

A Reflection on Epistemic Interpretation and Just Conversion of Heterogeneous Values in Generative Relational Systems

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Abstract

Institutions respond to relationships, opportunities, and other heterogeneous values through money, standardized allocations, and public acts of recognition. Such responses involve distinct responsibilities: interpreting what matters in a particular history and justifying the response authorized on that basis. This paper develops the distinction through a generative relational account of situated significance. A proposed exchange of RMB 10,000 for withdrawal from an academic collaboration establishes the need to interpret both association and money through their practical uses, reciprocal conditions, and supported futures. The argument distinguishes recognition, interpretation, comparison, commensuration, and conversion, and examines failures of omission, inappropriate abstraction, and wrongful exclusion from inquiry. Controlled cases show that responsible interpretation can accompany an unjust response, while materially adequate provision can coexist with an independent interpretive wrong. Conversion is assessed through its purpose, grounds of entitlement, medium, alternatives, authority, and scope of closure. An unrestored remainder can be acknowledged within a justified response without establishing unlimited compensation or requiring the recreation of a relationship. Legal remedies supply a sustained application, including a bounded reading of English professional-negligence reasoning and the 2010 UNIDROIT Principles. Public factual governance, environmental deliberation, and capital-mediated consumption test the framework's broader reach. A formal appendix clarifies decisions across several warranted interpretations without positing a universal quantity of value. The contribution is an account of distinct but interacting duties, with inquiry calibrated to the decision's purpose and with remedial finality separated from claims of complete restoration. The framework remains a normative proposal; its constructed cases supply neither causal estimates nor a general theory of fair conversion rates.

Keywords: epistemic interpretation; heterogeneous values; generative relations; commensuration; conversion; compensation; residual loss; public factual governance; capital.

Manuscript status and preparation

This note records the manuscript’s research status, preparation method, and terms of reuse. The article is a theoretical working draft intended for substantive author review and scholarly criticism.

Research status. The manuscript develops conceptual distinctions, normative arguments, and explicitly constructed examples. It reports neither original empirical data nor estimated causal effects. Publication identities and the material used were verified online before inclusion. The accompanying `citation_verification.md` records access levels and claim limits. Several sources were accessible through abstracts, publisher descriptions, or selected pages. Further full-text engagement and assessment of originality remain part of submission preparation. The legal discussion examines a specified judgment and historical instrument within their stated scope.

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1 Interpretation and response in the assessment of value

The evaluation of a heterogeneous loss involves an account of what mattered and an account of what should follow. A payment, allocation, or public correction can respond to a relationship without reproducing that relationship. Its justification depends partly on how the relationship has been understood and partly on reasons concerning entitlement, authority, and available responses. This introduction establishes these responsibilities through an academic-collaboration case and situates the argument within existing work on comparison and commensuration.

Consider an offer of RMB 10,000 to Mei in exchange for withdrawing from an academic collaboration with Lin. An observer describes the collaboration as one professional contact. Mei describes years of reciprocal inquiry, the formation of trust, and an opportunity to pursue questions that neither participant could yet address alone. The observer treats cash as a readily replaceable sum; Mei might use it to secure housing, purchase time, or leave an arrangement that constrains further study. These descriptions concern the same proposal while directing attention to different features of its practical significance.

The initial problem concerns the adequacy of those descriptions. A prestigious name alone establishes little about the collaboration's value to its participants. A declaration of pricelessness leaves its relevant features unspecified. An institution assessing the proposal needs to understand the actual activity, reciprocal commitments, material conditions, and supported possibilities. It needs comparable attention to the uses of money. Only then can a decision about the proposed undertaking be adequately connected to what the parties would gain or relinquish.

A further problem concerns the reasons for the response. Understanding the collaboration does not establish a right to buy its termination, compel its continuation, or award compensation for its loss. A settlement, a grant, a private offer, and an adjudicated remedy have different grounds. The same amount can play a different role in each. A decision must identify the operation it authorizes and the authority under which it does so. This paper uses *conversion* for such a specified response across different forms of value, with the operation defined anew in each application.

The problem family has substantial antecedents. Chang examines a proposal to pay someone to end a friendship and challenges an inference from the relationship's nature to its incomparability with money [2]. The present academic example therefore supplies an application within an established debate. Its function is to expose distinct responsibilities of interpretation and response, including the implications of historical formation and incomplete restoration. Its introduction makes no claim to originate the comparison between relationships and monetary alternatives.

The social organization of comparison is also well established. Espeland and Stevens analyze commensuration through common metrics, its operation as a social process, and its relation to power [5]. Smidt's recent account examines the operations through which heterogeneous qualities become units, rankings, and actionable decisions, emphasizing the political significance of those operations [13]. These antecedents limit any claim that evaluative power begins only with the final price or score. The present article concentrates on distinguishing interpretive treatment, remedial justification, and the account of what a response leaves unrestored.

The distinction is analytical and normative. Institutional work can follow several sequences. A decision's purpose shapes which facts and relationships require investigation. Proposed remedies can reveal omissions in an initial description. New testimony can change the appropriate response. Interpretation and conversion can proceed through repeated revision while remaining answerable to different questions. An institution cannot establish the adequacy of its inquiry merely by pointing to a beneficial outcome, or establish the justice of its response merely by demonstrating that it understood the claimant.

The generative relational perspective specifies the relevant subject matter. Values can acquire significance through particular histories, relations, and capacities for further action. A lost period of collaboration can matter through the questions, habits, and opportunities formed within it. Money can matter through the practical access it enables at a particular time. This perspective supports attention to situated formation without requiring a comprehensive metaphysics in which every value is relational or every intrinsic-value theory is false.

The central proposal has three connected parts. Institutions owe a responsible account of the relevant significance, using evidence and participation appropriate to their task. They also owe a justification of the response's purpose, grounds, medium, scope, and consequences. Where a justified response leaves a warranted loss partly unrestored, its account should preserve that remainder without inferring unlimited liability. The investigation needed for temporary support can be narrower than the investigation needed for assigning historical responsibility or closing a claim. This relation between inquiry and purpose helps make the proposal practicable.

The article develops the formation of value, clarifies comparison and conversion, and then examines the two responsibilities in detail. A discussion of residual loss precedes controlled cases that test their distinctness. Legal remedies provide a sustained application through a specified English professional-negligence judgment and the 2010 UNIDROIT Principles. Public factual governance and capital-mediated consumption extend the analysis, while environmental deliberation informs the discussion of institutional practice. A formal appendix clarifies the possibility of acting across several warranted interpretations. The constructed examples establish conditional arguments; their application to actual disputes requires evidence about the relevant histories and powers.

2 Historical relations and the emergence of significance

A situated account of value identifies how a practice, resource, or relationship acquires significance for particular people. This section reconstructs the collaboration case, applies the same approach to money, and distinguishes experienced significance from anticipated benefit and normative worth. The objective is to identify features that an adequate interpretation may need to preserve, without treating historical particularity as an automatic entitlement.

2.1 Reciprocal inquiry and supported futures

Mei and Lin's collaboration begins through an encounter around a shared question. Repeated exchanges establish some understanding of each other's methods and interests. Their work creates materials, commitments, and expectations that enable further inquiry. These features are stipulated for the case. They distinguish an active collaboration from a remote hope of access to an eminent person. The relevant value arises partly through the activity that the participants sustain together.

History matters constitutively as well as causally. A past conversation may cause a later invitation. A shared history of reliable criticism may also be part of what makes the present relation one of trust. Replacing Lin with another equally qualified researcher could supply comparable technical expertise while changing that relational feature. The observation concerns the content of this particular good. It leaves open whether a replacement would be preferable, sufficient for a given purpose, or part of an appropriate response to loss.

Generativity concerns supported capacity for further activity. In the collaboration, relevant evidence could include a scheduled next phase, access to materials, complementary abilities, and reciprocal willingness to continue. These features justify describing a live opportunity despite uncertainty about eventual results. By contrast, the mere possibility of a world-changing discovery supplies a weak basis for evaluating a specific loss. An account can recognize an interrupted opportunity without assigning its participants ownership of every achievement that might have followed.

The distinction also protects freedom within the relation. Lin retains authority to revise plans, decline further work, and offer a different interpretation of the collaboration. Mei's experience of its importance cannot establish Lin's duty to continue indefinitely. A relationship can be central to one person's life and peripheral to another's. Responsible interpretation records this asymmetry where warranted, including any actual commitments that give either person a stronger claim.

Fame can affect opportunities through audiences, resources, or institutional access. Those effects deserve evidence-based consideration. Fame alone does not confer superior moral worth on either participant or establish the importance of their relationship. An ordinary collaboration can be deeply signif-

icant through its actual history. A framework centered on historical relations should make such activity visible without requiring recognition by already prestigious institutions.

