral rules in the sense of memorizing them, but for whom they have no binding force. Hence such conscience commands nothing, not in the sense that there are no legitimate, concrete commands that bind subjects, but in the sense that the responsibility for responding to these commands, which this conscience must instill, is never reducible to or explicable by an appeal to mere exposure to yet a further set of commands.

This being free to take on or turn away from my obligations is, Heidegger claims, “not a property of man but is synonymous with behaving ethically” (BPP 141). Such a characterization of self-responsibility recognizes that the essence of obligation is to compel and summon—but not coerce. It is important to be clear, then, that Heidegger is not asserting the unbounded or unlimited nature of Dasein—that we are not subjected to any claims until we decide to make something into a claim. Rather, he is articulating the necessary conditions for explicitly responding to claims as claims—namely, that Dasein must take part in committing itself to them as such:

Letting something stand-over-against as something given, basically the manifestness of beings in the binding character of their so-and that-being, is only possible where the comportment to beings, whether in theoretical or practical knowledge, already acknowledges this binding character. But the latter amounts to an originary self-binding, or, in Kantian terms, the giving of a law unto oneself. The
letting-be-encountered of beings, comportment to beings in each and every mode of manifestness, is only possible where freedom exists. (EHF 205)

My obligation to respect a certain claim cannot make me act in light of it unless I take responsibility for who I am to be in the face of such claims. “Freedom makes Dasein in the ground of its essence, responsible [verbindlich] to itself, or more exactly, gives itself the possibility of commitment” (MFL 192). In understanding what it means for Dasein to take responsibility for the possibility of normative commitment, we can agree with Steven Crowell’s suggestion in “Factivity and Transcendental Philosophy” that “to recognize my responsibility in the existential sense is to understand that the being normative of norms, their functioning as norms, is grounded in my concern for normativity as such,” and this concern for normativity as such “rests on what Heidegger calls an ‘ontological’ basis, namely, on the existential circumstance that a concern with normativity constitutes selfhood.”

But as we have shown, my concern for normativity is rooted not only in my desire to meet adequately the constraints of my way of existing, but also in my desire to accommodate the temporalizing having to be of the other Dasein. This deep intertwining of my having to be with that of other Dasein is most evident in the fact that the others can themselves be the source of this summons to adequacy. In this sense, it seems clear that concern for the other is not a simple derivative of authentic self-responsibility, since the latter is often secondary to the former. By acting as the other Dasein’s call of conscience, I can summon her to take over her responsibility for having to be. This is the essence of the mode of Fürsorge that Heidegger dubs “leaping-ahead”: it is a mode of being-with in which I disclose and nurture the other in the wholeness of her existence qua worldly and world-constituting having-to-be, and it finds its voice in the call of conscience.

The Call of the Other

It is important to note from the outset that when he claims that Dasein can become the conscience of others he uses “scare” quotes to convey the sense that Dasein can only act as a conscience-like phenomenon for the other: “Resolute Da-sein can become the ‘conscience’ of others” (BT 298/274). Dasein can function like the other’s conscience, then, but it cannot in fact be the other’s conscience; there remains a significant dif-
ference between conscience’s self-calling, and this conscience-like “being called.” This difference is demonstrated when we consider a major difficulty facing the claim that I may be the recipient of a silent call from another Dasein which evokes an authentic hearing. Namely, the coincidence of caller and called within the same articulated Dasein seemed to be essential to the unified existing that characterized authenticity. Since conscience is both the call to another hearing and the first instance of this hearing itself, it thereby provides a type of inaugural instance of responsiveness to my responsibility for being that evokes my authentic existing. If this is the case, however, how can we talk about this inaugural authentic hearing without the call coming from—and simultaneously triggering responsiveness in—my own Dasein?

