Russ Shafer-Landau, ed.

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Oxford Studies in Metaethics documents the work presented annually at the Madison Metaethics Workshop. Both the workshop and the publication series serve as measures of metaethical interest as well as annual venues for furthering philosophical debates about ethics. This sixth volume includes chapters of high quality on a variety of topics, several of which complement each other in interesting ways: David Sobel, Chris Heathwood, and Julia Markovits each contribute a chapter on the prospects of subjectivism/internalism/desire-based views about reasons; Richard Joyce and Jonas Olson each contribute a chapter broadly on error theory, with Joyce criticizing certain success theories and Olson criticizing fictionalist accounts of moral discourse; and Sharon Street and Allan Gibbard each contribute a chapter on the prospects of quasi-realism. The other chapters include Sarah McGrath writing on how experience supports moral knowledge, Matt Bedke on analyzing deontic concepts, Campbell Brown on supervenience, Paul Katsafanas on reflective agency, and Ralph Wedgwood on instrumental rationality. There is far too much for me to comment on in this excellent volume, and so I will restrict my focus to the chapters from Street and Gibbard after some brief set-up.

Metaethicists continue to be interested in the prospects of realism and its adversaries, and *OSME 6* includes interesting developments on this front. Opponents of ethical realism typically argue for their view on grounds of theoretical economy: they neither posit normative facts, nor special ways of finding out about them, and so seem to avoid metaphysical and epistemological problems that they think ruin realist theories. But for decades now, much opposition to ethical realism comes under the banner of "quasi-realism", which spends considerable effort showing how to accommodate "the realist appearances" in ethical thought and talk, including recognition of moral truths, facts, and knowledge. Quasi-realists thus open the door to questions about the nature of such truths, facts, and knowledge, although they claim, e.g., that the moral truth is *insubstantial* in some way that still gets them off the hook that realists are caught on.

Quasi-realists recognized many of the challenges they faced at the start. For example, back in 1984 Simon Blackburn articulated what can be called the problem of the schizoid attitude: "Can the projectivist take such things as obligations (and) duties…seriously? How can he if he denies that these represent external, independent, authoritative requirements? Mustn't he in some sense have a schizoid attitude to his own moral commitments – holding them,

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but also holding that they are ungrounded?" (See Blackburn, *Spreading the Word*, (Oxford University Press, 1984), pp. 197). This problem arises for quasi-realism precisely because it aims to *preserve* our ordinary moral thinking, rather than to *undermine* it. A quasi-realist starts out as an anti-realist but ends up agreeing with quite a lot of what seems definitive of realism. Importantly, quasi-realists think we should go on moralizing much as we actually do: first-order normative claims can be offered confidently even though the second-order, philosophical truth of the matter is as the anti-realist would have it.

Sharon Street's contribution to the present volume raises a precise version of the schizoid attitude problem against quasi-realism. Whereas much attention and criticism has focused on whether quasi-realism really does preserve the realist appearances of ethical thought and talk (e.g. the Frege-Geach problem and worries about relativism) and whether it simply collapses into a version of realism rather than being an alternative to it, Street objects to quasi-realism on behalf of anti-realism. She argues that even if quasi-realism succeeds in its goal of being an alternative that mimics realism, its agreements with realism cause trouble. Simply put, she argues that the very naturalistic scruples that originally motivate quasi-realism in the first place eventually undermine it once it has endorsed certain realist-seeming commitments.

In particular, Street focuses on the claim *that value is mind-independent*. Quasi-realists have conceded that such independence is part of ordinary ethical thinking. But they think it should be understood as a first-order normative claim, and thus that it should be interpreted in the way that expressivists handle other normative claims. For example, Gibbard suggests that 'It's a fact, independent of us, that kicking dogs for fun is wrong' expresses a plan not to kick dogs for fun even in those contingencies where one approves of such behavior (See Gibbard, *Thinking How to Live* (Harvard University Press, 2003), pp. 186). In some such way, the claim of independence is understood as the expression of noncognitive attitudes.