2.2 Money, practical access, and temporal scarcity

The same reconstruction applies to the offered money. RMB 10,000 is a stipulated amount, with its purchasing power left unspecified. Its significance depends on the recipient's needs, obligations, available services, and control over its use. It could secure a period of study, cover a housing expense, enable care for a dependent, or reduce exposure to a harmful arrangement. Each use can affect later relationships and opportunities.

Fungibility concerns the interchangeability of units within a monetary system. It leaves open whether a person can replace a lost sum at the relevant time. Identical units arriving six months later may fail to prevent an immediate disruption. The difference can arise from the timing of a course, an application, or a care need. An adequate account of cash therefore considers temporal access as well as its numerical amount.

Monetary assistance may also depend on burdensome conditions. A grant, loan, wage, and settlement can transfer the same nominal sum while creating different obligations. Availability to Mei may depend on fees, repayment, documentation, or restrictions on use. Conversely, a reliable unconditional payment can expand agency precisely because Mei can select among uses that the provider cannot fully anticipate. Describing money as generative directs attention to these practical distinctions.

Zelizer's account of economic transactions and intimate relations emphasizes their practical coexistence and social organization [16]. The present case likewise leaves room for money to sustain valuable associations. Material support can make reciprocal work possible and reduce inequalities within it. A comparison that grants relationships every imaginable future benefit while describing cash as inert currency would be asymmetrical at the interpretive stage.

2.3 Significance, preference, and normative standing

Experienced significance, present preference, expected benefit, and normative worth are related concepts with different roles. Experienced significance concerns what an activity means in a person's practical life. A preference expresses a comparative or directional attitude. Expected benefit concerns anticipated effects under specified assumptions. Normative worth concerns reasons that can justify protection, pursuit, recognition, or a claim on another person. Evidence for one does not automatically establish the others.

A socially real status hierarchy illustrates the distinction. Ownership of an object can confer actual recognition within a group. That fact can help explain the owner's attachment while leaving the hierarchy open to criticism for humiliation or exclusion. Likewise, a role in a harmful organization can be important to its holder without establishing an entitlement to preserve the organization's power. Situated interpretation requires understanding the significance accurately; normative evaluation then examines the grounds for its protection.

Relational approaches already appear in environmental value theory. Chan and colleagues emphasize relations with nature and with other people as sources of evaluative reasons [1]. Their environmental discussion supplies a relevant antecedent, with its own domain and purposes. The present account uses historical and generative features to specify what an institution needs to understand in a particular decision. It makes no claim that these features replace all other accounts of value.

The formation of future possibilities also has precedents in market ethics. Satz examines how market arrangements can shape agency and the alternatives within which people choose [11, pp. 94–98, 180–181]. The generative vocabulary here organizes a related concern around interpretation and response. It adds a demand for specification of the opportunities at stake, their evidential support, and the practical conditions of using them. A mere increase in the number of possible activities would provide an insufficient measure of improvement.

Historical reconstruction therefore has a bounded role. It explains why a generic description may omit relevant features, identifies whose participation matters, and distinguishes supported possibilities from imagination. It also permits a person to change direction. A worthwhile past can remain part of a life's history even when continuation is neither feasible nor desired. The aim of interpretation is an adequate account of significance for the task at hand, with the grounds of any demand for preservation or compensation stated separately.

3 Comparison, commensuration, and the scope of conversion

The argument requires distinctions among understanding a value, comparing alternatives, and authorizing a response. This section defines the operations used throughout the paper and examines the limited implications of heterogeneity. It also specifies conversion narrowly enough to distinguish it from an ordinary factual judgment or every act of practical reasoning.

3.1 Recognition and interpretive specification

Recognition, as used here, acknowledges that a claimed value or loss merits consideration. An institution can recognize a disrupted collaboration as a matter requiring inquiry while withholding a conclusion about its extent or legal status. This preliminary use differs from legal recognition of a protected interest or institutional recognition of a person's title. Those uses should be specified where they arise.

Interpretation supplies an account of the significance at issue, its formation, and its relevance to a decision. It includes factual judgments about events and commitments, accounts of lived meaning, and explanations of practical consequences. These components invite different forms of evidence. A dated agreement can establish an undertaking; testimony can illuminate its significance; an opportunity assessment can examine its future implications. An interpreter needs to distinguish these claims within the account.

Recognition can be appropriate even when interpretation remains incomplete. An institution may preserve records or provide a hearing because a claim is plausible. Conversely, accurate information about a relationship can exist in an institution that refuses to treat its importance as relevant for a particular task. Whether that exclusion is justified depends on the task and the grounds for recognition. The distinctions prevent every failure to grant a requested response from being redescribed as a failure to understand the person.

3.2 Heterogeneity and comparative relations

Heterogeneity concerns differences in the forms or dimensions of significance under consideration. Such differences can make a single measurement difficult or inappropriate, yet they do not establish the absence of every defensible comparison. A person can have clear reasons to prefer secure housing to an optional purchase without discovering a universal unit shared by security and aesthetic pleasure.

Commensuration represents different entities through a common scale or unit for a specified purpose. An ordinal ranking supplies less information than a cardinal measure; a monetary sum measures something different from an ordered description of opportunities. Within a defined context, either can be useful. The interpretation of its output should preserve what the representation means and the operations it supports. An ordinal difference between two positions does not acquire the meaning of a quantity merely because the positions receive numerical labels.

Incomplete comparison can reflect several conditions: insufficient evidence, uncertain future effects, disagreement about relevant values, or a substantive failure of a proposed ranking relation. These conditions should remain distinct. Chang's argument for parity identifies a possible positive comparison beyond better, worse, and equally good [3]. The present account leaves that proposal and its rivals open. Its institutional argument requires only that failure to obtain an exact common quantity does not itself settle what an evaluator may reasonably decide.

Table 1: Operations in the interpretation and response to heterogeneous value

Operation	Principal task	Limit of the result
Recognition	Admission of a value or loss to consideration	An opportunity for inquiry leaves entitlement unsettled
Interpretation	A reasoned account of significance, history, and relevance	An adequate description leaves the response's authority open
Comparison	Assessment relative to a specified question	A defensible comparison can leave a complete ranking unavailable
Commensuration	Representation through a common scale or unit	The scale supports only its defined comparisons and operations
Conversion	Authorization of a response across forms of value	Justification of a response need not establish equivalent replacement
Exchange	Transfers or undertakings among participants	Agreement leaves independent duties and others' rights available for assessment
Remainder assessment	Description of warranted aspects left unrestored	Acknowledged loss leaves further liability to separate grounds

An institution can sometimes act through thresholds, exclusions, or permission among several admissible options. A prohibition on unauthorized control over Lin can eliminate a remedy before the relative value of every remaining alternative has been established. A commitment to meeting urgent needs can justify interim assistance while other matters remain disputed. These decisions still need normative grounds. The absence of a complete ranking neither supplies those grounds nor automatically defeats them.

3.3 Conversion as a specified normative operation

Conversion occurs, in the present usage, when an institution or participant authorizes a response in one form of value as an accommodation, substitution, or discharge concerning significance of another form. A monetary award for a recognized loss, a support allocation following an interruption, or a settlement involving public acknowledgment can instantiate such an operation. Each case must specify the source concern, the response, its purpose, and the authority through which they are connected.

The terminology does not imply a physical transformation of the original good. Paying money after an interrupted collaboration does not turn the collaboration into currency. The decision creates or performs an obligation whose content differs from the activity it addresses. Similarly, a public ceremony can recognize a contribution without reproducing the period during which recognition was withheld. Calling these operations conversion draws attention to their justificatory connection across different forms of significance.

Some responses are direct corrections. Restoring a deleted name to a record can correct the record's omission. Establishing that an event occurred is a factual determination. These acts should be described in their own terms. Conversion becomes relevant where an institution treats money, access, recognition, or some combination as an appropriate response to a heterogeneous injury. Public factual governance can therefore contain both direct correction and conversion without treating historical truth as a value available for exchange.

Table 1 summarizes the working vocabulary. The distinctions concern the role of an operation within an argument. A single meeting or judgment can perform several of them, and its participants may revise earlier descriptions as possible responses become clearer. Analytical separation permits criticism of each responsibility without requiring institutionally separate departments or a rigid workflow.

3.4 Evaluative conclusions and institutional authority

A comparative conclusion and authority to impose it concern different relations. Mei might judge one career path better while lacking authority to compel Lin's participation. A committee might reasonably

compare proposals while exceeding its mandate by attaching unrelated restrictions to funding. Conversely, a recipient can have standing to choose among several acceptable responses despite the evaluator's inability to rank them completely.

