Moral Relativism and Moral Disagreement

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ABSTRACT: This chapter focuses on the connection between moral disagreement and moral relativism. Moral relativists, generally speaking, think both (i) that there is no unique objectively correct moral standard and (ii) that the rightness and wrongness of an action depends in some way on a moral standard accepted by some group or an individual. This chapter will first consider the metaphysical and epistemic arguments for moral relativism that begin from the premise that there is considerable amount of moral disagreement both within individual societies and between them. The second half of the chapter, by contrast, focuses on the objection that moral relativism threatens to make us unable to have moral disagreements because it seems to make us speak past one another. This part of the chapter also evaluates relativist responses to this disagreement problem that rely on semantic opacity, disagreement in attitude, metalinguistic negotiations, and truth relativism. The chapter finally concludes by considering future directions of research in this area.

Introduction

There is a considerable amount of moral disagreement both within individual societies and between them.[1] For example, Americans are split almost equally when it comes to the moral rightness and wrongness of abortion, same sex marriage, euthanasia, and so on. Similarly, different cultures disagree about women's rights, the correct level of taxation, the treatment of animals, and many other issues. To what extent these intra- and inter-cultural differences in the moral standards people accept actually exist is an empirical question, and thus mainly to be investigated with the empirical methods of social sciences and anthropology.

  There is a family of views in moral philosophy that is often confused with the previous empirical cultural differences thesis. These views are called versions of moral relativism. They tend to agree that (i) there is no objectively correct universal moral standard and (ii) whether a given action is right or wrong depends in some way on the moral standard accepted by some individual or a group. Philosophers then disagree about what the connection is between the cultural differences as an

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[1] For an overview of some of the empirical data, see Rowland (2021, §1.2).

empirical claim and moral relativism as an ethical view. Some argue that we can construct a powerful argument for moral relativism starting from the cultural differences, whereas others claim that moral relativism is implausible because it makes moral disagreements impossible. These two claims are the focus of this chapter.

The next section begins from a contemporary version of moral relativism and the argument from disagreement for it. The following section then explains the problem of disagreement, and it also considers four recent relativist responses to that challenge. The conclusion finally considers where the debate is likely to go next.

Moral Relativism and the Argument from Disagreement

Let's begin from a version of contemporary moral relativism inspired by James Dreier (1990), who called his view 'speaker relativism' (often the view is also called contextualism). According to this view, moral predicates such as '… is right', '…ought…', '…is good' and so on are incomplete expressions. Thus, on their own, they do not have a semantic value or a referent. There is no property that would be ascribed to actions, outcomes, characters and the like merely by the sentences of the form 'X is good' themselves. Rather, the linguistic meaning of these predicates consists of a 'character', which can be understood as a rule determining how the predicate in question acquires its semantic value and referent in a context of utterance, the situation in which the predicate is used to make an assertion.[2]

We need one more element to make this view relativist. According to the relativist versions of the previous view, the character of the moral predicates is such that, in a context of utterance, the attitudes of the speaker or her community (the moral standard she or her community accepts) fix the reference of the moral predicate used to a specific property. Thus, according to the speaker relativist views, when Ann utters the sentence 'eating meat is wrong' in a context, her own attitudes determine which property her utterance ascribes to the actions of eating meat.[3] If, for example, her own moral standard forbids actions that cause unnecessary suffering to sentient beings, her wrongness utterance ascribes that very property to meat eating.

In contrast, according to the group relativist versions, in the context of utterance, the moral standard of Ann's community determines which property of meat eating she is talking about when she calls those actions wrong (Wong 1984; Copp 1995). There are also more flexible views according to which the character of the moral predicates is such that sometimes the attitudes of the speaker fix the reference in a context, sometimes the attitudes of the community, and sometimes even some other moral standards can be salient (Finlay 2014; Silk 2016). The key consequence of these theories is that asserting the very same sentence can have different content, it can express a different proposition, in different contexts where the speakers accept different moral standards. As a result, the same moral sentence can be true in the context of one speaker or a community and false in the context of another.[4]

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[2] Dreier's view is inspired by Kaplan's (1989) work on indexicals.

[3] Dreier's (1990) own view is of this type.

[4] This is a hallmark of moral relativism (Lyons 1976).

Can we then argue for this relativist view by starting from the premise that different individuals and groups accept different moral standards? At least not directly as the following is obviously a flawed argument:

> P1: There exists intra- and inter-cultural moral disagreement.
>
> P2: If there exists intra- and inter-cultural moral disagreement, then moral relativism is true.
>
> C: Moral relativism is true.