As one might expect, this reinterpretation of the notion of independence leads quasi-realists to apparently conflicting claims that they insist are consistent. Street complains that quasi-realists manifest a "split personality" on this subject (p. 15): on the one hand, they affirm that values and reasons are mind-independent (as a first-order normative claim), and on the other hand they affirm (as a second-order, philosophical claim) that our normative thought and talk expresses noncognitive attitudes rather than representing mind-independent normative facts. Some might suspect this already shows quasi-realism to be inconsistent, but that isn't exactly Street's complaint. She allows that an expressivist can engage in normative discourse with the appearance of objectivity that comes along with talk of mind-independence. She argues that

this first-order normative claim of independence, however, leads quasi-realism to an epistemological problem: Do our normative judgments "track" the mind-independent normative facts? The naturalistic scruples endorsed by quasi-realists allegedly require a negative answer. But then "the quasi-realist is forced to conclude that due to evolutionary influences, we are in all likelihood hopeless at recognizing the independent normative truth" (p. 15). This charge of hopelessness implies a dead end for quasi-realists like Gibbard and Blackburn, however, since they want to preserve our ordinary ethical discourse rather than undermine it. On these grounds, Street explains "why quasi-realists cannot have it both ways" and announces the defeat of their ambitions to span the gap between realism and anti-realism. She also heralds a return to a debate over ethical realism that is defined more traditionally in terms of mind-independence.

Whether or not Street's "Darwinian Dilemma" works in the end, the thrust of her objection is surely admirable. The naturalistic motivations that allegedly buttress quasi-realism might help to dismantle it. We should also question whether reasons of theoretical economy support or hinder quasi-realism, since its adherents seem inevitably to endorse complicated metaphysical claims in response to compelling problems. An example of what I have in mind can be seen in Allan Gibbard's chapter in *OSME 6*, which is partially intended as a response to Street's objections. While Street argues that quasi-realists cannot have it both ways, Gibbard's response tries to do just that, i.e. agree with both realists and anti-realists. His chapter spells out how much of realist theory he wants to end up agreeing with after starting from a naturalistic (i.e. anti-realist) world view.

Crucial to Gibbard's chapter is his distinction between two kinds of realism, *vast* and *tempered*, and a correlating distinction between kinds of facts. Vast realists claim that "normative truths are facts like any other" (p. 43). But Gibbard only wants to mimic a tempered realist who "recognizes a gulf between these paradigm facts and normative facts… (because) they needn't have all the epistemic credentials of paradigm facts" (p. 45). A vast realist, he says, "treats our judgments as indicators of facts separate from us" but tempered realists do not "follow through on treating our judgments fully as indicators of independent facts" (p. 44).

Notice that vast and tempered realists are differentiated using a notion of independence. As it is used here, the notion must be construed as metaphysically significant and not merely as a first-order normative matter as explained above. Also noteworthy is that whereas Gibbard remained agnostic in 2003 about whether 'facts' should be understood deflationarily or not (See Gibbard, *Thinking How to Live*, (Harvard University Press, 2003), pp. 18), here in *OSME 6*

Gibbard relies crucially on a substantial distinction amongst facts. While we should, of course, allow for theorists to refine their own views, a frequent worry raised for quasi-realists is that their interpretation of notions like truth, fact, and independence can seem too convenient. At one time, the relevant notion has metaphysical substance behind it, and at another time they insist it only *seems* to be metaphysically substantial. Gibbard's chapter doesn't help us resolve such worries, but it does admirably provide even more detail about the precise commitments of his preferred version of quasi-realism.

Although Gibbard aims to mimic tempered realism, his reasons for rejecting it in favor of quasi-realism involve the nature of facts. The problem with tempered realism is that it "still insists that normative facts are just as much facts as are the paradigms of facthood. They aren't in any way second rate as facts" (p. 45). Gibbard's quasi-realism instead recognizes normative facts as "quasi-facts" (p. 47) with some kind of second rate ontological status in addition to the epistemic limitations also affirmed by tempered realists. Quasi-facts are associated with issues over which we can have fundamental disagreements with others, and we can come to doubt whether our own judgments on such matters are fundamentally mistaken. But Gibbard denies "that understanding normative properties and relations as objective matters of fact is basic to explaining how judgments of wrongness work" (p. 46).

Presumably, these distinctions are supposed to help show how a quasi-realist can agree with realists on crucial matters like the existence of mind-independent normative facts and how to diagnose fundamental disagreements (a matter Gibbard says more about in this chapter), while nevertheless maintaining naturalistic credibility.

But one wonders whether such complications undermine the original theoretical support. For example, Gibbard seems to claim that there are different kinds or grades of facthood, with normative facts ranking lower than paradigm facts. This bit of ontology raises big philosophical questions which ordinary realists don't encounter. Is it possible that the quasi-realist ambition of agreeing with both realists and anti-realists undermines their claim to theoretical economy?

Andrew Alwood
Virginia Commonwealth University
aalwood@vcu.edu