It is here that we must rely on Heidegger’s use of scare quotes regarding the other’s ability to act as the call of conscience. Conscience can—qua discourse—allow others to give me an understanding of being in its mineness through a communicative sharing in which what I had previously fallen away from—an awareness of my way of being—is made explicit to me. Though the other’s call can therefore summon me to a responsive self-understanding of this way of being qua having to be, it cannot fulfill the other dimension of conscience: the responsibility-taking that accounts for it being a genuine inauguration of authenticity. In other words, the others cannot take responsibility for this being in my place. Indeed, the other’s belief that he can take responsibility for my being in my place is precisely the misunderstanding and distortion at the root of leaping-in. The other who calls me with the voice of conscience gives me a self-understanding that I did not previously have, then, but it is a giving that summons me to take responsibility for my own having to be.

A potential problem that arises with this interpretation lies in the fact that the summoning quality of conscience appears to rely on the fact that it is a self-calling from out of our everyday tendency toward inauthenticity. The possibility of interrupting falling lies in being summoned immediately, argues Heidegger, and this character of immediacy is attributable to conscience because it is Dasein calling itself. Though our initial understanding of the call of conscience seemed to require that the Dasein presenting the possibility of authentic existing is the same Dasein as the one to whom this possibility is attested, however, nothing in Heidegger’s account requires that we reach this conclusion. Indeed, he never offers any argument for the claim that Dasein’s potentiality-for-being-a-whole can only be triggered by the immediacy of self-calling. This is not the only way to understand this immediacy, however: note how he claims that the call of conscience is necessary for Dasein to be brought back from its lostness in the they “if this is to be done through itself” (BT 271/250, em-
phasis mine). Such an “if” implies that one may also be called back from this lostness by something—or someone—other than the self. Though he emphasizes the necessity of conscience being the “self calling the self” to its ownmost possibilities if the immediacy of the call is to achieve its “jolting” disclosure, then, Heidegger seems to simply assume that the call must be from my authentic self if it is to succeed as a call to be this authentic self, particularly when the call cannot be from “someone else who is with me in the world” (BT 275/254). Thus he asserts that “when the caller reaches him who is summoned, it does so with a cold assurance that is uncanny and by no means obvious. Wherein lies the basis for this assurance, if not in the fact that Da-sein, individualized to itself in its uncanniness, is absolutely unmistakable to itself? What is it that takes away from Da-sein so radically the possibility of misunderstanding itself from some other direction and failing to recognize itself, if not the abandonment in being delivered over to itself?” (BT 277/256).

Wherein lies the basis of this assurance? Why must the absolute immediacy with which the call takes away the possibility of misunderstanding imply that it could only have come from me? Since communicative discourse is the sharing of new orientations and understandings, its very structure allows for this possibility. Nevertheless, it cannot have come from “someone else who is with me in the world,” since “in its who, the caller is definable by nothing ‘worldly.’ It is Da-sein in its uncanniness, primordially thrown being-in-the-world, as not-at-home, the naked ‘that’ in the nothingness of the world” (BT 276–77/255). As we have already shown, however, the others, too, are characterized by a dimension that is “nothing worldly”; something which accounts for the fact that the world’s structures of significance and measuring are constituted in Dasein-to-Dasein encounters. If we are to take seriously Heidegger’s claim that I may be the recipient of a conscience-like call originating in another Dasein, then, this call would have to originate in the world-constituting temporalizing mineness of the other Dasein—and not in the other’s “worldly” mode of being. Thus in noting the fact that “hearing the call depends on the very abilities it is supposed to constitute,” one can conclude that the temporality of the call “cannot be that of placement within chronological succession, since as an ontological moment it comes ‘before’ events that are chronologically earlier than it. It is this sort of consideration . . . that led Heidegger to insist upon the non-primordiality of chronological time.” Sources of this primordial claim must therefore be irreducible to the innerworldly, intratemporal dimension. As Heidegger notes in The Essence of Human Freedom, the reality of a natural thing has its “what-content” “in the actual objects of spatio-temporal experience” (EHF 185). Since freedom is not
like this, but is nevertheless still a fact, “the reality of freedom must be capable of intuitive presentation in a mode other than that applicable for natural things. The reality of freedom requires another kind of actuality than that exhibited by natural objects, i.e. the reality of freedom is not an objective reality” (EHF 185). Since other Dasein meet this criterion, it is not only my own voice of conscience that can be a source of such “extratemporal” and “otherworldly” calling claims. In being called by the other, I am also called with such a voice. Heidegger makes room for this possibility because of his emphasis on hearing as the discursive manner in which conscience summons and provokes in Dasein an understanding of its way of being. The very same structure characterizing openness to my own call of conscience is what characterizes the most essential openness to the other Dasein: “Listening to . . . is the existential being-open of Da-sein as being-with for the other. Hearing even constitutes the primary and authentic openness of Da-sein for its ownmost possibility of being, as in hearing the voice of the friend whom every Da-sein carries with it” (BT 163/153). The implication here is that Dasein’s responsiveness to its own potentiality of being is primarily constituted through the very same receptive moment of discourse that discloses Dasein’s essential being-with others.