The paper consequently treats comparison as part of justification whose force depends on its question and use. A calculation can establish a reimbursement amount for documented expenses. Further reasons are needed to present that amount as compensation for every aspect of a relationship or as a settlement of all claims. The boundaries of the inference are central to just conversion because a narrowly valid representation can otherwise acquire an unjustifiably expansive institutional role.

4 Epistemic responsibility in the reconstruction of value

Interpretive responsibility concerns the quality of an institution's inquiry and its treatment of those whose significance is being assessed. This section develops standards for evidence, participation, abstraction, and uncertainty. It distinguishes incomplete knowledge from wrongful exclusion and relates the required depth of inquiry to the decision's purpose. The aim is accountable reconstruction, with neither an infallible inner quantity of value nor complete historical knowledge assumed.

4.1 Evidence concerning activity, meaning, and opportunity

Different components of a value description require different support. The collaboration's existence may be evidenced by shared work, correspondence, meetings, and commitments. Its importance to Mei may be illuminated by testimony about learning, motivation, trust, and the place of the work within a wider life. Its future prospects may require evidence of resources, plans, reciprocal willingness, and practical constraints. A single prestige label or output count supplies an incomplete substitute for these inquiries.

An evidential account should distinguish what occurred from what the available record supports. A lost email can leave uncertainty about an undertaking without proving that the undertaking never existed. A surviving agreement can be authentic while omitting the understandings that governed its use. Conversely, confident recollection may be mistaken. The evaluator should identify the proposition, its evidential basis, relevant objections, and the confidence warranted by their assessment.

Testimony about experience also has a distinctive scope. Mei can provide important evidence of the collaboration's significance without being able to establish Lin's intentions or the probability of a future discovery. Lin may confirm shared commitments while reporting a different degree of personal attachment. An adequate interpretation can preserve these differences. It need not force the participants' experiences into a single shared intensity of value.

The evidential status of a supported opportunity requires particular care. A concrete next step can be accessible even where its eventual results are uncertain. A completed application, an agreed project, and a speculative ambition have different forms of support. Institutions should avoid collapsing them into either guaranteed success or complete unreality. The relevant confidence concerns the opportunity specified, not every outcome that imagination can attach to it.

4.2 Omission and inappropriate abstraction

An omission becomes relevant when the missing feature could affect a defensible interpretation or the reasons for a response. Describing the loss as one professional contact may omit the sustained activity that makes an interruption important. Describing an offered payment without its timing may omit the urgent need it can meet. The evaluator should explain why selected information suffices for the question under consideration and remain open to challenges that identify consequential omissions.

Abstraction itself is indispensable. Institutions use categories to coordinate inquiry, support equal treatment, and decide under limited resources. A category of documented expenses can appropriately group claims whose receipts establish the relevant amounts. The same category can be inadequate if

presented as a complete account of disrupted association. Its legitimacy depends on the purpose for which it is used and the claims made for its coverage.

Overly individualized inquiry has costs as well. Requiring an elaborate life history for a small travel reimbursement can burden the claimant, expose private information, and distribute attention inefficiently. A standardized grant may fairly provide a material floor without ranking recipients' relationships. Responsible abstraction states what it covers and what it leaves open. It should not convert a limited administrative category into a judgment that unrecorded significance has little worth.

An institution can therefore owe different descriptions for different tasks. Immediate support may require evidence of interruption and need. Assignment of responsibility may require a causal history and an opportunity for the alleged responsible party to respond. A comprehensive settlement may require inquiry into additional interests and the claimant's understanding of its scope. Adequacy is indexed to these purposes, with those purposes themselves open to normative assessment.

4.3 Credibility, access, and wrongful exclusion

Interpretive disagreement and ordinary error differ from epistemic injustice. An evaluator may reach a reasonable conclusion that a claimant rejects. Evidence may remain inconclusive. Wrongful treatment arises where a person's contribution is excluded or devalued on grounds that violate justified standards of inquiry and equal participation. Identifying that wrong requires specifying the practice and the reasons against it.

Fricker distinguishes testimonial and hermeneutical forms of epistemic injustice [6]. Dotson examines the role of hearers and practices of silencing [4]. These approaches provide antecedents for assessing how an institution receives an account of value. The present framework applies that concern to the reconstruction of significance and the decisions made through it. Its proposed procedures require their own justification.

Consider a committee that refuses to hear Mei because junior researchers are assumed incapable of meaningful intellectual contribution. Even if the committee possesses some accurate records, this credibility rule can wrong Mei as a participant in inquiry. A different committee may listen fairly and conclude that a particular claimed commitment lacks support. The unfavorable conclusion alone does not establish the same wrong. Assessment should examine the reasons for credibility decisions, the opportunity to answer concerns, and consistency with relevant evidence.

Access to records can also be uneven. A senior institution may control the project archive while the affected participant has only informal notes or testimony. Demanding a record that the participant was prevented from retaining can reproduce that exclusion. Appropriate responses may include preservation requirements, assisted access, consideration of alternative evidence, and fair allocation of the burdens of inquiry. These measures require attention to confidentiality and the rights of other people whose records are involved.

Documentation inequality creates a further challenge. A framework that recognizes richly recorded relationships more readily can privilege people whose lives already fit institutional forms. The response should improve the fairness of evidence gathering and evaluation. It should also consider support whose entitlement rests on need or equal standing, where an elaborate history is unnecessary. Relaxing a documentary requirement does not require treating every asserted account as established fact.

4.4 Institutional categories and their own histories

The interpreting institution also operates within a history. Its categories may have been developed for easily counted outputs, formal employment, registered ownership, or other legible relationships. Activities organized through informal care, reciprocal learning, or collective practice can fit those categories poorly. The resulting mismatch deserves examination when it systematically excludes matters relevant to the institution's justified purpose.

The proper inquiry concerns the category's function, the distinctions it suppresses, and the effects of alternatives. A general category can protect claimants against intrusive or biased inquiry. A more detailed

category can improve recognition while making procedure costly and unequal. The choice requires reasons concerning relevance, burden, consistency, and opportunities for correction. Historical origin alone neither validates nor discredits an institutional category.

Revisability is especially important when an unfamiliar form of value becomes intelligible through participation. An institution can receive a claimant's account, compare it with other evidence, and modify its description without treating the first account as authoritative. A revision can concern the vocabulary of the claim as well as its factual content. Such work preserves inquiry as a shared practice in which affected people can challenge how their circumstances are represented.

4.5 Warranted plurality and sufficient inquiry

Several interpretations can remain warranted after responsible inquiry. Participants may differ about the collaboration's personal meaning while agreeing on its activity and interruption. Evidence may support a range of future prospects without determining one estimate. A decision can record a shared factual core and the remaining disagreement, with each conclusion tied to the evidence that supports it.

Plurality has limits. An interpretation contradicted by established evidence need not receive equal standing merely because someone prefers it. Historical truth is not created through compromise among the social benefits of rival stories. The evaluator's duty concerns fair consideration and proportionate confidence. Its final record can distinguish established findings, warranted alternatives, and unsupported assertions without claiming complete access to the past.

Inquiry can sometimes stop before all disagreement is resolved. If a temporary response has adequate grounds under every presently warranted interpretation relevant to it, delay may serve little purpose. A later decision assigning blame or settling a wider claim may require more evidence. Appendix A represents this possibility formally. The practical standard remains substantive: the institution must justify its purpose, the evidence considered, the cost of further inquiry, and the scope of the conclusion it is prepared to draw.

5 Normative grounds for conversion across forms of value

A responsible description of significance supplies an object for decision while leaving the grounds of the decision open. This section develops the second responsibility through purpose, entitlement, medium, alternatives, and authority. The proposals identify matters for reasoned justification. They do not constitute a procedural formula sufficient to make every conversion just.

5.1 The purpose of a response and the grounds of entitlement

The purpose of a response determines the question it addresses. A remedy for wrongdoing concerns a protected interest, responsibility, and an appropriate response to the injury. Redistribution concerns the allocation of resources under a distributive standard. A grant can support future activity without assigning fault. A voluntary settlement can address uncertainty and disagreement through an authorized agreement. Each purpose can involve money while giving that money a different normative role.

The collaboration case makes this difference concrete. A payment offered for withdrawal invites assessment of the undertaking and the conditions of choice. A payment requested after wrongful interference invites inquiry into responsibility and repair. Funding sought to continue the project invites consideration of an allocation among potential recipients. Mei's account of the collaboration can be relevant to all three, while entitlement must be established under the reasons appropriate to each.

