In the preceding chapter, we used the doctrine of indistinct intellec-
tions to take significant steps toward solving Type-1 NO’s, NO’s in
which the agent is reasonably expected to keep in mind her obligation
continuously until TEF. What, though, about Type-2 NO’s, cases in
which the relevant time lag is long enough such that the agent could
not reasonably be expected to keep in mind her obligation continu-
ously until TEF, but short enough such that there is no expectation for
her to ‘write notes to herself’ or do something along those lines? Is the
document of indistinct intellecations useful for explaining their
culpability?

In this chapter I will demonstrate how it can be so applied by pro-
posing a significant development of Scotus’s machinery, a development
I will call ‘Lingering Indistinct Intellections.’ Moreover, I will show that
there are two variations of Type-2 NO’s and that my proposal helps
explain culpability in both of them. I will end by acknowledging a task
similar to that expressed after we discussed Type-1 NO’s remains.
Namely, there will still be a question as to how the agent is to have
knowledge of certain relevant descriptions of her action or non-action.
The answer to this will ultimately come in the chapter on Suárez.
Nonetheless, the work done in this chapter will be indispensable for the
resolution of Type-2 NO’s.

I. Type-2 NO’s: Special Challenges Posed

Given the longer time-lag in Type-2 cases, NO’s of this type pose
some particular challenges not presented by Type-1 cases. These par-
ticular challenges, in turn, make Type-2 NO’s the most challenging
to solve. For ease of exposition, I repeat the basic example of a Type-2
case here.
Sample 2: John arrives at his apartment at 4:30 and, at that time, makes a promise, and is thus morally obligated in some sense, to pick up his friend Des at the airport tonight. He will need to leave at 7:00 in order to do this. Knowing that he has two and a half hours, he begins watching TV. As it turns out, he becomes so engrossed in the show he is watching that he forgets to pick up Des. It is not until 9:00, when Des calls John to ask him where he is, that John realizes he has omitted to fulfill his obligation.

We need to find a way to ascribe voluntariness and blameworthiness to John’s ignorance, at 7:00, of the fact that it was then time for him to quit watching TV and leave. This is especially challenging, for it is difficult to specify any point in the example at which John may have done something unacceptable.

It may be suggested that one point in which culpability can ultimately be placed is John’s watching TV. Why? It is clear that John did not have present in his mind an intellection of his obligation at 7:00; otherwise, the omission would not be negligent, but rather intentional (since an indistinct intellection implies some awareness on the part of the agent). And since John was watching TV, one can perhaps conclude that this obligation-related intellection is absent (and thus John’s ignorance is present) on account of John performing intellectual tunnel vision on what he was watching. In such a case, blameworthiness is traced back to his performance of intellectual tunnel vision.

As it is, this suggestion does not initially carry much weight. Let us posit for sake of argument that John did indeed perform intellectual tunnel vision (hereafter, ‘ITV’) and did so at 5:00. There seems to be nothing wrong with his performing ITV at that time. He is *ex hypothesi* not required to keep the obligation in mind continuously (as in Type-1 cases). Furthermore, he need not have the obligation-related intellection in mind until 7:00, and performing ITV at 5:00 does not necessarily entail that the obligation-related intellection will be absent at 7:00. There thus appears to be no direct incompatibility between performing ITV at 5:00 and recalling or fulfilling his obligation.

The defense for the permissibility of performing ITV just offered, however, is itself questionable. It may be conceded that performing ITV at 5:00 is not, in and of itself, incompatible with recalling one’s obligation at 7:00; only performing ITV at 7:00 would be. However, once ITV is begun, there is no guarantee that one will happen to recall one’s obligation. Therefore, if John is about to perform ITV at 5:00, he has the further obligation to take steps (such as set an alarm) so as to help ‘bring him out of tunnel vision,’ so to speak, and remind him of his