This mention of “the voice of the friend whom every Da-sein carries with it” brings to mind current discussions of the self-relational dimension of ethics as a type of “internalized other.” Such a characterization of hearing led Levinas to query whether the self-calling nature of conscience is—qua discourse—derivative of other-calling: that is, discursive being-with: “One must ask if this very discourse, despite its allegedly interior scissions, does not already rest on a prior sociality with the Other where the interlocutors are distinct. It is necessary to ask if this forgotten but effective sociality is nonetheless presupposed by the rupture, however provisional, between self and self, for the interior dialogue to still deserve the name dialogue” (“DR” 102). The question of whether conscience is derivative of “conscience” or whether the self-oriented and the other-oriented modes of authentic discourse are equiprimordial cannot be further addressed here; nevertheless there is certainly a case to be made for the former interpretation despite the decidedly Levinasian slant that this would give Heidegger. If we recall that discourse is the mode of disclosure belonging essentially to being-with, however, this interpretation does not seem so foreign: “This capacity to listen to the other with whom one is, or to oneself who one is in the mode of discoursing, where it is not at all a matter of utterance in the sense of external speaking, is grounded in the structure of being of the original being-with-one-another” (HCT 266).
Silence

If others are to act as the call of conscience for me, they must trigger this other hearing, and they must call in a mode that is other than worldly, intratemporal modes of discourse; their call cannot take the form of ordinary calling. Instead it must “call silently, unambiguously, with no foothold for curiosity” (BT 271/251). It is for this reason that Heidegger analyzes the essential possibility of discourse that correlates to authentic hearing: keeping silent. This is a form of communicating, he argues, that is not an “external speaking,” but which can nevertheless “let something be understood” by the other person (BT 164/154). Despite its silence, such a call “loses nothing of its perceptability” (BT 273/252–53). This perceptible yet silent “something” that I let the other understand, Heidegger claims, “makes manifest and puts down ‘idle talk’” (BT 165/154).

What is this “something” that can only be understood outside the domain of idle talk? According to Heidegger, keeping silent implies that Dasein is in “command of an authentic and rich disclosedness of itself” (BT 165/154). One can conclude, then, that in such communicative keeping silent, what I give the other to understand is Dasein-being and the potentiality of authentic existing implied therein—certainly topics outside the domain of idle talk. Thus Heidegger goes on to say that “keeping silent” implies that Dasein has something to say but refrains from doing so and that this reticence “articulates the intelligibility of Dasein so primordially that it gives rise to a genuine potentiality for hearing and to a being-with-one-another that is transparent” (BT 165/154). This primordial articulation, this “silent communication” that grants transparency, is a clear echo of the structures of conscience—but in these passages the indication is that such a silent communication is possible not only between my authentic and inauthentic “selves” but between my authentic self and another Dasein. Indeed, by claiming that it “gives rise to a genuine potentiality for hearing”—a genuine hearing that, being authentic, I myself have supposedly already achieved—Heidegger clearly indicates that authentic Dasein has the capacity to awaken this potentiality in other, inauthentic Dasein. The capacity to engage in such a mode of silent, yet communicative—shared—discourse is the essence of the discursive nature of the call of conscience, which establishes the authentic mode of being-with that Heidegger terms “leaping-ahead.”