Significance alone leaves that entitlement incomplete. A relationship can be valuable and end through another participant's legitimate decision. A disappointment can be real while responsibility for its occurrence remains unassigned. A project can deserve support without having a stronger claim than other projects under a particular funding program. These distinctions preserve recognition of loss while requiring an account of who owes what, to whom, and on which grounds.

Purpose also limits an institution's conclusions. An emergency-support program can provide assistance on evidence of need without resolving responsibility for the underlying event. Its payment should not be represented as a finding that the entire history has been adjudicated. A tribunal considering a defined claim can explain what falls within its decision and what remains outside its mandate. A narrow purpose needs an independent justification; an institution cannot evade a duty by simply redefining the task to exclude it.

5.2 The chosen medium and its practical relation to the loss

A response medium needs a defensible connection to its purpose. Money can reimburse expenditure, support material security, and allow recipients to choose among new activities. Restored access can remove an ongoing barrier. A correction can address a false public record. An apology can acknowledge responsibility under appropriate circumstances. Their possible contributions differ, and their combination may be more appropriate than any one alone.

The choice of medium should account for the recipient's situation. A travel voucher is ineffective where the relevant opportunity has expired. A new affiliation can provide useful resources while leaving a false account of earlier conduct uncorrected. Cash can provide flexible support yet fail to remedy an exclusion that the responsible institution still controls. The evaluator should connect the response to the specified injury and explain the dimensions it addresses.

A response may also impose a new burden. Public acknowledgment can expose a person who has reasons for privacy. Reinstatement can return someone to an environment they reasonably wish to leave. A training opportunity may demand time that urgent care obligations make unavailable. Participation by the affected person supplies evidence about these effects and can help identify feasible alternatives. Its role extends beyond inviting approval of a predetermined remedy.

Money's flexibility can be a positive reason for selecting it. A person may be best placed to decide how to rebuild a life whose course the institution cannot anticipate. The argument for a monetary response can rest on that capacity without claiming that the payment measures every dimension of what was lost. An adequate justification should state the actual reason for choosing money and resist larger claims that the reason cannot support.

5.3 Alternatives, proportionality, and the burdens on others

Considering alternatives tests whether a chosen response is adequate and appropriately limited. The relevant alternatives should differ materially in the dimensions that matter: continued access, immediate security, correction, privacy, or control over future activity. An institution need not enumerate every conceivable package. It should consider plausible options that could address the recognized concern with substantially different effects.

Proportionality requires specification of the interests and burdens compared. A limited administrative cost can be justified to correct a serious misattribution. An intrusive demand on Lin's future participation may exceed the institution's authority even if Mei would benefit. Resources allocated to one claimant may be unavailable to others with equally grounded claims. Assessment must account for these parties without turning each interest into an assumed common quantity.

Equal treatment also requires attention to the basis of equality. A standard payment can fairly address equal documented costs. Equal payments can be inadequate where the justified aim is to meet needs that differ. Conversely, different historical narratives can warrant the same material floor under a need-based program. Numerical uniformity and individualized amounts each require an account of what the institution is trying to treat equally.

The framework therefore leaves several substantive theories relevant. Distributive principles inform resource allocation; accounts of responsibility inform repair; rights constrain permissible means. The proposed responsibilities make their role visible within a conversion decision. They cannot replace those theories through the general instruction to be sensitive to context.

5.4 Authorization, participation, and contested decisions

An institution's authority must cover the act it proposes. A committee authorized to distribute funding may lack standing to settle a private dispute. A participant can waive some personal claims while lacking authority to release claims held by collaborators. A response involving another person's labor, identity, or testimony requires attention to that person's rights and participation. Greater appreciation of the original loss supplies little basis for expanding these powers.

Consent can support a choice among remedies where the conditions of choice are adequate. The recipient should understand the response's scope, the claims it settles, and relevant alternatives. Wrongful pressure can arise where urgently owed support is withheld unless the person agrees to unrelated restrictions. A signature records an act within those circumstances; assessing its normative force requires the circumstances to remain visible.

Participation also has limits as a source of justification. Agreement among present participants cannot determine historical truth or erase absent parties' rights. A deliberative process can reproduce existing inequalities in voice. A decision can be explained respectfully and still allocate resources unjustly. The responsibility of conversion therefore concerns the substantive grounds of the response as well as the process through which those grounds are considered.

Contestation should be possible at the point of disagreement. A claimant may accept the factual description while challenging the medium, reject a proposed waiver while accepting interim assistance, or dispute the account of an opportunity while accepting reimbursement of established costs. A procedure that bundles these judgments into one indivisible acceptance makes correction more difficult. Separating their grounds can permit useful action while preserving a live dispute about another component.

The normative result is a demand for an articulated connection between the recognized concern and the authorized response. Purpose identifies the task, entitlement identifies its grounds, medium identifies its practical operation, and authority identifies who may decide. Alternatives and consequences test the resulting proposal. These considerations can support a justified response even when exact replacement is unavailable, while leaving its unrestored aspects for a separate and explicit assessment.

6 Residual loss and the scope of remedial closure

A response can be justified within its purpose while leaving aspects of a loss unrestored. This section distinguishes forms of remainder, explains their relevance to an account of repair, and examines the limits of what acknowledgment can establish. The argument preserves the usefulness of compensation and the reality of incomplete restoration without deriving an unlimited claim from either.

6.1 Unrestored aspects and distinct sources of incompleteness

Residual loss refers here to warranted aspects of a loss that remain unrestored after a response. An interrupted period of reciprocal work, a missed occasion for recognition, or an irretrievable interval of trust may fall within that description. The remainder is an account of specified aspects. It is not an assumed quantity obtained by subtracting money from the total value of a relationship.

Several sources of incompleteness should be distinguished. Some aspects are presently restorable but have not been restored, such as access to records that an institution continues to withhold. Others are irreversible, such as a past opportunity whose time has elapsed. Some claimed aspects remain uncertain because the evidence supports several accounts. Others fall outside a particular decision's scope. These conditions have different implications for further inquiry and responsibility.

Uncertainty about a claimed loss should be recorded as uncertainty. Describing an unsupported possibility as an established remainder would bypass the interpretive responsibility. Equally, a limit on what a tribunal can determine does not establish that the experience never occurred. A decision can distinguish the participant's account, the findings publicly warranted, and the interests it has authority to address. This distinction preserves both evidential discipline and the limits of the institution's conclusion.

The time of assessment also matters. A response may restore an opportunity later, remove an ongoing barrier immediately, and leave a past interval irretrievable. Its effects can be assessed over a specified horizon without declaring that future improvement erases earlier loss. A person may build valuable new relationships after the interruption while continuing to regret what happened. Such development can be recognized on its own terms.

6.2 Compensation and the absence of equivalent replacement

A monetary response can have adequate grounds despite incomplete replacement. It may cover costs attributable to an interruption, support renewed activity, or perform a justified settlement. Those functions do not require that the original relationship and the money instantiate the same good. The payment's adequacy concerns the obligation or purpose under which it is supplied.

Radin's discussion of incomplete commodification considers the coexistence of commodified and other understandings [9, chap. 7]. This antecedent supports taking the coexistence seriously. The present argument concentrates on the scope of a response: accepting money can be consistent with regarding a lost relationship as important in ways that the payment leaves unfulfilled. The statement about remainder should make those ways explicit where evidence and relevance permit.

Equivalent replacement can also be an inappropriate aim. Requiring Lin to recreate an earlier relation could violate Lin's agency and burden Mei with an enforced association. Providing conditions for new inquiry may be more appropriate than attempting to reproduce an unavailable past. The selected response should explain the relationship between what can be done and what the responsible party can justifiably be required to do.

The absence of exact equivalence consequently supplies an incomplete objection to compensation. It can defeat a claim that a payment recreates everything lost. It leaves open whether the payment is a justified way to discharge a specified duty. Conversely, the availability of a defensible monetary amount does not establish that material payment is the only response owed. A continuing false record or avoidable restriction may require a different act.

6.3 Acknowledgment, continuing duties, and finite liability

Acknowledgment can contribute to an honest account of repair. A decision can identify the restored components, state the limits of the chosen response, and preserve the recipient's ability to describe continuing loss. This contribution is valuable where institutions otherwise treat acceptance as evidence that the past has become harmless or fully replaceable.

Acknowledgment can also become a substitute for feasible performance. An institution may recognize an irreparable loss publicly while failing to return records or remove a barrier it still controls. The distinction among types of remainder prevents that inference. Irreversibility in one dimension does not discharge a duty concerning another dimension that remains within the institution's power.

