

Editorial Note

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The first part of this issue stems from the 2013 conference of the British Society for Ethical Theory, hosted by the Institute of Philosophy in London. Two papers deal with expressivism.

Nicholas Baima investigates the ramifications of ethical vagueness for expressivism. Ultimately, he argues, expressivism does not have the resources to adequately account for ethical vagueness, while cognitivism does. In his view, this demonstrates an advantage that cognitivism holds over expressivism. *Nicholas Smyth* shows how Simon Blackburn's pragmatist method enables him to respond decisively to many of the objections that expressivist analyses cannot capture some allegedly important feature of moral language. *Hallie Liberto's* subject is exploitation. She asks what conditions of vulnerability an individual must face in order that we might ever correctly say that she or he has been wrongfully exploited. She argues that Mikhail Valdman's answer that says that wrongful exploitation is the extraction of excessive benefits from someone who cannot reasonably refuse one's offer, is too narrow, but that other competing answers, like Alan Wertheimer's, are too broad. Appealing to Marilyn Frye's account of oppression and taking guidance from her inclusion and exclusion criteria, Liberto proposes a new answer. *Fiona Woollard's* article completes the special issue. She argues that discussion of the role of numbers in morality has focused too much on whom-to-rescue cases. Numbers also seem to play a role in cases like Trolley, in which we must decide whether to kill a person (or persons) as a side-effect of saving a greater number. She shows that recognition of the role of numbers in Trolley type cases has important ramifications for the debate. These cases bring out some addition implausible implications of the position of those who think that numbers do not count.

In his article, *Sven Ove Hansson* introduces the figure of a moral oracle. When presented with a situation involving an agent's choice between alternative actions, a moral oracle says what the agent is allowed to do. The oracle bases her advice on some moral theory, but the nature of that theory is not known by us. The moral oracle's test consists in determining whether a series of questions to the oracle can be so constructed that her answers will reveal which of two given types of theories she adheres to. The test can be applied to moral theories in order to determine if they differ in their recommendations for action. *Anna-Karin Margareta Andersson* discusses whether unconscious adults, as well as human fetuses, which are potential agents in the sense that they follow a "normal" path of development towards agency, have moral rights and what these rights are. She defends that (1) possession of the capacity for autonomous agency that is temporarily "blocked" by sleep or coma is sufficient in order for an

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individual to have intrinsic worth and thus, moral rights, and that (2) if possession of the blocked capacity for autonomous agency is sufficient in order for an individual to have intrinsic worth that gives her moral rights, then the presence of potential for autonomous agency is sufficient for an individual to have intrinsic worth that gives her moral rights.

With *Hugh Lazenby's* article the focus of this issue shifts to moral questions surrounding the role of the market and of property. He explores how luck egalitarianism fares in capturing our intuitions about the fairness of market-generated outcomes. Critics of luck egalitarianism have argued that it places no restrictions on what outcomes are acceptable, at least when all agents are equally situated before entering the market, and that this gives us a reason to reject it as an account of fairness. Lazenby argues that luck egalitarianism does make specific judgements about which market-generated outcomes are compatible with maintaining a fair distribution, and that luck egalitarian prescriptions accord with our pre-theoretical intuitions about the (un)fairness of certain market-generated outcomes. *Bryan Cwik* asks if labour provides strong reasons to grant intellectual property rights to intellectual labourers. His answer in the article is “yes”. Cwik offers a new view, different from existing labour theories of intellectual property, which he calls the productive capacities view. According to Cwik, this view gives us a way to make sense of the idea of labour as the basis for intellectual property rights, as well as a tool for critically evaluating existing intellectual property institutions. Whether land owners should be held liable for injuries to trespassers, is the subject of an ongoing debate. *David Faraci and Peter Martin Jaworski* maintain that the best way forward for all parties in this debate is to recognize the existence of “morally responsible liability”—of cases where owners qua owners are morally responsible for damages caused by their property. Drawing on the work of A. M. Honoré and Jeremy Waldron they argue that owners are morally responsible for damages caused by their property when and because their taking ownership of something leads to increased risk to others.

David Benatar argues that being brought into existence is always a net harm and never a benefit. *Aaron Smuts* disagrees. He argues that if you bring someone into existence who lives a life worth living, then you have not all things considered wronged her. Lives are worth living if they are high in various objective goods and low in objective bads. Contra Benatar, Smuts thinks that many lives are indeed worth living. Therefore, we have no reason to think that coming into existence is always a net harm. *Nancy E. Schaubert* asks if a virtuous person can act contrary to the virtue she possesses. Can virtues have “holes”—or blind spots—and nonetheless count as virtues? Schaubert argues that the nature of motivation required for the possession of Aristotelian virtue does not admit of blind spots because the practical reasoning of the virtuous requires both cognitive and motivational coherence. In his article, *Ramon Das* discusses the ‘beneficiary pays’ principle which, in the context of the climate change debate, holds that those who benefit from greenhouse emissions associated with industrialisation ought to pay for the costs of mitigating and adapting to their adverse effects. It is widely believed that the non-identity problem raises serious difficulties for any such claim. Das offers a new way of understanding the claim that persons in developed societies which evades the non-identity problem entirely.

Reflective equilibrium is often credited with extending the idea of accounting for the data from its familiar home in the sciences to the realm of moral philosophy. *Ben Eggleston* argues that careful consideration of the main concepts of this idea—the data to be accounted for and the kind of accounting it is appropriate to expect of a moral theory—leads to a revised understanding of the “accounting for the data” perspective as it applies to the discipline of moral theory selection. This revised understanding, Eggleston says, is in tension with reflective equilibrium and actually provides more support for the alternative method of moral theory selection that has been termed ‘practical equilibrium’.

Two articles discuss questions surrounding crime and criminals. *William Bülow* discusses whether the collateral harm of imprisonment to the close family members and children of prison inmates may give rise to special moral obligations towards them. He argues that these harms imply that imprisonment should only be used as a last resort. Where it is necessary, it should give rise to special moral obligations. *Steve Matthews* examines the belief, held by significant numbers of people, that victims of violent crime are blameworthy in so far as they imprudently place themselves in dangerous situations. His central claim is that public declarations of blame of victims are morally problematic partly because they focus responsibility away from perpetrators, and partly because they harm vulnerable citizens who, as a result of internalising such public blame, suffer unnecessary constraints on their liberty.

In the last article of this issue, *Whitley R. P. Kaufman* examines the argument that traditional morality must be rejected as speciesist in seeing humans as fundamentally distinct from other animals, after Darwin demonstrated the essential continuity of humans and animals. Kaufman shows that this argument is of dubious merit. While there is plenty of room for improving our treatment of animals, it is unlikely that these shortcomings can be blamed on scientific ignorance, or that knowledge of the theory of evolution has any clear moral implications for our treatment of animals.