Even if this argument has the valid form of a *modus ponens*, P2 is questionable. There is disagreement, for example, about the shape of the Earth and yet we do not conclude from it that our planet's shape is relative to the opinions of those who disagree about it. This means that, if we are to have an argument for moral relativism from disagreement, we need a better bridge than P2 to get from P1 to the conclusion that relativism is true. There are two main ways to build such a bridge: one metaphysical and one epistemic (McGrath 2007).

The metaphysical arguments from disagreement have the form of an argument to the best explanation (Mackie 1977, 36–7). According to them, relativists can provide a better explanation of the existence of the wide-spread cultural differences than the realists who believe in universal objective moral facts. The key challenge for the defenders of this argument is then to explain just why the realist explanations of the existing disagreements would be worse than the relativist explanations.

The relativists can begin from the view that moral judgments are reflections of our societies' ways of life, of the ways in which particular societies have historically come to adapt to their environments.[5] We are then immersed in these ways of life through upbringing, a process that shapes our desires, emotions, habits, and other mental states that then lead us to have our moral intuitions. This theory of the origins of our moral judgments naturally predicts that there will be moral disagreement, and it also nicely fits the relativist idea that moral properties are not anything over and above the moral standards we accept, and so in this sense our judgments will not be mistaken.

In contrast, the realists are forced to think of our moral judgments as attempts to represent accurately the objective, universal moral order. They then have to claim that, in the disagreement cases, even if both parties are trying to acquire true moral beliefs the best they can, one side of the disagreement must be mistaken. Their way of attempting to access the moral facts must be flawed in some way. This can be argued to be a worse explanation for two reasons. Firstly, it would not predict that there would be as much moral disagreement as there actually is given that it is unclear why so many people and cultures would be so bad at accessing the moral facts. Secondly, because realists typically think that their own moral beliefs are true in the disagreement cases, there seems to be something objectionably smug about insisting that other people's and societies' ways of doing moral inquiry are flawed.

The epistemic version of the argument from disagreement, in contrast, argues that if moral realism were true our moral beliefs could not be justified. This is a problem for the realists because they

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[5] Here I follow Rowland (2021, 27).

usually want to reject moral scepticism, and thus argue that we can generally know what the objective, universal moral facts are. This means that, if the epistemic argument works, the realists must choose between two ways of giving up their view, between scepticism and relativism.

The epistemic arguments begin from reliabilist views of justification and more specifically from the so-called safety principle (Prichard 2007). This is the thought that your belief that p is justified when you formed it by relying on a belief-formation mechanism that produces the belief that p only in situations in which p really is the case. This principle relies on the idea that a given true belief is justified when it is not an accident that you hold the belief based on your cognitive agency in situations in which it is true and only in them. After all, this would guarantee that you could not have easily had a false belief in your actual situation.

The realists then have to give an account of our moral-belief formation mechanisms. They can either claim that our moral beliefs have their origin in our ways of life as explained above, or they can describe some other independent mechanism of rational reflection or moral perception. The problem is that, whichever way the realists go here, the previous epistemic principle and widespread moral disagreement together undermine the justification of our moral beliefs (assuming that realism is true). This is because presumably the different sides in both intra- and inter-cultural moral disagreements rely on similar belief-formation mechanisms. In these disagreements, according to realism one side must have false beliefs. Because of this, the relevant belief-formation mechanisms must be producing both true and false beliefs, and so these mechanisms cannot be reliable. This seems to entail that our moral beliefs cannot be justified assuming that moral realism is true. In contrast, given that according to the relativists moral facts are relative to the moral standards of different societies and so both communities are able to have true beliefs in the disagreement cases, for the relativists the disagreements will not challenge the justification of our moral beliefs as our moral belief-formation mechanisms would still be reliable. Thus, the argument is that, if you really want to avoid moral scepticism, you better be a relativist.[6]

There are, of course, many realist responses to these arguments. It has been argued (i) that moral disagreements are based on empirical disagreements about matters of fact or on the differences between the circumstances in which moral judgments are made (Brink 1989, 200), (ii) that the expert opinions of professional ethicists tend to agree about moral facts and so the conflicting folk views have no evidential value (Parfit 2011, 554), and (iii) that many moral disagreements are based on various self-interested and emotional biases (Enoch 2009; Parfit 2011, 553), or (iv) failures to recognise degrees of wrongness and moral indeterminacy (Shafer-Landau 1994; Parfit 2011, 555 and 562).[7] The realists then hope that these observations can together explain why there is so much moral disagreement. The realists also hope that once we exclude the moral beliefs that are 'tainted' in the previous ways, there is so little disagreement left that the reliability of our best moral belief-formation processes can no longer be questioned.

