1) Steven Arkonovich (Reed College) and Aaron Salomon (Reed College), 'Moral Testimony and Anti-Luck Epistemology'

Abstract: Literally, since the dawn of time, people have been arguing about the morality of abortion, stem cell research, gun control, and numerous other moral issues. These issues are, therefore, really really controversial. Thus, testimony about moral issues is an unreliable source of knowledge. Because the issues are controversial. Because people can’t agree on them. It’s like taking someone’s word that that’s really a barn over there, when most things that look like barns aren’t really barns. They’re fake barns. So the guy who thinks he knows it’s a barn is clueless. And so are so-called moral experts (except for the authors of this paper).

— Comments: Josh DiPaolo (University of Massachusetts, Amherst)

2) John Basl (Northeastern University) and Gina Schouten (Illinois State University), 'The Inadequacy of Traditional Moral Status Arguments for Abolition of Animal Consumption and Experimentation'

Abstract: Political intervention to reduce or abolish the use of non-human animals in pharmaceutical research or intensive animal agriculture is not justified. This is despite seemingly sound arguments that such practices are incommensurate with the moral status of the affected animals. While a general distinction between moral justification and political legitimacy is often recognized, many arguments for reduction or abolition of animal use ignore this distinction to their peril. In this paper we adopt a Rawlsian framework, explore the avenues available for justifying political interventions on behalf of the non-humans that suffer via the above practices, and show that such interventions are either unjustified or hopeless. This is because a general consensus over policies that better recognize the moral status of animals is unlikely and because having moral status, even very significant moral status, is insufficient for having political status, i.e., having a status such that one’s interests are to be protected independent of any consensus over those interests.

— Comments: Katie McShane (Colorado State University)

3) Anna Bergqvist (Manchester Metropolitan University), 'Moral Perception and Situated Evaluative Thought'

Abstract: Friedrich Nietzsche and Iris Murdoch both argue that perceptual experience itself, not just evaluative reports on experience (viz. judgement), can be evaluatively significant, and that the best way of making sense of this claim is to say that experience is shaped by the concepts that subjects possess and deploy as situated historical agents with a stance upon the world. This paper examines the implications of Murdoch’s distinctive conception of value experience for the possibility of a value objectivism and what is sometimes called the ‘absolute conception’, which is implicit in many contemporary debates about thick evaluative concepts and in discussions of the interrelationship between Kant, Hegel and Nietzsche in the history of philosophy more generally.

— Comments: Michael Milona (University of Southern California)

4) Brian Berkey (University of Pennsylvania), 'The Demandingness of Morality: Toward a Reflective Equilibrium'
Abstract: It’s common for philosophers to reject otherwise plausible moral theories on the ground that they are objectionably demanding, and to endorse "Moderate" alternatives. I argue that while support can be found within the method of reflective equilibrium for Moderate moral principles, it’s much more difficult than Moderates have supposed to provide support for the view that morality's demands are also Moderate. Once we draw a clear distinction between Moderate accounts of the content of moral principles, and Moderate accounts of morality's demands, we can see that defenses of Moderate views that include both of these components are subject to both methodological and substantive objections. I illustrate these objections by examining an argument for a Moderate view that has been offered by Richard Miller. The central upshot of my argument is that we must take seriously the possibility that Moderate principles, applied to well off people in circumstances like ours, imply demands that are much more extensive than Moderates typically accept.

— Comments: Alex Zambrano (University of Colorado, Boulder)

5) Sara Bernstein (Duke University), 'Ethical Puzzles of Time Travel'
Abstract: One often hears: "If time travel were possible, I would go back in time and kill Hitler, and save millions of lives." But little thought has been given to the background issues surrounding these kinds of claims: if time travel were possible, what sorts of ethical puzzles, dilemmas, and obligations would it introduce? For example, would one be morally permitted or even morally obligated to go back in time and kill Hitler? Would less dramatic interventions, such as travelling back in time to prevent a single car accident, also be subject to moral obligation?

This paper is dedicated to these and similar ethical questions that would arise were time travel to be possible. I articulate several ethical puzzles of time travel and divide them into three different categories: permissibility puzzles, obligation puzzles, and conflicts between past and future selves. In each category, I suggest that ethical problems involving time travel are not as dissimilar to parallel "normal" ethical puzzles as one might think.