Before we can turn to the final section of this discussion—in which we will examine the implications of these analyses for understanding leaping-ahead more concretely—we must face two final objections arising from the fact that most interpreters insist that only previously authentic Dasein can act as the call of conscience that establishes the authentic
Dasein-to-Dasein relationship. First, if a prior authentic resoluteness is required for leaping-ahead, it seems that such authentic being-with will not only be extremely rare, but it will only take the form of refusing to treat the other in terms of thing-appropriate categories. In other words, it will not encompass positive human relationships. Many commentators argue that insofar as authenticity is inherently isolating, it cannot account for the entire range of human relationships that we hope to encompass within the leaping-in/leaping-ahead continuum, such as love and justice. Thus Theunissen notes, for example, that from a positive standpoint, such a letting of the other be “stands for the recognition of the ownmost being of Others, [but] is, from a negative standpoint, the dissolution of all direct connection between Others and me. Others can only be freed for themselves inasmuch as they are freed from me.” Dan Zahavi takes a similar stance when he claims that this “helping” the other to authenticity—which appears to characterize the authentic relationship for Heidegger, is a merely negative kind of help. I cannot individualize the other; I can only help the other by not confirming the other in his inauthentic existence. Thus at best, the only way I can help is by not taking the other’s care away from him, but simply leaving the other in his own potentiality-of-being (SuZ 298). It is therefore not at all the case that genuine being-with-one-another as such could somehow help the Da-sein who is living in everydayness make the transition to a genuine relation to being: Da-sein cannot profit positively from being in some specific relation to me; it must attain its authentic self non-relationally.

On these interpretations, leaping-ahead can only be described as a lack of interference, and the extremes of the Fürsorge continuum would therefore be meddling interference and respectful distance. Loving justice and passionate concern do not appear to be described in such a picture.

As I have already shown, however, authenticity does not destroy or prevent Dasein-to-Dasein encounter; it merely calls its innerworldly and intratemporal forms of expression into question and demands that each Dasein take responsibility for its own having-to-be. And as we will see in the final section, Heidegger’s use of hearing and keeping silent—the non-worldly and temporalizing modes of authentic Dasein-to-Dasein encounter—can indeed provide an account of the most positive forms of human togetherness. Before doing so, however, we must first respond to the accusation that Heidegger’s position is contradictory insofar as the call of conscience requires a prior authenticity; this requirement means that it assumes the very authenticity that the other’s calling is supposed
to help me accomplish. “If Da-sein is first free for the Thou by individu-
alization, how can this authentic relation to the other be the very rela-
tion that helps Da-sein become individualized?” By reversing the terms
of the statement that authentic Dasein can act as the call of conscience
for another, however, we see that a prior authenticity cannot be the case
for both parties. Though the one calling may require a prior authentic
understanding of Dasein’s way of being in order to communicate this to
another Dasein, the one being called by the other’s conscience-like sum-
mons cannot already be authentic or the other’s communication could
not act as call; the idle chatter of das Man would already have been inter-
rupted, another hearing would already be in place. Zahavi himself notes
that “the contradiction disappears, however, when one sees that for Hei-
degger, authentic being-with-one-another is not a reciprocal relation. If
I am already individualized, I can help the other to confront himself
with his own possibilities of being.” Though Zahavi concludes that this
“help” is not much help at all, he recognizes, at the least, that the relation-
ship of caller and called is a complex one in which genuine concern-
ful being-with is not simply a derivative of a prior authenticity on the part
of both Dasein. The recipient of the call clearly cannot be in a prior state
of authentic resoluteness if the disruptive, disclosive nature of the call is
to succeed in interrupting the fallen modes of Dasein interpretation. In
this sense, at least one of the parties first has the possibility of authentic-
ity communicated to her through this relationship.