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[6] For an argument with this structure, see Street (2006).

[7] For an illuminative discussion of these responses, see Rowland (2021, ch. 2).

The Disagreement Problem

It has been known for over a century that moral disagreements are also a problem for the relativists (Moore 1912, ch. 3). To see why, let's assume that Ann and Ben both accept different moral standards and belong to different moral communities. The moral standard of Ann's vegetarian culture forbids eating meat, whereas Ben's meat-eater culture permits doing so.

Consider then the following exchange:

> *Ann:* Eating meat is wrong!

> *Ben:* No, it's not! There is nothing wrong about eating met.

According to relativism, when Ann uses the word 'wrong' in (1) her moral standard fixes the reference of that word to a certain property P, where P could, for example, be the property of making sentient beings suffer. This is why the content of Ann's utterance is the proposition that eating meat is P. Likewise, when Ben uses the same word 'wrong' in (2), his moral standard too fixes the reference of that word to a property. Given that Ben accepts a different moral standard, this will be a different property Q (say, being what a fully virtuous agent would not do). Ben's utterance thus expresses the proposition that eating meat is not Q.

The problem is that relativism is making Ann and Ben talk past one another. Ann's assertion has the content that eating meat is P, but Ben's utterance cannot deny that this proposition is true. By saying that eating meat is not wrong, he can only assert that eating meat lacks some other property Q. This makes the disagreement disappear. It's not the case that one speaker is accepting and another rejecting the very same content but rather they both assert contents that can be true simultaneously.

They should even be able to recognise this. If relativism were true, Ben should be able to respond (Schroeder 2008, 17):

> (3): *Ben*: #What you say is true, but eating meat is not wrong.

According to the relativist analysis, with the first part of (3) Ben would grant that eating meat is P, which was the content of Ann's utterance. Yet, Ben could then assert with the second part that eating meat is not Q. However, (3) is an absurd thing to say, and so something must have gone wrong with the relativist account, or so the critics claim. Next, I will outline the different ways in which the relativists have tried to respond to this challenge.

Semantic Opacity

The first response denies that there even is a challenge.[8] It begins from the idea that semantic facts can be opaque, because we, as ordinary speakers, can be confused about which exact proposition is the content of an utterance of a given sentence. For example, many people do not know that when they utter the sentence 'X refutes Y' the content of their assertion is the proposition that X proves Y wrong.

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[8] See Finlay (2017, 202).

This idea allows relativists to argue that their account of the semantic facts (for example, of the content of the Ann's and Ben's utterances above) is correct. The content of those utterances really is respectively that eating meat is P and eating meat is not Q, where these contents can be true simultaneously (and so there is no content-based disagreement). Yet, because these semantic facts are opaque to us, we just mistakenly have the intuition that Ann and Ben disagree even if in reality they do not. We are just so used to there being a disagreement when sentences of that form get asserted in non-moral contexts that we mistakenly assume a content-based disagreement in the moral contexts too. This, however, is confused and so there is no problem of disagreement to solve.

I do not believe that this is a sufficient response for three reasons. Firstly, the relativists who respond in this way owe us an 'error theory', an explanation of why specifically these semantic facts are opaque and why we are mistakenly inclined to think that moral disputes are genuine disagreements (Sodoma 2021, §3.1). The solutions discussed below will go some way towards providing such a theory. They try to show how in the alleged disagreement cases there are other kinds of "non-content-based conflicts" that are easy to mistake for genuine disagreements. In this respect, the strategies the relativists have used to respond to the problem of disagreement are mutually compatible.

There are also two more general issues. Firstly, the principle of charity is a widely accepted methodological principle in semantic theorising (Davidson 1984). According to it, when we interpret what speakers mean by their utterances, we should, as far as possible, adopt interpretations that make other speakers overall rational, logical, and have true beliefs. If we accept this principle, then (unless it's the last resort) we should avoid assigning the utterances of ordinary speakers content that makes them semantically confused.