— Comments: Raul Saucedo (University of Colorado, Boulder)

6) David Birks (University of Oxford), 'Benefitting Offenders'
Abstract: If it is wrong to prevent an innocent person from autonomously harming herself, is it wrong to prevent a criminal offender from doing the same? Similarly, if it is wrong to compel an innocent person to pursue activities that benefit her, contrary to her autonomy, is it also wrong to compel the same from a criminal offender? Both questions concern the permissibility of paternalistic behaviour, which is thought to be morally objectionable regardless of whether a person has committed a criminal offence. In this paper I argue that even if we hold that at least some paternalistic behaviour is impermissible, in certain cases, the same behaviour is permissible when directed towards criminal offenders. I propose that the reason paternalistic behaviour is permissible towards an offender is the same reason that inflicting intentional harm becomes permissible on an offender — namely, it is a means of administering justified punishment for her wrongdoing.

— Comments: Stephen White (Northwestern University)

7) Gunnar Björnsson (Umeå University), 'Discursivism about Disagreement in Attitude'
Abstract: Disagreement phenomena play a central role in philosophical arguments about semantics, epistemology, and metaphysics. To further our understanding of such phenomena,
this paper develops the hypothesis that disagreement in attitude (in thought, judgment, belief) consists in a certain potential for disagreement in discourse. This hypothesis, which I will call “discursivism”, is admittedly more complex than accounts taking disagreement in attitude to consist in the acceptance of contents that cannot both be true or satisfied, or that cannot be simultaneously rationally accepted. But, as I will show, it offers straightforward solutions to familiar puzzles about normative disagreement that have evaded standard non-cognitivist explanations in terms of attitudinal conflict. It also accounts for both standard disagreements in taste and a hitherto unnoticed and otherwise puzzling feature of taste disagreements, neither of which is easily accounted for by Michael Ridge’s more recent suggestion that disagreement should be understood in terms of conflicting advice.

— Comments: Mike Huemer (University of Colorado, Boulder)

8) Gwen Bradford (Rice University), 'The Badness of Pain'
Abstract: Why is pain bad? The literature abounds with discussion of wellbeing, but there is so little about what is bad for us that you would think we’re in denial about it. Surely if anything is bad, it’s pain. Yet there are instances where we do not treat pain as something that’s intrinsically bad, but only instrumentally so, and still further cases where it is not treated as bad at all and even welcomed. What is the best account to capture the badness of pain? This paper explores several possible accounts, and finally highlights the merits of what seems to be the most promising account so far.
— Comments: Chris Heathwood (University of Colorado, Boulder)

9) Joshua Brandt (University of Toronto), 'Partiality's Negative Analogue'
Abstract: We take valuable relationships, such as friendship, family, and nationality to justify ‘positive partiality’: members of these relationships acquire special permissions or obligations for preferential treatment. This paper explores the considerably less discussed idea of ‘negative partiality’, i.e. relations that involve unfavourable treatment. I develop a scheme for conceptualizing negative partiality, which I employ as a means of anticipating potential critics. After offering the common sense case for negative partiality’s justification, I note certain asymmetries between positive and negative partiality. Finally, I make a more theoretical case for negative partiality by arguing that it makes sense of the practice of forgiveness.
Comments: Anthony Cross (University of California, Los Angeles)

10) Michael Bukoski (University of Arizona), 'Moral Uncertainty and Distributive Sufficiency'
Abstract: According to the sufficiency principle, distributive justice requires that everyone have some sufficient level of resources or well-being, but inequalities above this threshold have no moral significance. I present a new argument for the sufficiency principle based on considerations of moral uncertainty. One is in a situation of moral uncertainty when one is uncertain what one morally ought to do given all the relevant nonmoral facts. I argue that plausible and uncontroversial principles for decision-making under moral uncertainty favor the sufficiency principle over views (such as some libertarian views) that forbid redistribution even to the point of sufficiency as well as those that require redistribution to the point of equality. This “uncertainty argument” has the advantage of avoiding reliance on controversial intuitions about distributive justice and also shows that the implications of moral uncertainty are not limited to applied ethics issues such as abortion and vegetarianism.
Comments: Matthew Rendall (University of Nottingham)
11) **Timothy Campbell** (Rutgers University), 'The Problem of Symmetrical Threats'
   
   *Abstract*: According to mainstream views of defensive killing, a person becomes liable to defensive killing by posing an impermissible threat of death or serious injury to others which, under certain conditions, gives others a permission to kill that person in self- or other-defense. I argue that this account of the relation between the impermissibility of a person’s threat, her liability-status, and the permissibility of others’ defensive response leads to contradiction given several plausible assumptions about symmetrically situated attackers that are naturally and morally very similar to one another.