Indeed, I would even argue that calling the other in the voice of
conscience need not always require that Dasein have achieved a prior
authentic resoluteness. The reason for this lies in the very same lack
of reciprocality or exact symmetry defining the relationship. Namely,
the weight of responsibility for my own being tends to provoke the fall
toward self-misunderstanding and inauthenticity, but when it is the other’s
way of being that I come to understand in all its temporalizing having to
be, this anxiety-inducing dimension of self-responsibility is not so press-
ing. I may be able to see more clearly in the other what I cannot or will
not recognize in myself. Indeed, I believe that the authentic relationships
that are established on such a basis can act as a type of feedback loop
in which Dasein help each other toward greater self-understanding. It
is for this reason that we can argue that the authentic Dasein-to-Dasein
relationship need not be such a rare thing, since it does not require a
prior authenticity in at least one of the parties, and it may not require it
in either. By examining how this notion of “calling the other” can allow
us to understand the authentic leaping-ahead relationship that it estab-
lishes in terms of the most positive modes of human interaction, we may
be able to support these claims more fully.
Love, Justice, and Giving the Other Time

In order to demonstrate that the most positive human relationships are encompassed within Heidegger’s notion of the leaping-ahead that frees the other and the call of conscience that is its voice, we must note that, despite the scarcity of the text available in which Heidegger explicitly addresses these themes, he is characterizing a type of relationship in which one person takes the growth and well-being of the other as its guiding principle, which means “helping to bring it [another Dasein] to itself” (FCM 202). Recall that in What Is Called Thinking? Heidegger defines calling in terms of an “anticipatory reaching out” that brings together and establishes a relationship in which the relationship of caller and called is “to commend, entrust, give into safekeeping, to shelter” (WCT 387).

Such a description of the Dasein-to-Dasein relationship that is established when I act as the call of conscience for the other does not imply a respectful distance—simply leaving the other alone—but characterizes a type of nurturing concern. This is supported by Heidegger’s analysis of what it means to “free” someone in “Building, Dwelling, Thinking”: “To free actually means to spare. The sparing itself consists not only in the fact that we do not harm the one whom we spare. Real sparing is something positive and takes place when we leave something beforehand in its own essence, when we return it specifically to its essential being, when we ‘free’ it in the proper sense of the word into a preserve of peace.”

Behavior toward the other that is oriented toward a positive nurturing that returns the other to peace in its “essential being” characterizes all of our most positive modes of human interaction. Though such language seems somewhat schematic and abstract when we realize that Heidegger is essentially talking about loving concern, this is indeed what he is talking about: “To embrace a ‘thing’ or a ‘person’ in its essence means to love it, to favor it. Though in a more original way such favoring [Mögen] means to bestow essence as a gift. Such favoring is the proper essence of enabling, which not only can achieve this or that but also can let something essentially unfold in its provenance, that is, let it be.”

Heidegger’s talk here of enabling, and letting be invokes the same middle-voiced structures that we have seen throughout. In this case, however, we can note their explicitly ethical implications: if the other that I seek to protect and nurture is defined in her very being by an ecstatic openness and incompleteness, respecting her essence will require me to give her the necessary space and time in which to realize herself. For Heidegger, freeing beings for their own possibility means that the “character of possibility always corresponds to the kind of being of the beings understood” (BT 151/141). The character of possibility per-
taining to the other Dasein is one of temporalizing mineness expressing its being-in-the-world. To correspond to this character of possibility demands a nurturing heedfulness that not only permits but enables the other to pursue his own care. Kenneth Gallagher better expresses this conception of love in “Intersubjective Knowledge,” where he argues that “my love calls forth the being of the other.”