The opposite inference is also unwarranted. An irretrievable period can remain lost even after the responsible actor has performed everything that justice requires. Continued grief or regret does not by itself establish a further debt against that actor. Additional liability requires grounds concerning the obligation's scope, responsibility, feasible performance, or another relevant principle. A statement of remainder can therefore coexist with a conclusion that a specified duty has been fully discharged.

Finite liability deserves an affirmative justification. Its grounds can include the content of the duty, rights of third parties, causal limits, reasonable burdens, and a valid settlement. The claimant's ability to name additional significance does not eliminate those limits. At the same time, limits should be stated honestly. An institution should explain the boundary of what it requires without redefining every aspect outside that boundary as valueless.

6.4 Finality, correction, and continuing historical understanding

Closure has several possible objects. An obligation can be discharged, a proceeding can end, and an administrative decision can become settled for its purposes. These forms of finality differ from the claim that complete historical knowledge has been attained or every loss restored. An institutional design can give decisions reliable practical effects while retaining appropriately bounded routes to correction.

Revision should identify its trigger and scope. New evidence about responsibility may justify reconsidering a finding under a suitable procedure. A changed personal evaluation of the past may warrant a revised narrative without reopening a settled monetary claim. A discovered omission in a public record may justify correcting that record while leaving a separate settlement intact. These possibilities require attention to authority and reasonable reliance on prior decisions.

The remainder thus belongs in the account of a response because it limits the conclusions that the response supports. It can direct further action where duties remain and preserve truthful description where further restoration is unavailable. Its acknowledgment is compatible with practical closure, renewed agency, and the affected person's freedom to move beyond the dispute.

7 Controlled cases of interpretation and response

The distinction between interpretive responsibility and conversion justification requires cases in which correcting one failure leaves another unresolved. This section varies an institution's treatment of the same stipulated collaboration loss and the response it supplies. The comparisons demonstrate limited relations of non-entailment. They do not assume that every feature of process and outcome is independent of every other feature.

7.1 Responsible reconstruction and a justified response

Suppose an institution wrongfully withdraws access that Mei and Lin were entitled to use for a shared project. The institution has authority and resources to correct its own decision. Records and both participants' accounts establish the relevant undertaking, interruption, and material effects. Some hoped-for outcomes remain uncertain. These are stipulated premises for the normative comparison, with no claim about an actual institution.

In the first case, the institution conducts fair inquiry, acknowledges its responsibility, and distinguishes established effects from uncertain prospects. It restores access, reimburses justified costs, and offers appropriate support for resuming or redirecting the activity. Lin retains freedom concerning participation, and Mei can select among justified options. The decision explains that an elapsed period of joint work remains unrecoverable.

The response can be adequate on both dimensions under these premises. Its description reflects the warranted history and affected parties' accounts. Its practical acts follow from specified duties and respect the limits of institutional authority. The favorable judgment rests on those grounds. An apology or a payment alone would leave that justification incomplete. Further facts about burdens or excluded interests could alter the assessment.

7.2 Responsible reconstruction and an unjust condition

The second case retains the same adequate account of the loss but changes the response. The institution offers urgently owed support only if Mei promises to suppress any future criticism of the institution and undertakes to secure Lin's continued participation. Stipulate that these demands are unrelated to the performance of the duty and exceed Mei's authority over Lin. The institution's understanding can remain accurate while its conditions lack justification.

Additional historical research alone would leave the defect intact. The corrective action concerns the conditions, the performance of the duty, and the purported control of another participant. This case establishes that interpretive adequacy cannot by itself justify the conversion. Indeed, accurate knowledge

Table 2: Distinct failures in the assessment of a stipulated collaboration loss

Case	Interpretive conduct	Response component	Corrective focus
A	Fair reconstruction with acknowledged uncertainty	Performance of specified duties within legitimate authority	Appropriate implementation and bounded review
B	The same fair reconstruction	Owed support tied to unjustified silence and control of a collaborator	Removal of the conditions and performance of the duty
C	Wrongful dismissal of the claimant's account	Adequate material floor under an independent entitlement	Correction of the statement and interpretive practice
D	Wrongful dismissal	Failure to perform the established duty	Both interpretive correction and an adequate response

of a person's dependence can make a manipulative response more effectively targeted. Understanding has epistemic value while its use remains subject to normative assessment.

7.3 An adequate material response and wrongful dismissal

The third case changes interpretive treatment while isolating an independently grounded material entitlement. Suppose a standing support scheme provides the same adequate payment to everyone whose documented access was wrongfully interrupted. The rule's justification concerns a defined material floor, with individual claims for other responses left open. Mei receives that entitlement in full. In the accompanying decision, however, the committee dismisses evidence of the collaboration as inherently insignificant because junior researchers' accounts deserve little credibility.

The material provision can be adequate for its defined purpose while the committee commits an independent wrong in its interpretive treatment. The stipulated credibility rule violates fair participation; its sweeping description also extends beyond what the support decision required. The payment's adequacy leaves grounds for correcting the statement and reviewing the process through which it was made.

This case requires a careful limit. It does not show that the complete institutional judgment is just by accident, or that an unjust process supplies a justified basis for every favorable amount. The payment has an independent entitlement as its ground. The wrongful dismissal belongs to a further act accompanying its administration. Treating these objects separately makes clear why preserving the payment and correcting the interpretive wrong can both be appropriate.

7.4 Combined failures and differentiated correction

In the fourth case, the committee dismisses the collaboration on the same wrongful grounds and supplies a response that fails to perform the established duty. Increasing the payment may correct a material shortfall while leaving the exclusionary treatment intact. A respectful hearing can correct that treatment while leaving the duty unperformed. The combined failure calls for attention to both dimensions.

Table 2 states the comparisons. Its second column evaluates interpretive conduct. Its third evaluates the specified response component; it deliberately distinguishes material adequacy from the justice of an entire proceeding. That distinction prevents the matrix from assuming its conclusion through an ambiguous use of adequacy.

7.5 The scope of the demonstrated distinction

The cases identify different grounds of criticism and different corrective actions. A broader account of response justice might include fair epistemic treatment as one of its conditions. Under that usage, Case C would count as an unjust response overall. The present distinction remains useful because it specifies the adequate component and the remaining wrong within that overall judgment.

The interaction also runs in the other direction. A proposed remedy can reveal a missing perspective in an initially plausible interpretation. A plan to compel Lin's cooperation shows that the account has inadequately considered Lin's authority, even if the account of Mei's experience is accurate. Interpretive and normative revision can therefore reinforce each other. The paper's claim concerns their distinct justificatory tasks and the insufficiency of success on one specified task to establish success on the other.

8 Legal remedies and the interpretation of lost opportunities

Legal remedies provide a sustained test because their authorization depends on defined interests, responsibilities, evidential standards, and remedial powers. This section distinguishes legal operations, examines a bounded example from England and Wales, and uses the 2010 UNIDROIT Principles as a separate contractual illustration. It then returns to the collaboration case to identify the work needed to turn an account of significance into a legally justified response.

8.1 Price, settlement, and adjudicated remedy

A contractual price records terms under which parties undertake an exchange. A voluntary settlement specifies an agreement concerning claims or disputes. An adjudicated remedy rests on a competent institution's application of relevant legal grounds. Their monetary forms can coincide while their justificatory bases differ. A price offered for withdrawal from a collaboration provides little direct evidence of the remedy appropriate after an independently wrongful interference.

The distinction is especially important where an initial offer later becomes part of an evidential record. A party may have accepted an amount to meet urgent needs or avoid the cost of a dispute. An evaluator considering its significance should identify the operation that the agreement actually performed. The agreement may be relevant evidence while leaving the scope of legal protection, causation, and available remedies to the governing framework.

Legal categories also have a selective function. A court may need to identify a protected interest and the conditions of liability before determining a monetary response. A finding that a particular claim falls outside the available cause of action does not amount to a general judgment that the relationship lacked significance. Likewise, a claimant's convincing account of personal importance does not itself supply a cause of action.

Schauer distinguishes the philosophical commensurability debate from questions about the consequences of legal positions within it [12]. The present application also avoids making a complete metaphysical resolution a prerequisite for examining a specified legal decision. The relevant question concerns what the legal operation is authorized to establish and which evaluative conclusions exceed its grounds.

8.2 Counterfactual causation in professional negligence

The jurisdictional example is a limited reading of the United Kingdom Supreme Court's 2019 judgment in *Perry v Raleys Solicitors*, arising from England and Wales. In paragraphs 20–24, the Court distinguishes what a properly advised claimant would have done, to be proved on the balance of probabilities, from beneficial outcomes dependent on others' actions, assessed through loss of a chance [15]. Paragraphs 15–19 explain the difficulty of counterfactual inquiry and retain the requirement of causation. These passages concern professional negligence; they do not announce a universal rule for every lost opportunity.