My last concern is that the previous response threatens to make relativists inconsistent in their attitudes towards the evidential value of folk intuitions. The previous section mentioned how the realists have claimed that the cultural differences in the folk moral views do not support relativism because ordinary people are often confused whereas the less confused moral experts will disagree less (Parfit 2011, 554). The relativists, in response, have rejected that claim and defended the idea that folk moral intuitions are not confused but rather should be accepted at face value. In this situation, it seems inconsistent then go on to defend the idea that, even if the previous first-order moral intuitions should be assumed to have evidential value, the corresponding intuitions about disagreements can be set aside as confused.

Disagreement in Attitude

The second solution grants that there is no content-based disagreement in cases like Ann's and Ben's conversation. It then observes that Ann's and Ben's utterances at least pragmatically imply that they have conflicting motivational attitudes (Dreier 1990). When Ann asserts that eating meat is wrong, she knows that this means that meat eating has a certain property determined by against what kind of actions her own moral standard is. This is why we can expect that she is against eating meat, that she has some motivational, practical attitudes against doing those actions. For the same reason, we can expect that Ben has either positive motivating attitudes or at least an attitude of indifference towards eating meat when he claims that eating meat is not wrong.

This then allows the relativists to borrow an account of moral disagreement from the expressivists according to whom moral utterances conventionally express motivational attitudes in virtue of their meaning. One early defender of this view, Charles Stevenson (1944, 2–8), argued that moral disagreements are not content-based factual disagreements but rather practical 'disagreements in attitude'. They are like the disagreement we have when we disagree about where to go for dinner together, whether to go to a Chinese or a Thai restaurant. This is a genuine disagreement, and yet it is a disagreement in conflicting plans that cannot be both satisfied simultaneously rather than a disagreement over matters of fact. The relativists can then claim that, similarly, Ann's and Ben's disagreement consists of conflicting motivational practical attitudes (such as preferences or plans) rather than conflicting beliefs about what is the case (as their beliefs that meat-eating is P and not-Q can be both true).[9]

This account faces several problems. More generally, even if expressivists often rely on the previous account of moral disagreements, it is difficult for them to get the details right, and so the relativists will inherit these problems. The disagreement in attitude account seems to predict both too many and too few disagreements. Firstly, it seems that we can have clashes of practical of attitudes even when we do not disagree. For example, imagine that two people want to rent the same flat (Ridge 2013, 46–7). Those people will have a clash of attitudes concerning who is to live in the flat, but there is no disagreement between them about anything. Secondly, with respect to the too few disagreements, imagine a case where both Alice and Brad have a headache when there is only one painkiller left in the house (Dreier 2009, 105). Let us assume that Alice believes that people ought to use painkillers to alleviate pain whenever they can, whereas Brad believes that everyone should always just tough it out. Here there is a disagreement between Alice and Ben about what ought to be done even if there is no clash of attitudes between them as they both can perfectly well prefer that Alice takes the only painkiller they have. These cases are not a knock-down argument against the disagreement in attitude accounts, but they indicate that it is difficult to find suitable practical attitudes and conflicts between them to explain all disagreements.

The more unique problem for the relativists is the problem that, as already explained, Ben should not be able to respond to Ann by saying that 'What you say is true, but eating meat is not wrong!'. The problem is that we would expect the expression 'what you say…' to pick out, as it does usually, the proposition which Ann asserted (that eating meat is P). Yet, that proposition really can be true and so Ben should be able to say that it is. But, given how absurd Ben's response would be, that expression must function in some other way in this context. It must pick out some other proposition, for example, the one that Ben would express himself by uttering the same sentence 'Eating meat is wrong!' that Ann uttered (i.e., the proposition that eating meat is Q).[10] This would explain why it would not make sense for Ben to say that 'what you say is true'. Yet, it seems questionably *ad hoc* to claim that, even if 'what you say…' in all other situations picks out the proposition asserted by the previous speaker, here it switches to picking out some other proposition instead (Suikkanen 2019, §5).

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[9] See Dreier (2009, 109), Björnsson and Finlay (2010, 27–8), and Finlay (2014, ch. 8).

[10] See Björnsson and Finlay (2010, 20–1).

Metalinguistic Negotiations

The third response too grants that there is no content-based disagreement between Ann and Ben: the content of Ann's utterance is that eating meat is P and so the content of Ben's response that eating meat is not Q does not conflict with the proposition she asserted to be true. Yet, even if there is no genuine disagreement between Ann and Ben, there is at least some kind of a dispute between them that calls for an explanation.