Love is essentially a call to the other’s inner potential to be herself—a self that I have put myself in the service of evoking. In the relationship between the lover and the beloved, “he knows her in a manner that only one who loves her can know her. For her ‘being’ or her ‘person’ is not an already realized objective reality viewed by him from a more advantageous perspective: it is a creative category. The boy’s love is the creative invocation of her being: it is a participation in the mystery of her uniqueness.”

Such a creative invocation is the essence of what Heidegger means by leaping-ahead—a summoning of the other’s being in its wholeness that is given voice in conscience and expressed in behaviors that instantiate this being-in-service to the other.

An example will help us illustrate the manner in which everyday behaviors can manifest this mode of Fürsorge in which I act as a summons to the other to live fully into his being. My nephew and I are going to go to the park. He is just learning how to tie his shoes, and as I watch him struggle with the task, I find myself increasingly motivated to take the thick awkward laces from his little hands and do it myself—it is getting dark, I must be back to make dinner, and indeed he very much wants me to do it for him. The goal—having tied laces—may be more important, I think, than dedicating the time to enabling the boy to master the activity of lace-tying. But as I watch him struggle, I admire his sheer will to achieve this ability in spite of continued frustrating setbacks and I restrain myself from taking this opportunity to practice from him. I even resist the immediacy of his desire that I do it for him, because I recognize—and desire to nurture—his existence in its wholeness. I do not leap in and take over this careful struggle to be from him—I hold myself back in a type of restraint that is nevertheless characterized by a hovering attentiveness, a silent co-willing, an expressive encouragement and recognition of his struggle. Such restraint cannot be adequately described simply as freeing the other from my interference, as Zahavi and Theunissen suggest. A genuinely patient orientation toward another person does involve a type of “holding oneself back,” but it is by no means easy or indifferent—patience can be an incredible effort in the service of the other that nevertheless fails to make much of a “worldly” appearance. It is, for the most part, a silent communication.

In such an everyday example of patience one can see a stance
toward the other that recognizes the achievement of the ability as more important than the goal itself. In such a stance one is oriented toward the successful expression of the other’s being in its complex temporal entirety—not just now, but in all future lace-tying. Though such a situation could be described as a simple case of one of my desires overriding another—for my nephew to practice shoe-tying rather than for the shoe to be tied as quickly as possible—the orientation at work in this overriding is fundamentally other-directed. In the case of the latter desire—that the shoe be tied immediately—I am interested in accomplishing some particular goal as a step toward achieving a situation I desire: going to the park. In the former case, however, though my desire includes an interest in accomplishing the tied shoe so we can go to the park, my intention is directed primarily toward the other person’s achieving of this goal. Though both desires are aimed at the same end result, in the case of patient leaping-ahead, I fundamentally alter or qualify this desire such that it is only genuinely satisfied if the other person is the one who has brought it about. In this sense my guiding principle is the other person’s ability to be as such.

This accounts for the fact that we can, for the most part, tell the difference between the person who is being genuinely patient, and the person who is merely tolerating us. Though the external behavior may be virtually indistinguishable between the two, one can sense on some implicit “Dasein-to-Dasein” level whether the other is silently sharing an orientation to one’s task and its purpose, or if she has simply removed herself mentally so as not to interfere with the situation. From a third-person perspective the “worldly” manifestations of this difference will often be extremely hard to distinguish, but the recipient of patience will not find it so: the silent, summoning communication that characterizes leaping-ahead can be heard by the one who receives it.