The conceptual significance of this example lies in the differentiation of uncertainties. A description of one lost opportunity can contain questions about several agents' conduct, the claimant's access to evidence, and the kind of hypothetical event being assessed. Treating the whole description as one undifferentiated probability would obscure these distinctions. The legal analysis identifies which question receives which treatment within its particular setting.

The example also tests the role of the claimant's testimony. Mei may be well placed to explain an intended next step while being less able to establish Lin's counterfactual decision. An institution can give that testimony substantial weight within its proper scope without treating it as complete evidence of another person's future conduct. This is a conceptual application of the distinction, not a conclusion that Mei's hypothetical case satisfies the requirements of English professional-negligence law.

The comparison challenges a simple opposition between historical-relational sensitivity and legal reasoning. A legal framework can already distinguish agents, evidence, and unrealized outcomes. The task for the present approach is to identify what a specific legal reconstruction preserves, what its purpose reasonably leaves outside, and which larger claims an observer should avoid drawing from the result.

8.3 Non-pecuniary harm and chance in the 2010 Principles

The UNIDROIT Principles of International Commercial Contracts 2010 provide a separate illustration within their contractual framework. Article 7.4.2 includes non-pecuniary harm; Article 7.4.3 addresses sufficiently certain future harm and loss of a chance. Article 7.4.4 limits liability through foreseeability [14]. These provisions contradict the broad assertion that legal frameworks can recognize only realized monetary loss. The Principles are examined as the specified 2010 instrument, with its application distinguished from national legislation or a rule governing every collaboration.

Illustration 6 under the commentary to Article 7.4.2 concerns a young architect whose publicly announced commission is terminated. It identifies reputational harm and a lost opportunity for greater recognition alongside material loss. This is an official hypothetical within the commentary, not a reported judicial decision. Its contractual premise is essential to the comparison.

The academic vignette differs in precisely the matters that an adequate legal account would need to investigate. An ongoing intellectual association may include a formal undertaking, informal reciprocal expectations, or only one participant's hope. A concrete opportunity may have been supported by scheduled activity and resources, or may remain speculative. Identifying these features is necessary before any relevant legal framework can be applied. The existence of a recognized form of future harm elsewhere supplies a comparison, not an automatic entitlement in this case.

8.4 The construction of a legally relevant collaboration claim

A proposed claim concerning Mei and Lin should begin with the interest and duty alleged. The candidate wrong might concern breach of a specified undertaking, wrongful withdrawal of entitled access, or another legally recognized interference. The claimant must identify the applicable basis, the actor against whom the claim is directed, and the relevant institutional authority. A generalized claim that an important relationship was lost leaves this work incomplete.

The next task is to specify the causal account. A missed meeting, an expired opportunity, and the complete end of a relationship are distinct alleged effects. The evidence might support one more strongly than another. Lin's independent decision could alter the reconstruction, while an actual commitment might strengthen it. The person assessing the claim should avoid attributing the whole course of the relationship to a single interference unless the evidence supports that conclusion.

The losses should then be separated by their evidential and normative character. Documented expenditure may be straightforward to identify. A supported chance of participation requires a counterfactual account. A period of shared inquiry may have real personal significance without a ready monetary representation. A hoped-for public discovery belongs to a different and usually more speculative category. These distinctions help identify which parts of a claim require further proof and which require an additional ground of protection.

A remedy proposal must also distinguish the rights of the participants. Restoring access that an institution wrongfully removed can address the institution's conduct. Requiring Lin to resume collaboration would implicate Lin's independent agency. Funding new work could be appropriate under a justified duty or program while changing the conditions of the future project. The proposed response should explain what it repairs, what it enables, and which powers it requires.

These steps map the conceptual problem onto a possible legal inquiry without predicting its outcome. A specialist application would need the actual facts, governing law, procedural posture, and remedial powers. The present argument establishes a narrower point: legal interpretation and conversion can be assessed through distinct questions even where the legal system already recognizes complex future and non-monetary interests.

8.5 Legal closure and the limits of evaluative inference

A legally justified award can settle a defined claim without establishing that money and the lost relation have identical significance. The legal ground for the award determines what its performance accomplishes. An account of its scope can recognize a supported remainder while distinguishing that remainder from an additional enforceable obligation.

The reverse limit is equally important. A legally unavailable remedy cannot be made available solely by redescribing a loss in richer philosophical terms. Those terms may support criticism of a legal framework or an independent ethical response. Changing the framework requires an argument about its purposes, authority, and consequences. The interpretive responsibility preserves a place for that criticism while keeping established law, proposed reform, and moral evaluation distinct.

9 Public factual governance and corrective responses

Public factual governance tests the framework where the primary concern includes historical occurrence, provenance, attribution, and the public record. This section uses a constructed knowledge dispute to distinguish evidential findings from choices about corrective action. Its scope is the interface between interpretation and response, with the institution's authority and the limits of disclosure made explicit.

9.1 Historical occurrence, public recognition, and institutional status

Suppose a research association maintains an archive of a shared project. Documents establish that Mei produced an early formulation of an idea and that Lin later developed a substantially different application. The public record credits Lin alone with the entire sequence. The association has authority to correct the archive it maintains. These premises distinguish the historical contribution, the development of the work, and the institution's existing account of them.

Several propositions can be relevant without being interchangeable. Mei's identifiable formulation may have occurred earlier. Lin's later work may have had greater public influence. An institution may have conferred a title on Lin through an authorized procedure. Each claim has different evidence and conditions of truth. Correcting historical priority need not deny later influence, and the existence of an institutional title does not establish authorship of every earlier contribution.

Interpretation concerns the meaning and relevance of these distinctions for the dispute. The evaluator needs to examine records, attribution practices, participation, and the actual claims being made. A generic category of recognized contributor may omit an important sequence of work. An equally sweeping counter-narrative can wrongly erase Lin's later development. Responsible reconstruction should preserve supported differences when correcting the attribution.

The significance of omission also needs evidence. A false record may have affected opportunities, relationships, or the ability to continue the work. Some consequences may be documented, others uncertain. Mei's experience of exclusion can deserve serious consideration while the causal extent of the public misattribution remains open to inquiry. The distinction between experience, established occurrence, and inferred effect carries over from the collaboration case.

9.2 Evidential standards and the limits of narrative compromise

Historical claims require evidential assessment. An institution cannot make a false attribution true by deciding that it would produce a more harmonious public story. A compromise over corrective measures

has a different object from a compromise over what occurred. The participants can agree to a forward-looking arrangement while retaining disagreement about an unresolved historical proposition.

Evidence can also leave a question unsettled. Competing recollections may be consistent with the surviving record, or the record may establish collaboration while leaving the precise sequence uncertain. A responsible public finding can state these limits. Fair treatment requires consideration of the relevant accounts; it does not require equal confidence in accounts with different evidential support.

Authority matters at this stage as well. An association can publish a warranted finding about records within its care without thereby acquiring the powers of a court. A legal decision about ownership or liability has a specified scope that should be examined before it is used as evidence for a wider historical claim. The proposed governance framework requires explicit statements about what each institution's decision purports to establish.

9.3 Direct correction and heterogeneous remedial packages

Correcting the archive's attribution is a direct response to a demonstrated defect in the archive. The act preserves the relevant distinctions and makes the revised account accessible to its users. Conversion arises if the association additionally treats monetary support, restored access, or public recognition as an appropriate response to further injuries connected to the false record.

The grounds of each component need to be specified. An institution may owe restoration of access it wrongfully removed. It may have reason to reimburse demonstrable costs or fund renewed work under a justified arrangement. A public acknowledgment may address the institution's own responsibility. None of these acts should be presented as a purchase of historical truth or as ownership of the recipient's future allegiance.

A hypothetical package might correct the attribution, provide access to project materials, and finance a bounded period of independent work. The financial component could enable a new future without recreating a missed period of recognition. The record correction could be complete while a relational remainder persists. The account should distinguish these effects and identify any claims the package is intended to settle.

The remedy must also respect Lin's interests. Correcting an overbroad attribution can preserve accurate recognition of Lin's actual contribution. A statement assigning fault requires evidence of responsibility beyond evidence that the record was inaccurate. The institution may have introduced the error independently. Separating correction from blame prevents a justified factual revision from silently acquiring a further accusatory meaning.