The third response is then based on the idea that by uttering moral sentences we do not merely assert that certain propositions are true but rather we can imply other things too. By uttering (2), Ben can, for example, in practice be just trying to get Ann to accept the same omnivorous moral norms as his moral community. If Ben's attempt in this were successful, this would also change the context of Ann's future moral utterances. Given her new moral standard, her attitudes would now come to fix the reference of the term 'wrong' in her usage to the same property Q that Ben is talking about, and so Ann and Ben would be able to agree and disagree in the genuine content-based way in the future. Also, if Ben is right that eating meat is not Q, getting Ann to adopt his moral standard that forbids Q actions would also change Ann's behaviour to conform to the meat-eating moral standards both would now share.

The crux of this response thus is that the disputes that on surface might look like genuine moral disagreements should deep-down be understood as implicit negotiations concerning which moral standards we are to accept both to govern our behaviour and to function as the context that determines which properties are the referents of the moral terms when we use them.[11] Yet, even if such negotiations are sometimes worth having, there are reasons to question whether the view captures what is going on in the intuitive moral disagreements.

Firstly, *prima facie* the proposal seems to mis-locate what is at issue in the relevant disagreements (Finlay 2017, 192–3). To us, Ann and Ben seem to disagree about the moral status of meat-eating rather than about which moral standards they are to accept as the shared context of their exchange. The defenders of the view can, of course, claim that this, again, is an opaque semantic fact ordinary speakers can easily be mistaken about, and there is some evidence that this is sometimes the case (Plunkett and Sundell 2013, 14–5). When I tell my son that 'That's a lot of ice cream!' and he replies that 'It's not!', this may initially seem to me like a size-disagreement but, on reflection, we really are disagreeing about what standard should apply to 'a lot' in the context.

Secondly, and more problematically, the proposal seems to entail both too few and too many disagreements (Finlay 2017, §8.1; Suikkanen 2019, §3.5). To see the first problem, let's assume that eaves-droppers Charlie and Daniel, who both share Ben's moral standard, are listening to Ann's and Ben's conversation. Charlie then says to Daniel that 'Ben is right: eating meat is not wrong!'. Here, Charlie intuitively disagrees with Ann but it's not clear how the metalinguistic proposal could make sense of this. Charlie cannot be negotiating with Ann about which moral standard to accept given that Charlie is not even talking to her, nor can he be negotiating with Daniel because they both know already that they share the same moral standard.

Similarly, the account also seems to predict too many disagreements. Consider a case in which Ann's moral standard (Avoid making sentient beings suffer!) and Ben's moral standard (Do what

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[11] This proposal has been defended by Plunkett and Sundell (2013), Khoo and Knobe (2016), Silk (2016, 125–6), Bolinger (2020), and Sodoma (2021).

a fully virtuous agent would do!) converge. Maybe both would, for example, require helping a drowning child. Here intuitively Ann and Ben agree that you ought to save the child. However, the metalinguistic proposal seems unable to accommodate this agreement. At the level of content, Ann and Ben are talking past one another: Ann is claiming that saving the child is R and Ben that it is T, but these propositions have nothing to do with one another. The agreement cannot be at the metalinguistic level either given that Ann and Ben accept conflicting standards. Furthermore, because of this the proposal threatens to make Ann and Ben disagree even when they really agree.[12] This too suggests that it is difficult to make the metalinguistic negotiation proposal extensionally adequate.

Truth Relativism

The final proposal rejects the idea that the moral standards of speakers make a difference to the content of their moral utterances. According to the truth relativists, an assertion of a moral sentence such as 'eating meat is wrong!' always has the same content no matter who utters the sentence or what moral standard they accept. The defenders of this proposal, however, claim that the moral standard accepted by a person or a group constitutes a context of assessment.[13] This entails that the given moral sentence will never be true, full stop, but rather always merely true relative to a context of assessment constituted by a standard.

To see how this view works, let us return to Ann and Ben. According to truth relativism, when Ann utters the sentence 'Eating meat is wrong!' the content of her utterance does not in any way depend on her attitudes. As a consequence, when Ben utters the negation of that sentence, 'Eating meat is not wrong!', the content of that assertion will be the direct negation of the proposition that was the content of Ann's utterance. This is why, on this view, there is supposed to be a genuine content-based disagreement between them, which the defenders of the view take to be an important advantage of the view.