The essentially temporal aspect of the leaping-ahead relationship is also obvious in patience: the patient person says “take your time”—a curious expression in itself—but one that clearly indicates the type of explicit recognition and accommodation of the other’s temporalizing having to be that characterizes this pole of the Fürsorge continuum. Thus Heidegger notes that in such a stance, “when Dasein places itself in the reticence of carrying things through, its time is different. Publicly regarded, its time is essentially slower than the time of idle talk, which ‘lives faster’” (HCT 279). The impatient person, on the contrary, feels that the other person is “taking too much time”—an expression that indicates a desire not to have to deal with the fact that I am always already in a situation of accommodating the temporalizing of the others. Underlying the impatient desire seems to be the belief that the time required for you
to express your being in the world is taking time from the expression of mine.

Indeed, this idea of “giving the other her time” is related to how Heidegger defines justice in his reflections on the Anaximander Fragment. The famous fragment, which reads: “Whence things have their coming into being there they must also perish according to necessity; for they must pay a penalty and be judged for their injustice, according to the ordinance of time,” is interpreted by Heidegger as indicating a type of deep relationship between temporality and justice. In his analysis of this text, Heidegger wonders “How is it that what presences, staying, stands in injustice [ἀ-δικία]? What is unjust about the thing that presences? Does it not have the right to stay awhile, from time to time, and so fulfill its presencing?” (“AS” 267). The conclusion he reaches is not that temporalizing expression into the now—or “presencing”—is itself unjust, but that in certain modes of presencing things are out of joint, not right, unjust. “What presences is what stays awhile,” Heidegger claims, and “the while presences as the transitional arrival in departure. It presences between coming hither and going away. Between this twofold absence presences the presencing of all that stays” (“AS” 267). As we have seen, the temporal particularity that is the essence of Dasein’s being is defined by presence and absence; its temporalizing is ecstatic and fundamentally related to otherness. Here Heidegger refers to it as “jointed.” The “dis-joiniture,” by which he refers to the fundamentally temporal structure of injustice, arises from the fact that Dasein can seek to resist or subvert its fundamental structures of ecstatic relationality in order to maintain itself in a type of constant presence: “What has arrived may even insist on its while, solely to remain more present” (“AS” 267). Dasein tries to insist on “pure persistence in duration,” as Reiner Schürman puts it: “The ‘unjust’ entity disjoins itself from the finite flow of absencing-presencing-absencing and ‘holds fast to the assertion of its stay.’ The present insists on its presence, consolidates it, persists against absence . . . This essence of the will by which it is set on constant presence stands in agreement with conceptual, i.e., ‘grasping’ thought . . . It is that force which seeks to establish the self as permanent and time as lasting.” This grasping refusal to recognize the ecstatic finitude of temporality—by refusing to acknowledge its passage or the others with whom it is shared—is the fundamental root of all injustice. Injustice is, for Heidegger, insisting on my time—my now—and refusing to heed the coming to presence of anyone or anything else. According to Heidegger, this attempt to maintain oneself unjustly in presence—usually at the cost of others—primarily takes the form of falling into interpretative stances that use temporal categories appropriate to things. In doing so, Dasein
can believe itself to exist in time the way a stone sits in a field—fundamentally unchanging and independent of that which surrounds it. Thus Kisiel notes how Heidegger characterizes “‘falling’ as the drag of substantive fixity characterizing possession, the reifying tendency wanting to maintain the constancy of presence.”

Despite the schematic language, we can recognize how such a stance can be the essence of all human injustice. Indeed, talk of going to any means to “try to prolong and solidify its stay; having arrived into presence, it can insist on its presentness” brings nothing to mind so much as a corrupt incumbent politician. Though completely refusing presence to others is in principle impossible, injustice is the attempt to do so—generally by denying them social or physical modes of manifestation, by leaping-in and taking their projects and opportunities for care from them. Justice is, on the other hand, the stance in which I share presence with the other. In its more extreme forms, such leaping-ahead can take the form of a love in which I not only share presence with the other, but encourage him to take his time, granting him presence at the expense of my own. In this mode of Fürsorge, I offer the other my care and silently summon him toward a greater self-flourishing.