9.4 Disclosure, privacy, and bounded revision

Public correction can conflict with legitimate privacy interests. The record may contain intimate correspondence, confidential research material, or information about uninvolved people. The institution should distinguish the truth of a proposition from the amount of underlying material that needs publication. Protected review, a proportionate public statement, or a limited redaction can sometimes preserve evidential accountability while reducing unnecessary exposure.

These choices concern governance of access and response. They leave historical occurrence unchanged. An institution should explain the limits of public disclosure and avoid implying that withheld details have been disproved. Conversely, confidentiality should not become an unexamined reason to preserve a known misattribution or prevent any meaningful challenge.

Revision also needs practical boundaries. A correction procedure can identify relevant new evidence, provide an opportunity for affected parties to respond, and record changes transparently. These measures permit continued inquiry without demanding that every settled administrative decision remain indefinitely open. The appropriate balance depends on the institution's function, the stakes of the finding, and the reliance placed on its records. The present contribution is the separation of these questions from claims that a compensatory act has resolved historical truth or restored every consequence of an earlier error.

10 Capital, symbolic value, and manufactured inadequacy

Capital-mediated consumption tests whether the framework can acknowledge socially produced value while criticizing wrongful conditions of its production and use. This section compares truthful provenance with a constructed campaign of manufactured inadequacy, then examines commercial claims to the authorship of love and belonging. The object is the interpretation of value and the justification of the claims made through purchase, with each alleged wrong requiring specified grounds.

10.1 Craft, provenance, and socially real significance

Consider a luxury object whose buyer values its design, skilled production, documented provenance, and relation to a shared practice. Its significance can include aesthetic pleasure, recognition of workmanship, memory of an event, or participation in a tradition. A price may reflect demand within those circumstances. The object's symbolic dimensions can be socially constituted and still form part of what the buyer has reasons to value.

An evaluator who reduces the object to its raw material cost may omit those dimensions. Conversely, a seller's origin story requires evidence where it makes historical claims. Craftsmanship, rarity, attribution, and provenance are distinguishable propositions. A compelling story cannot establish a false history, and a true history does not automatically justify every price or condition attached to the object.

The buyer's own history can add significance that another buyer would lack. The object may recall a person or mark a transition. Such significance can be real without establishing an obligation on others to pay its holder's preferred price. Interpretation recognizes the relevant meaning; the grounds of sale, compensation, or preservation remain separate. This is the same distinction that prevents the collaboration's personal importance from becoming an automatic claim to another person's participation.

10.2 The production of inadequacy and the value of relief

In the critical version of the case, a company contributes to a recognition hierarchy in which people lacking its product are represented as unworthy of affection or belonging. It repeatedly associates ordinary ways of living with personal deficiency and offers ownership as a route out of that condition. Stipulate evidence that the campaign materially contributes to the targeted insecurity through wrongful deception, degradation, or manipulation. The stipulation is essential; commercial influence alone establishes neither the causal contribution nor the wrong.

The resulting desire may be understandable within the buyer's circumstances. Ownership might reduce actual exclusion, communicate affection through a familiar convention, or provide genuine enjoyment. Denying these effects would weaken interpretation of the case. The normative criticism concerns the grounds on which inadequacy was produced, the practices through which relief is sold, and the authority claimed from the transaction.

Illouz connects commercial imagery and consumption with romantic experience [7]. Richins examines idealized attractiveness images, comparison, and appearance satisfaction among young women [10]. These sources supply bounded points of contact. They do not establish the complete constructed sequence, general effects across all buyers, or the intentions of a particular company.

The distinction between actual significance and justified worth becomes especially important here. A status benefit can be real because others enforce an exclusionary hierarchy. Its reality helps explain the buyer's action. It does not give the hierarchy an entitlement to continued enforcement or make every resulting advantage a value that public institutions should protect. Critical interpretation can understand the buyer without endorsing the social standard that creates the pressure.

10.3 Purchase, extraction, and commercial savior claims

The company may obtain several forms of return: payment, repeated engagement, personal information, loyalty, or public endorsement. These are possible features of the stipulated scenario, requiring evidence

in an actual application. The analysis should identify which returns were agreed, how their conditions were understood, and whether the company used wrongful pressure in securing them. A purchase need not authorize every further demand that the company associates with membership in its community.

The strongest commercial narrative represents the seller as the source of the buyer's love or social worth. Having contributed to a sense of deficiency, the company describes the relief associated with ownership as proof that it creates belonging and rescues otherwise inadequate people. This account obscures the contributions of other participants and the company's own role in the pressure surrounding purchase.

A sale can convey an object and associated legitimate services. It cannot by itself transfer authorship of another person's affection to the seller. A product may help mark a meaningful occasion while the relationship remains constituted through the participants' lives and actions. Commercial claims to exclusive moral credit require grounds that payment and customer satisfaction alone cannot supply.

This is a conversion problem where a limited transaction is represented as authorization of a much larger evaluative claim. The seller moves from the buyer's appreciation of a commodity to a claim that the seller supplies the conditions of personal worth. Responsible interpretation should identify the distinct contributions and causal history. Normative assessment should then examine the proposed authority and whether the purchase can justify it.

The buyer's gratitude can remain intelligible. A person may appreciate a real benefit while criticizing the practices that helped make it necessary. An evaluator should preserve this complexity and permit a judgment that distinguishes the product from the practices associated with it. The critical target is the unsupported claim to moral authorship or deference, together with any established wrongs in producing and exploiting need.

10.4 Corrective responses and the limits of anti-market inference

The appropriate response depends on the wrong identified. False provenance can call for correction of a historical claim. Wrongful degradation can call for cessation and an appropriately grounded remedy. Unfair conditions can call for changes in the transaction or its enforcement. Institutional exclusion may require a wider response than changes to one company's marketing. These proposals need evidence and a justified allocation of responsibility.

The same object could remain valuable after harmful representations are removed. Truthful craft and provenance can support appreciation without requiring a hierarchy of human worth. Money paid for the object can then be assessed through the actual terms and conditions of that exchange. A blanket conclusion that symbolic value is fictitious or that every market conversion is unjust would lose these distinctions.

The capital case therefore reinforces the dual responsibility. An evaluator can correctly recognize a commodity's real significance while rejecting the seller's account of its moral authority. The buyer can accept relief while retaining grounds for criticism and repair. A response to the wrongful practice should preserve what can reasonably be valued and address the specific injury, with its remaining effects described honestly.

11 Objections, deliberative practice, and further inquiry

The proposed responsibilities face objections concerning originality, relativism, institutional burden, and practical decision under uncertainty. This section addresses those objections and uses a bounded environmental study to clarify the promise and limits of deliberation. It concludes by identifying the further inquiry needed to assess the framework's usefulness beyond its constructed cases.

11.1 Established distinctions and the scope of contribution

The distinction between understanding a situation and judging an action is familiar. Work on commensuration already examines the construction of evaluative objects, and work on epistemic injustice already

supplies resources for criticizing wrongful interpretive treatment. The present account therefore has a limited claim to contribution. Its test is whether the distinctions identify a reason or corrective action that an undivided judgment of value would leave obscured.

The controlled cases provide that test in a specified form. Correcting a payment leaves a wrongful credibility judgment unresolved. Correcting the history leaves a coercive condition unresolved. Recognizing an irretrievable loss leaves open whether any further duty remains. These differences matter because institutions can make an appropriate change to one component and then incorrectly claim to have resolved the whole dispute.

The contribution consequently lies in the coordination of interpretive adequacy, the grounds of a response, and the scope of acknowledged remainder. Purpose-relative inquiry connects these components: deciding a temporary material entitlement can require less reconstruction than attributing responsibility for an entire relationship. This claim gives the framework practical content without requiring a universal metric or complete historical knowledge. Its distinctness from the closest accounts of commensuration remains a matter for further comparison and criticism.

Generative relational analysis supplies an integrative perspective within this proposal. It directs attention to the formation of activities and possibilities, reciprocal agency, and the conditions under which values become accessible. Those concerns can overlap with other accounts of human agency and plural value. The argument requires their relevance to the specified decisions; it leaves open the further claim that they require an independent general theory of value.

11.2 Relational significance and evidential discipline

A possible objection treats situated interpretation as a license to make any personally meaningful account authoritative. The framework's distinctions limit that inference. Experienced significance, historical occurrence, supported opportunity, and normative entitlement have different evidential and justificatory grounds. A sincere report of attachment can establish something about the speaker's experience while leaving another person's intention or an institution's liability unsettled.

The same discipline protects people accused of causing a loss. The opportunity to offer an account belongs to affected parties with conflicting interests. A claimant's difficulty documenting an experience supplies a reason to examine the conditions of evidence and possible alternatives. It does not settle responsibility against another person. A just inquiry must explain what the available material supports, what remains contested, and which consequences the uncertainty permits.

