

Editorial Note

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Accepted: 19 July 2015 / Published online: 25 July 2015
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The first six articles are part of a special issue resulting from the 2014-conference of the British Society for Ethical Theory, held in Cambridge, Fitzwilliam College. In the first article, *Adina Preda* argues that a putative conflict between negative rights (to non-interference) and positive rights (to socio-economics goods) is not a genuine conflict. While the two rights are both valid, no right is infringed if positive rights are enforced. Welfare or socio-economic rights can be included in a set of general rights without generating conflicts with negative rights to non-interference; this might clear some space for arguments that favour egalitarian redistribution. *Adrienne M. Martin* continues with her article on the emotional attitude, love. At the heart of her Kantian moral psychology is a distinction between rational and subrational motives, and the thesis that interpersonal emotional attitudes like love are governed by a norm of respect. She shows that an analysis of love that relies on this psychology, which she calls ‘the incorporation conception’ of love, tightly fits with paradigmatic cases of romantic love, reveals both the continuities and differences between romantic and other forms of love, and also explicates our ambivalence about certain cases.

Benjamin Sachs proposes that moral requirements are *directly* grounded by non-normative facts. In this view, moral reasons do exist, and they’re grounded by moral requirements. Sachs defends this view against the objections (1) that it must deny that one is generally blameworthy for having violated a moral requirement, (2) that it implies the existence of genuine moral dilemmas, (3) that it runs counter to an obviously true view of how moral deliberation should work, and (4) that it cannot explain why it *feels* as though figuring about what one is morally required to do often takes the form of thinking about what one’s moral reasons are. *Mark Nelson* argues that utilitarianism cannot accommodate a basic sort of moral judgement that many people want to make. He raises a real-life example of shockingly bad behaviour and asks what can the utilitarian say about it. He concedes that the utilitarian can say that this behaviour caused pain to the victim; that pain is bad; that the agent’s behaviour was impermissible; even that the agent’s treatment of the victim was vicious. However, there is still one thing the utilitarian *cannot* say, namely that the agent *wronged the victim*, that they violated *her*. In her

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article about Kant and moral demandingness, *Alice Pinheiro Walla* explains why Kant thought that imperfect duty must allow latitude for choice and argues that we must understand the necessary space for pursuing one's own happiness as *entailed* by Kant's justification of one's duty to promote other's happiness. Nevertheless, becoming *worthy of happiness* has always priority over one's own happiness, even when circumstances are such that we cannot secure our own happiness without seriously neglecting more pressing needs of other persons. She concludes that Kant's moral theory calls for complementation by the political and juridical domain.

Rafe McGregor's aim in his article is to demonstrate that Francis Hutcheson's moral sense theory offers a satisfactory account of moral perception, and that the existence of a sixth sense, as suggested by Hutcheson, is not implausible. He discusses three objections to Robert Cowan and Robert Audi's theories of evaluative perception: the Directness Objection to Cowan's ethical perception and the aesthetic and perceptual model objections to Audi's moral perception. McGregor examines Hutcheson's moral sense theory and deals with the unresolved issues in Hutcheson's account by recourse to Charles Darwin's evolutionary perspective on the moral sense. Shelly Kagan (1998) contends that it is reasonable to assume that unforeseen good and bad consequences roughly balance out and can be largely disregarded. Using a statistical argument, *Samuel Elgin* demonstrates in the last contribution to the special issue, that Kagan's assumption is almost always false. An act's foreseeable consequences are an extremely poor indicator of the goodness of its overall consequences. Acting based on foreseeable consequences is barely more reliably good than acting completely at random.

Earl Spurgin's subject is *Schadenfreude*, the emotion we experience when we obtain pleasure from others' misfortunes. Philosophers typically view it, and the disposition to experience it, as moral failings. Spurgin defends *Schadenfreude*, but on grounds that overcome the deficiencies of two recent defences. These defences can account for those feelings only by holding that they are mistaken or misguided. In opposition to those who view *Schadenfreude* as a moral failing, Spurgin argues that it is morally permissible unless it is part of a causal chain that produces an immoral act. The moral permissibility of the emotion is necessary in order for individuals to have the emotional freedom that, in turn, is necessary for their well-being. In his article, *Christopher Morgan-Knapp* charts the prospects of a nonconsequentialist alternative to a consequentialist approach to precaution, using risk-cost-benefit analysis. He argues that a contractualism focused on *ex ante* consent can motivate the following regulatory criterion: regulators should permit a socially beneficial risky activity only if no one can be expected to be made worse off by it. *Mollie Gerver* discusses consent for data on consent. Paradoxically, those who cannot give informed consent for the disclosure of their personal data on an intervention may have been especially ill-informed about the repercussions of the intervention. In such instances, should researchers ever use the data and disclose the data in their research? In an attempt to demonstrate when this dilemma may be relevant, and how it may be solved, Gerver presents a real-world case of this dilemma in her own empirical research on refugees who agreed to repatriate to their countries of origin from Israel. She considers what theories on consent, if any, can help us resolve this dilemma.

Ethicists have become increasingly sceptical about the importance of empathy in producing moral concern for others, says *T.J. Kaspenbauer*. One of the main claims made by empathy sceptics is a psychological thesis: empathy is not the primary psychological process responsible for producing moral concern. In his article, he investigates six different empirical claims commonly made about empathy toward animals, and finds all six claims to be problematic. Kaspenbauer reviews evidence indicating that other moral emotions, particularly anger, are

more strongly engaged with producing moral concern for animals, and are thus more capable of achieving various normative aims in animal ethics. His conclusion is that empathy should lose its currently privileged place. *J.P. Marina* and *Chris Surprenant* respond to the recent situationist critique of practical rationality and decision-making. According to that critique, empirical evidence indicates that our choices (1) are governed by morally irrelevant situational factors and not durable character traits, and (2) rarely result from overt rational deliberation. This critique is taken to indicate that popular moral theories in the Western tradition (i.e., virtue ethics, Kantian ethics, and utilitarian ethics) are descriptively deficient, even if normatively plausible or desirable. Marina and Surprenant argue that the situationist findings regarding the sources of, or influences over, our moral agency do not reflect durable features of human nature, and claim that these findings are a by-product of a deficient approach to moral education. In the last article of this issue, *Duncan Purvis*, *Ryan Jenkins* and *Bradley Strawser* discuss what is morally wrong with using so-called ‘autonomous weapon systems’ (AWS), that will someday purportedly have the ability to make life and death targeting decisions ‘on their own.’ Many have strong moral intuitions against such weapons, and public concern over AWS is growing. Despite the strong and widespread sentiments against such weapons, however, proffered philosophical arguments against AWS are often found lacking in substance. The objections that Purvis, Jenkins and Strawser develop, focus on whether AWS can ever make genuine moral judgements, and on the threat for meaningful human life if moral judgements were left to AWS because they turned out to be more sophisticated.