

Editorial

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A central issue in political philosophy is the justification of authority. In the article that opens this issue, Christopher King identifies strands of reasoning underlying several theories of democratic authority. He shows why each of them fails to adequately explain or justify it. Yet, he does not claim that democratic authority cannot be justified. Furthermore, he sketches an argument for a perspective on the justification of democratic authority that would effectively respond to three problems not resolved by alternative theories—the problem of the expert, the problem of specificity, and the problem of deference. Successfully resolving these problems is at least evidence for the viability of a justification of democratic authority. The perspective that King draws, integrates procedural concerns with those about the quality of democratic outcomes. It shows that democratic authority, if there is such a thing, requires reliable democratic procedures as the only sort citizens could rationally accept.

In 2010 Dietmar von der Pfordten published his *Normative Ethik*. In his article in this issue, he makes his ideas accessible for an English speaking readership. In his book and in the article, Von der Pfordten is looking for a third way in normative ethics, between consequentialism or utilitarianism and deontology or Kantianism. To find such a third way in normative ethics, he argues, one has to analyze the elements of these classical theories and to look if they are justified. He contends that an adequate normative ethics has to contain the following five elements: (1) normative individualism, i. e., the view that in the last instance moral norms and values can only be justified by reference to the individuals concerned, as its basis; (2) consideration of the concerns and interests—aims, desires, needs, strivings—of individuals insofar as these have a justificatory function; (3) a pluralism of references of these concerns and hence of moral norms and values to all possible elements of actions; (4) the necessity of a principle of aggregation and weighing with regard to these concerns; (5) finally, as a central principle of aggregation and weighing, the principle of relative reference to self and others, operating as a generalizing meta-principle that guides the application of concrete principles and decisions.

In several publications, John Martin Fischer and Mark Ravizza argue that moral responsibility involves a kind of control over one's actions which they call "guidance control." This kind of control does not require an agent's ability to do something different from what he

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actually does, but instead requires only that the actual process leading to the action be responsive in some suitable way to the reasons that the agent has for acting. In his article, James D. Steadman offers, after summarizing this view, the following two innovations to Fischer and Ravizza's view: He argues, first, that the level of control required for moral responsibility (which he calls "regular reasons-responsiveness") is much stronger than what the authors' view allows for; and second, he gives a common-sense account of the kinds of motivational mechanism relevant to moral responsibility. Steadman argues that with these innovations, Fischer and Ravizza's view allows us to easily answer some counterexamples that appear in the current literature on moral responsibility.

Don Marquis (1989) has argued that most abortions are immoral, for the same reason that killing you or me is immoral: abortion deprives the fetus of a valuable future (FLOA). A rival account is Jeff McMahan's (2002), time-relative interest account of the wrongness of killing (TRIA). According to this account, an act of killing is wrong to the extent that it deprives the victim of future value and the relation of psychological unity would have held between the victim at the time of death and herself at a later time if she had lived. In his article, Peter Nichols argues that the TRIA supposedly has two chief advantages over Marquis' FLOA. First, unlike the FLOA, the TRIA does not rely on the controversial thesis that identity is what matters in survival. Second, the TRIA yields more plausible verdicts about cases. Nichols argues that advocates of the TRIA have failed to establish its superiority to the FLOA, for two reasons. First, the two views are on a par with respect to the thesis that identity is what matters in survival. Second, Marquis' FLOA does not yield the counterintuitive implications about cases that advocates of the TRIA have attributed to it, and the TRIA yields its own share of implausible judgments about cases.

Can outcome equality (say, in welfare) ever be unjust? Shlomi Segall thinks that, despite the extensive inquiry into the nature of luck egalitarianism in recent years, this question is curiously under-explored. Leading luck egalitarians pay little attention to the issue of unjust equalities, and when they do, they appear not to speak in one voice. To facilitate the inquiry into the potential injustice of equalities, Segall introduces two rival interpretations of egalitarianism in his article: the responsibility view, which may condemn equalities as unjust (when they reflect unequal levels of personal responsibility); and, the non-responsibility view, which does not. He then teases out the implications of these two views, in the hope of establishing that the latter is at least as plausible as the former. Segall thus establishes that the egalitarian ideal can be plausibly formulated in a way that condemns only (certain) inequalities but never equalities, and that this formulation is both coherent and attractive.

Most philosophers agree that if a moral agent is incapable of performing some act ϕ because of a physical incapacity, then they do not have a reason to ϕ . Most also claim that if an agent is incapable of ϕ -ing due to a psychological incapacity, brought about by, for example, an obsession or phobia, then this does not preclude them from having a reason to ϕ . This is because the 'ought implies can' principle is usually interpreted as a claim about physical, rather than psychological, capacities. In her article, Rosemary Lowry argues for an opposing view: if we don't have reasons to do things that we are physically incapable of doing, then neither do we have reasons to do things we are psychologically incapable of doing. She also argues that extending the 'ought implies can' principle to psychological capacities makes the principle more attractive.

In her publications, Julia Driver attacks the traditional assumption of virtue ethics that virtue requires knowledge. In his article, Michael Jeffrey Winter argues that the examples of virtues of ignorance Driver offers are not compelling and that the idea that knowledge is required for virtue has been taken to be foundational for virtue theory for good reason. He proposes that we understand the virtue of modesty as involving three conditions: 1) having

genuine accomplishments, 2) being aware of the value of these accomplishments, and 3) having a disposition to refrain from putting forward one's accomplishments. When we understand modesty this way, we can properly identify genuine cases of modesty and see how modesty requires knowledge. Something similar can be said about other alleged virtues of ignorance. With the proposal in place, we have no serious reason to think that moral virtue requires ignorance. Additionally, we have good reasons for thinking that acting virtuously requires having good intentions and that a necessary condition of having a virtue is having knowledge.

Philosophical accounts of altruism that purport to explain helping behaviour are vulnerable to empirical falsification. E.g., John Campbell argues that the Good Samaritan study adds to a growing body of evidence that helping behaviour is not best explained by appeal to altruism, thus jeopardizing those accounts. In her article, Stephanie Beardman proposes that philosophical accounts of altruism can be empirically challenged only if it is shown that altruistic motivations are undermined by normative conflict in the agent, and that the relevant studies do not provide this sort of evidence. Non-normative, purely causal, psychological factors would be empirically relevant only if the notion of altruism is broadened to include the requirement that one recognize certain situations as calling for altruism. But even in that case, the relevant studies are not designed in such a way that could threaten philosophical theories of altruism.

We sometimes decide what to do by applying moral principles to cases, but this is harder than it looks. Principles are more general than cases, and sometimes it is hard to tell whether and how a principle applies to a given case. However, says John K. Davis in the last article of this issue, sometimes two conflicting principles seem to apply to the same case. To handle these problems, we use a kind of judgement to ascertain whether and how a principle applies to a given case, or which principle to follow when two principles seem to conflict. The question that Davis raises is what we discern when we make such judgements—that is, what makes such judgements correct? The obvious answer is that they are made correct by whatever makes other moral judgements correct. However, that cannot be right, for a principle can be inconsistent with morality yet still apply in a particular way to a given case. If the principle is inconsistent with morality, then morality cannot be what we discern when we judge whether and how that principle applies to a given case. Davis offers an alternative account of what makes such judgements correct.