

## Editorial Note

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Published online: 18 October 2012

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This issue contains a selection of the papers presented at the Annual Conference of the British Society for Ethical Theory that was held from 11 to 13 July 2011 in St Anne's College, University of Oxford, and one additional paper. We are grateful to Edward Harcourt for his work as a guest-editor.

In the opening article, Abraham Graber goes into the dilemma posed by Sharon Street for the meta-ethical realist who is also committed to a Darwinian account of evolution. Either evolutionary forces have had a distorting influence on our ability to track moral properties or evolutionary forces influenced our beliefs in the direction of tracking moral properties. As Street establishes the dialectic, the anti-realist's explanation is better. Graber regards Street's paper as an instance of a broader anti-realist strategy. He attempts to show 1) that a scientific worldview and realism are compatible, and even stronger, 2) that a scientific worldview is suggestive of realism.

Alex Gregory's subject is the direction of fit of beliefs and desires. He starts with showing that both Michael Smith's account of the direction of fit of beliefs and desires and that of Lloyd Humberstone fail. While Smith argues that we explain the direction of fit of beliefs and desires by reference to a different kind of mental state: perceptions, Humberstone thinks we explain it by reference to the mental state of intentions. In both cases the view fails, partly because the third mental state is itself best understood as having a certain direction of fit. Gregory then offers his own account, according to which the difference between beliefs and desires is determined by the normative relations such states stand in. He argues that beliefs are states which we have reason to change in light of the world, whereas desires are states that give us reason to change the world.

The guiding thought behind Ward E. Jones' article is that explaining the phenomenon of beloved-induced shame can tell us something about what it means to love. Bennett Helm has recently suggested that in order to account for beloved-induced shame, we should deny the reflexivity of shame. After arguing that Helm's account is inadequate, Jones proceeds to develop an account of beloved-induced shame that rightly preserves its reflexivity. A familiar feature of love is that it involves an evaluative dependence; when I love someone,

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my well-being depends upon her life's going well. Jones argues that loving someone also involves a persistent tendency to *believe* that her life *is* going well, in the sense that she is a good person, that she is not prone to wickedness. These two features of loving—an evaluative dependence and a persistent tendency to believe in the beloved's moral goodness—provide, according to Jones, the conditions for a lover to experience shame when he discovers that his beloved has morally transgressed.

Rule consequentialism (RC) holds that the rightness and wrongness of actions is determined by an ideal moral code, i.e., the set of rules whose internalisation would have the best consequences. In his article, Leonard Kahn asks how many ideal moral codes are there supposed to be? Absolute RC holds that there is a single morally ideal code for everyone, while Relative RC holds that there are different codes for different groups or individuals. Kahn contends that Relative RC is superior because it accommodates our convictions about costless benefits. Some have charged that Relative RC threatens our convictions about the generality of moral codes and that it leads inevitably to what Brad Hooker calls “runaway relativism.” Kahn argues that Relative RC has principled reasons for stopping this imagined slide down the slippery slope.

The Humean view that some reasons for action are grounded in the desires of the agents whose reasons they are, does not go into the precise relation between the reasons and the desires that ground them. In his article, Neil Sinclair discusses two views: *promotionalism* and *motivationalism*. According to promotionalism, a desire that  $p$  grounds a reason to  $\varphi$  insofar as  $A$ 's  $\varphi$ ing helps promote  $p$ . According to motivationalism a desire that  $p$  grounds a reason to  $\varphi$  insofar as it explains why, in certain circumstances,  $A$  would be motivated to  $\varphi$ . Sinclair gives an argument favouring motivationalism, namely that promotionalism entails that agents have reasons to perform physically impossible actions, whereas motivationalism entails that there are no such reasons. Although this is a version of the ‘Too Many Reasons’ objection to promotionalism, he shows that existing responses to that problem do not transfer to the case of reasons to perform physically impossible actions. In the penultimate section Sinclair considers and rejects some objections to motivationalism made by promotionalists. His conclusion is that Humeans about reasons for action should prefer motivationalism.

Taurek cases focus on a choice between two views of permissible action, *Can Save One* and *Must Save Many*. It is argued that Taurek cases do illustrate the rationale for *Can Save One*, but, says Alan Thomas in his article, existing views do not highlight the fact that this is because they are examples of claims grounded on non-comparative justice. According to Thomas, to act to save the many solely because they form a group is to discriminate against the one for an irrelevant reason. The error lies in taking a contingency of some presentations of some Taurek cases, namely, that they involve distribution, to introduce the claims of comparative as opposed to non-comparative justice. But, says Thomas, cases of non-comparative justice can, contingently, also involve distribution. In order to settle which form of justice applies he thinks it is necessary to examine the nature of the distribution involved and the nature of “classes” to which individuals can be assigned.

In the last contribution to the BSET special issue, Fiona Woollaard starts with the observation that it is natural to think that we are required to stop polluting the environment because polluting harms the future individuals who will be faced with these problems. This natural thought faces Derek Parfit's famous Non-Identity Problem. Woollaard considers attempts to solve the Non-Identity Problem by denying that to harm someone an agent must make them worse off. Such responses, she argues, provide a partial solution to the Non-Identity Problem. They do show that we harm future individuals in a morally relevant sense by polluting. Nonetheless, this is only a partial solution. The Non-Identity Problem still suggests that our harm-based reasons not to pollute are less strong than we intuitively believe.

The issue is made complete by Adam Cureton's article on solidarity and social moral rules. The issue he raises is why we generally stick to social moral rules, even when it is more advantageous to break them. He argues that this question cannot be answered in a satisfying way if we do not realise that many of the relationships which we have with others are solidary relationships. The social moral rules are a *constitutive part* of our solidary relationships. This kind of solidarity is widespread and often valuable for its own sake quite apart from the value of other ends that are served by these relationships. When social moral rules exist and play an essential role in constituting the intrinsically valuable solidarity of a group, we have non-instrumental reasons to follow the rules because doing so is often a way of *manifesting* or *expressing* these valuable relationships by living up to their requirements. Breaking the rules can be a way of *betraying* or *letting down* our partners.