Yet, on this view, it can be that both Ann's utterance is true relative to her context of assessment (i.e., her vegetarian moral standard) and Ben's utterance is true relative to his context of assessment (i.e., his omnivorous standard). As a result, the view can also acknowledge that the disagreement between Ann and Ben is faultless. Neither Ann nor Ben is making a mistake relative to the standards of assessments that are relevant for assessing their utterances. Many who have relativist sympathies will find this consequence that moral disagreements are faultless appealing.

Yet, it has been argued that this proposal still fails to accommodate the intuitive moral disagreements (Francén Olinder 2010, 26; Dreier 2009). This is because the most developed way for the truth relativists to make sense of the moral propositions (the invariable content which everyone's moral assertions will have) is in terms of centred possible worlds (see Egan (2006)).[14] According to this suggestion, the proposition that eating meat is wrong is the set of all the centred possible worlds that have at their centre an individual, a time, and one of the many moral standards that forbids eating meat in their worlds. When you believe or assert this proposition, you locate

[12] In response, the relativists could suggest that not advocating for different actions or standards in a context is sufficient for agreement, but there is a worry that this would generate too many moral agreements.

[13] See Kölbel (2002), Brogaard (2008), Beebe (2010), and McFarlane (2014),

[14] For other alternatives and their problems, see Evers (2021), and for relativist responses to those concerns Wright (2021).

yourself at the centre of one of these centred worlds. You are thinking or saying that the moral standard at the centre of the centred world where you are forbids eating meat in that world. This then nicely explains how the proposition that eating meat is wrong is true relative to you when the moral standard you accept forbids eating meat (and how that proposition is false relative to those whose moral standards authorise eating meat).

The concern, however, is that, even if formally speaking this account can explain the invariable content of the moral utterances, it again makes the disagreements disappear. The alleged problem is that Ann's utterance (1) on this view locates Ann at the centre of one of the centred worlds the moral standard of which forbids meat eating. Yet, according to this analysis, Ben's utterance in contrast locates him at a centre of a centred world the moral standard of which authorises meat eating. The unfortunate consequence of this, however, seems to be that both are again asserting things about themselves, their own location at the centred worlds, and their own moral perspectives in a way that makes them talk past one another and say things that are mutually compatible. In effect, Ann can agree that eating meat is not forbidden when you consider things from Ben's perspective, and Ben can agree that it is wrong relative to Ann's perspective, and so the disagreement has again disappeared.[15]

Conclusion: Future Directions

This chapter has outlined the recent debates concerning moral relativism and moral disagreement. These debates will continue in two directions. Firstly, the more traditional arguments from disagreement and the problem of disagreement will continue to be debated. The realist explanations of how common actual moral disagreement are will certainly be developed further, and the relativists will also find new ways for trying to make sense of moral disagreements.[16]

We can also expect more radical developments. More recently, we have obtained more fine-grained data about folk intuitions concerning moral disagreement (Finlay 2017, 189). Firstly, it suggests that, even if the intuitions about real disagreements in the inter-cultural cases are widespread, in some of cases it is common to judge that neither side's judgments are 'wrong' or 'incorrect' (Khoo and Knobe 2016). This suggests that at least some, though not all, moral disagreements are believed to be faultless. Secondly, there is some evidence of intuitive asymmetries, of cases where we intuitively think that A disagrees with B even if B does not disagree with A (ibid., 30). The standard content-based accounts of disagreement, however, require symmetrically inconsistent attitudes.[17] Finally, there are also some experimental findings that indicate that speakers use, for example, vocal stress to indicate non-content-based disagreements in moral cases (Bolinger 2020).

We can then expect that, in the future, there will be more systematic relativist attempts to provide more comprehensive and unified relativist theories to fit all the new data. Such accounts will require

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[15] For a relativist attempt to address these concerns about disagreements, see MacFarlane (2007) and for a discussion and objections see Dreier (2009, §7) who recommends that truth-relativists too should adopt the disagreement in attitude account.

[16] I explored a content-based strategy based on proposition clouds in Suikkanen (2019).

[17] On this basis, we may have to reconsider what disagreements are, and the results may turn out to be more amenable to the relativists too (Bex-Priestley and Shemmer 2017).

an overall package that consists of (i) a semantic account that explains how moral utterances acquire their content in different contexts as this will determine what content-based disagreements there will be, (ii) an account of the pragmatic effects of moral utterances as this will specify which disagreements can be understood as non-content based and in what ways, and (iii) a view of which intuitions about disagreements are evidentially significant and which can be set aside based on semantic opacity. Even if many philosophers have started to make progress towards such unified accounts, there is still way to go.

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