

## Editorial Note

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The first two contributions to this issue stem from the 2015 conference of the British Society for Ethical Theory that was held in Southampton. Guest-editor was Jonathan Way. It is an undeniable fact about our moral lives that we are partial towards certain people and projects, says *Errol Lord* in the article that opens this issue. Despite this, it has traditionally been very hard to justify partiality. In his article, Lord attempts to defend a novel partialist theory. He discusses three different views of how partiality is justified and argues that they contain part of the truth. This can be seen by adopting a more sophisticated view of the weight of reasons which makes that both facts about individuals and facts about relationships play a role in explaining why we often have stronger reason to act well towards those things we are partial towards. In the next contribution, *Melis Erdur* presents a moral argument against moral realism. She states that the notion of an independent moral reality has been subjected to meticulous metaphysical, epistemological and semantic criticism, but it is hardly ever examined from a moral point of view. Erdur argues that the appeal to an independent moral reality as a ground for moral obligations constitutes a *substantive moral* mistake.

The character of war has changed, not only by the use of new technology such as drones, but probably more problematically by the changing temporal and spatial scope of war and the changing character of actors in war. In her article, *Jovanna Davidovic* develops an argument that the changing character of war gives us reasons to pay more attention to reductionist theories of war – those revisions within the just war tradition that suggest that we can use ordinary peacetime interpersonal analyses of moral responsibility and liability to harm to decide what justice requires in times of war.

In the next article, *Jukka Varelius* states that when it is considered to be in their best interests, withholding and withdrawing life-supporting treatment from non-competent physically ill or injured patients – non-voluntary passive euthanasia – is generally accepted because it can be seen as a natural death. If the perceived naturalness of the deaths occurring in connection with non-voluntary passive euthanasia speaks for their moral permissibility, it

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could be taken that a similar reason can support the moral acceptability of the suicidal deaths of non-competent psychiatric patients. Varelius argues that the suicidal death of a non-competent psychiatric patient is not less natural than those of physically ill or injured patients who die as a result of non-voluntary passive euthanasia.

Two contributions discuss forgiveness. Can forgiveness be taken back, asks *Geoffrey Scarre* in his paper. When we forgive, we make a firm commitment not to return to our former state of moral resentment against the offender, replacing it by good-will. Scarre contends that a person who forgives and later takes back that forgiveness because certain negative feelings have returned, either did not genuinely forgive in the first place or shows that she has not fully grasped the nature of forgiveness.

*Maura Priest* explores the status of third party blame after forgiveness. B can forgive A, but it can still seem that third parties can aptly blame A for the wrong against B. Priest argues that while post forgiveness blame is often inapt, in many other cases forgiveness is irrelevant. This difference is explained by appeal to the various relationships third parties might have to wronged parties, and how these differences affect the ways we blame and thereby blame's aptness.

According to agent-based approaches to virtue ethics, the rightness of an action is a function of the motives which prompted that action. However, many critics claim that agent-basing fails to preserve the intuitive distinction between agent- and act-evaluation. In his article, *Joseph Walsh* shows how an agent-based account of right action can be made sensitive to an act's consequences. According to him, an action is right just in case it realizes an agent's morally praiseworthy motive. *Andrew Cohen's* paper considers the relation of corrective to distributive justice. After discussing the shortfalls of one sort of account that holds these are independent domains of justice, he presents a more modest claim that these are *sometimes* independent domains of justice by focussing on the case of apologies. Apologies and the moral relations they engage might be parts of a domain of justice that is neither distributive nor dependent on distributive justice.

The following two articles draw on psychological studies. A recent and promising theory that should explain why disgust can provide evidence of moral wrongdoing is the social contagion view. In his paper, *Robert Fischer* draws two conclusions after criticizing both its descriptive and normative claims. First, we should question the wisdom of drawing so straight a line from biological poisons and pathogens to social counterparts. Second, we do not need to explain the evidential value of disgust by appealing to what the response tracks. These lessons point toward an alternative: namely, that disgust is a moral heuristic. On the heuristic view, disgust is a trigger for the subconscious use of a particular rule: If  $x$  is disgusting, and we would not do  $x$ , then  $x$  is morally wrong. In her paper, *Charlotte Newey* criticises Garrett Cullity's account of fairness as appropriate impartiality. Cullity deploys his account of fairness as a means of limiting the extreme moral demand to make sacrifices in order to aid others. According to Newey, the idea that fairness consists in appropriate impartiality is very vague. Moreover, psychological studies show the self-serving bias is especially likely to infect one's judgements when the ideas involved are vague. Newey argues that Cullity's solution to extreme moral demandingness is threatened by these findings.

Some subjectivist views of practical reasons entail that some people, in some cases, lack sufficient reasons to act as morality requires of them. This is often thought to form the basis of an objection to these subjectivist views: 'the amoralism objection'. In his article, *Christopher Cowie* argues that Julia Markovits in her recent book *Moral Reason* — alongside many other proponents of this objection — does not explicitly consider that her objection is premised on a

claim that her opponents deny on first-order grounds, often as part of a socially and politically motivated revisionism about the assessment of agents and their actions. As such, the amoralism objection as she presents it misses its dialectical mark. In his contribution, *Derek Shiller* shows that the expressivist can respond to the objection that expressivism cannot account for the obvious fact that normative sentences and their negations express inconsistent kinds of attitudes. Shiller offers an account of attitudinal inconsistency that takes it to be a combination of descriptive and normative relations. This account relies on a combination of functionalism about normative judgments and expressivism about the norms governing them. It holds that the inconsistency of normative judgments is primitive.

The following two articles discuss moral emotions. *Kristján Kristjánsson* reviews the scarce relevant philosophical literature from the last decade on jealousy. Special attention is given, however, to a new conceptual model proposed by Purshouse and Fredericks which rejects the standard architectonic of jealousy as a three-party compound emotion. While rejecting the essential contours of the new model, Kristjánsson shows that Fredericks offers some powerful misgivings about putative instrumentalist defences of jealousy. In addition to this new model, a number of other recent writings about jealousy – historical, conceptual and moral – are subjected to critical scrutiny in this overview article. The moral emotion discussed by *Timothy Oakberg* is shame. Although the greatest harms — mass murders, for example — are directly caused by a small number of individuals, the full force of the transgressions would not obtain without the indirect contributions of many others. In his article Oakberg discusses Larry May's argument that to combat these evils we ought to cultivate not only a sense of shared responsibility within communities, but, more specifically, a propensity to feel ashamed of ourselves when we choose to be associated with others who transgress. Referring to research by June Tangney, Oakberg argues that cultivating shame is a recipe for increasing antisocial behavior. Policies that promote feelings of empathy-based care and guilt, however, seem better designed to achieve the desired result, namely, minimizing the harms caused by groups.

In the last contribution, *Micah Lott* discusses the passivities objection to eudaimonism. Many contemporary eudaimonists emphasize the role of agency in the good life: our lives go well in virtue of what we do, rather than what happens, to us or otherwise. Nicholas Wolterstorff, however, has argued that this prioritizing of agency over patiency is a fatal flaw in eudaimonist accounts of well-being, because many life-goods are “passivities” that are out of a person's hands, including how she is treated by others. Lott argues that eudaimonism can maintain its agentist character while also capturing the element of truth in the passivities objection — namely, that human well-being is vulnerable and social.