Disagreement about significance can also persist after agreement about events. Mei and Lin might agree about their meetings and publications while assigning different importance to the collaboration. Some decisions can respect that difference because they concern individual support or voluntary future participation. A demand involving another person's conduct requires additional grounds. The framework thus allows plural evaluation while preserving limits on the authority of each evaluation over others.

11.3 Administrative scale and equal treatment

Detailed inquiry consumes time, exposes private information, and can favor people able to supply elaborate records. These costs bear directly on the justice of the institution's method. A requirement to recount an entire life before receiving basic support could reproduce the disadvantage that the support is meant to address. Equal treatment can justify a general rule when the rule's purpose depends on a limited set of relevant conditions.

The appropriate design can combine an accessible initial determination with more focused review where a further claim depends on individual history. For example, documented loss of access might establish temporary material support. A disputed attribution claim could require examination of specific records through a separate process. The additional process should address the dispute that calls for it, with safeguards against unnecessary exposure of unrelated relationships.

Such differentiation requires scrutiny of the initial rule and the review route. An institution can manipulate either by defining relevant evidence too narrowly or making further review prohibitively difficult.

The claim of efficiency is therefore one reason within an assessment that also considers exclusion, error costs, available alternatives, and the interests of those bearing the burden. A procedural arrangement helps organize these reasons; its existence alone cannot establish a just result.

11.4 Environmental deliberation and plural reasons

Environmental decisions provide a useful setting for examining how values become expressible during collective inquiry. Isacs and colleagues study deliberative valuation of marine issues on the Swedish west coast, involving citizens and politicians. Their mixed-method, quasi-experimental study identifies uncertain and conflicting preferences and emphasizes inclusive reason-giving and compromise in the expression of plural values [8]. These findings concern a specified study and supply a bounded point of comparison for the present proposal.

Consider, independently, a proposed coastal development affecting access, livelihoods, ecological relationships, and local memory. An initial survey could record preferences among projects while leaving the reasons for those preferences poorly understood. Deliberation could reveal that a stated preference concerns access during a particular season, a responsibility to future users, or distrust generated by an earlier broken undertaking. These interpretations could support different modifications to the proposal even where an initial numerical ranking was identical.

Improved articulation still leaves questions of decision authority, representation, and substantive obligation. Agreement among those present may exclude absent users or interests that participants have inadequate authority to waive. A discussion can also reproduce unequal credibility or pressure people toward an apparently convenient settlement. Deliberation therefore belongs within both interpretive and normative assessment. It can improve understanding and generate alternatives while its conditions and conclusions remain open to criticism.

The constructed example also illustrates a limit on conversion. Preserving access directly addresses one interest; payment to accommodate an accepted loss of access authorizes a response in a different medium. Environmental integrity and personal memory may require other grounds and responses. Describing the final arrangement as a compromise leaves its constituent claims in need of justification. The relevant legal powers would have to be established for any actual development decision.

11.5 Decision under uncertainty and empirical assessment

Several warranted interpretations can support the same provisional act without supporting the same final account. Temporary access or assistance might be appropriate under each live reconstruction of a disputed history. Appendix A specifies this possibility. Agreement on an act does not settle factual disagreement, and the act's scope should remain explicit. When the warranted interpretations support incompatible responses, further inquiry, a reversible measure, or an independently justified rule for bearing risk may become necessary.

Empirical assessment should examine the framework's distinct claims and proposed evaluations. A study could trace how a change in the accepted description alters remedy selection, while another could examine cases in which the material provision remains fixed and a disputed interpretive act requires correction. Documentary burdens, delays, participation, and the costs imposed on third parties would be relevant outcomes. Such work would need explicit standards and suitable evidence; the present examples do not establish those effects.

Further normative work concerns the choice among responses that remain permissible, the distribution of inquiry costs, and the grounds of finality. The framework organizes these disputes by specifying their objects and avoiding inferences that the controlled cases defeat. It leaves their substantive resolution to arguments appropriate to the institution and the interests at stake.

12 Interpretive responsibility and justified accommodation

This article has examined the interpretation of heterogeneous values and the justification of responses across different forms of value. Its concluding result concerns distinct, interacting responsibilities. An institution needs a warranted account of the significance relevant to its decision and grounds for the response it authorizes. Success in one specified component can leave an independent failure in another.

The generative relational perspective makes the histories and practical conditions of significance available for examination. A collaboration can matter through reciprocal activity and supported possibilities; money can matter through access, time, and further agency. Neither description establishes an entitlement by itself. Comparison can inform action without requiring an exhaustive common measure, and a justified conversion depends on its purpose, authority, medium, alternatives, and scope.

The account of residual loss limits what a response establishes. Compensation can perform a duty without recreating a relationship. Acknowledgment can preserve an honest description of what remains lost while further liability requires additional grounds. Practical closure can therefore coexist with incomplete restoration and continuing historical understanding.

The applications specify the consequences of these distinctions. Legal remedies require protected interests and grounds of responsibility. Public record correction requires evidence concerning what happened. Commercial relief requires separate scrutiny of the pressure surrounding purchase and of claims to moral authority. Deliberation can improve the articulation of value while its inclusiveness and conclusions remain subject to assessment.

The resulting proposal calibrates inquiry to a defensible purpose and keeps its limits visible. It permits action under bounded uncertainty, preserves the agency of affected participants, and directs correction to the failure that remains. Its further development requires closer comparison with existing accounts and institutional evidence concerning the burdens and effects of putting these responsibilities into practice.

A Common responses across warranted interpretations

This appendix gives a minimal set-based representation of action under interpretive uncertainty. It distinguishes historical compatibility from warranted interpretation, defines responses permitted across the warranted accounts, and states the limits of the construction. The model clarifies an inferential structure without assigning a common quantity to heterogeneous values.

Let H be a set of possible histories, O a set of records, and $Q: H \rightarrow O$ an observation map. The deterministic map is an illustrative simplification. For a record o , the compatible histories form $C_Q(o) = \{h \in H : Q(h) = o\}$. Compatibility with this record alone leaves evidential credibility and justified interpretation unsettled. An account may also require reasons about the significance and relevance of facts within a history.

Let $\mathcal{W}_N(o)$ be a nonempty set of warranted interpretations under an explicitly selected set of evidential and normative standards N . Each interpretation describes relevant history, significance, and uncertainty. The construction of this set requires argument; membership does not follow merely from a speaker proposing an account. The index N makes the chosen standards visible and leaves their justification open to assessment.

Fix an institutional purpose, available resources, and legitimate powers. Let D contain the responses available within those constraints, and let $A_N(v) \subseteq D$ contain the responses admissible under interpretation v . Equation 1 defines the common response set.

$$A_N^\cap(o) = \bigcap_{v \in \mathcal{W}_N(o)} A_N(v) = \{d \in D : d \in A_N(v) \text{ for every } v \in \mathcal{W}_N(o)\}. \quad (1)$$

Membership in $A_N^\cap(o)$ establishes admissibility across the specified interpretations under the fixed standards. It leaves the truth of each interpretation and the choice among several common responses unresolved. For example, let $\mathcal{W}_N(o) = \{v_1, v_2\}$, with $A_N(v_1) = \{d_0, d_1\}$ and $A_N(v_2) = \{d_0, d_2\}$.

Here d_0 might provide interim access with other claims reserved, while d_1 and d_2 represent different final dispositions justified by different reconstructed duties. The common set is $\{d_0\}$. Its existence supports that interim act within the model; it supplies no basis for presenting either history as established.

There is a simple conditional relation between the breadth of warranted interpretation and the common set. Holding D , N , and the admissibility assignment fixed, let $\mathcal{W} \subseteq \mathcal{W}'$. Then $\bigcap_{v \in \mathcal{W}'} A_N(v) \subseteq \bigcap_{v \in \mathcal{W}} A_N(v)$. Any response admitted under every member of the larger set is admitted under every member of its subset. The conclusion follows directly from the definition of intersection. Actual inquiry can revise the standards, the accounts, or the available responses, so it need not exhibit this nesting relation.

An empty common set shows the absence of a response admissible under every listed interpretation using this criterion. It leaves open further inquiry or a separately justified decision rule that permits some risk of error. Conversely, a nonempty set can reflect deficient standards or the unjustified exclusion of an account. Equation 1 therefore cannot replace the interpretation and justification examined in the main argument.

A decision can additionally carry a description ρ of warranted aspects left unrestored by response d . The pair (d, ρ) records an act and a description with different roles. It neither adds money to dignity nor derives further liability from the presence of a remainder. Any additional duty requires the substantive grounds discussed in Section 6.

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