   — *Comments*: Eric Lee (University of Colorado, Boulder)

12) **Sara Chant** (Tulane University), 'Collective Responsibility in a Mexican Standoff'
   
   *Abstract*: This paper will make use of Eli Wallach, Clint Eastwood, Lee Van Cleef, the peerless direction of Sergio Leone, and a kick-ass soundtrack by Ennio Morricone to argue against the collective agency thesis: If collective moral responsibility attaches to a collective as such, and not simply to the individuals who compose it, then the collective must be a distinct agent.

   — *Comments*: Caroline Arruda (University of Texas at El Paso)

13) **Eugene Chislenko** (University of California, Berkeley), 'The Ethics of Willpower'
   
   *Abstract*: I argue that empirical studies suggest a legitimate use of the notion of willpower, by isolating a distinct kind of fatigue in our capacity to engage in demanding activities. This result raises a question about the proper attitude toward one’s own willpower. I propose a framework for answering this question, centered on two contrasting virtues: modesty in how much one takes on, and confidence in execution. Together, this pair of virtues requires us to balance a sensitivity to limitations in our volitional capacities with a refusal to focus on those limitations. This balance requires a kind of dissociated attention which, I argue, is both psychologically attainable and desirable.

   — *Comments*: Katie Shanker (Washington University in St. Louis)

14) **Zac Cogley** (Northern Michigan University) and **Antony Aumann** (Northern Michigan University), 'Forgiveness and the Multiple Functions of Resentment'
   
   *Abstract*: The purpose of this paper is to present an empirically informed account of forgiveness. Like others, we understand forgiveness as overcoming anger with someone for what they have done. But we will provide a richer account of what anger is and does than is typically assumed. We will begin with the common idea that anger involves an appraisal of one’s interpersonal situation, namely that someone has done one wrong out of ill will. This is correct, we argue, but incomplete. In addition, anger has two additional functions. It communicates to the perceived wrongdoer that her act has been appraised as a moral wrong done out of ill will, and it sanctions the perceived wrongdoer for what she has done. We show that this account provides a better explanation of how and why forgiveness can be reasonable than alternatives that do not rely on empirically informed theories of anger.

   — *Comments*: Michael Campbell (Duke University)

15) **Eva Dadlez** (University of Central Oklahoma), 'Ink, Ethics and Expression: Philosophical Questions about Tattoos'
   
   *Abstract*: This essay offers an overview of the reasons why tattoos are philosophically interesting. Considered here will be a partial survey of potential areas of philosophical interest
with respect to tattoos, fortified by a little historical context. Claims about the ethical significance of tattoos and about the significance of tattoos for self-expression and as expressions of identity will be canvassed in the first two sections, as will questions about what they express or signify, how they might do so, and whose expression we might take it to be.

— Comments: Elizabeth Cantalamessa (University of Wyoming)

16) Dale Dorsey (University of Kansas), 'Humean Constructivism and the Common Core'

Abstract: Should all schoolchildren be forced to learn the same stuff? Should that stuff include how to genetically engineer humans so that future people literally become human constructs? You might think this is outrageous. You'd be right. What kind of sick person would suggest this? It's bad enough to support the common core, but beyond the pale to think that the common core should include human constructivism. What? It's Humean constructivism, not human constructivism? And it's a different common core from the one Fox news gets into a lather over? Never mind.

— Comments: Brian Coffey (Grand Valley State University)

17) Julia Driver (Washington University in St. Louis), 'Undermining Promises'

Abstract: Conditional promises such as my promise to donate to Oxfam, if you donate to Oxfam, can only be broken if the condition event is realized. In this case, the condition event would be you giving money to Oxfam. At that point, if I do not give any money to Oxfam, I have broken my promise. Breaking one's promises is [pro tanto] wrong. In the past I have argued that we can learn a good deal about the practice of promising by looking at failures of the practice, such as promise breaking. However, there are at least two other ways in which promises can be undercut. Besides breaking a promise a person might work to void a promise, by actively working to make sure the triggering condition is not met. I will also argue that there is another way to understand 'conditional promise' so that if the conditions in question are not met the promise is not voided but, rather, unactivated. Thus, one may undermine a promise by either rendering it void or failing to activate it. Undermining promises exploits a loophole in the morality of promising. This is a loophole that has not been much explored, and one that Kant seems to have missed. This is a neglected aspect of our promissory practices – there has been a lot of emphasis on promise breaking, but there are other interesting cases in which promissory interactions can be undercut. What renders these cases morally problematic is the attempt to abridge the authority of the promisee. In some of the cases discussed in this essay, agents make insincere promises absent any intention to break the promise, but with a masked intention to exploit such a loophole. I think that this is part of a larger set of practices centered on limiting our exposure to incurring obligations.

— Comments: Iskra Fileva (University of Colorado, Boulder)

18) Nicole Dular (Syracuse University), 'Harder, Better, Faster, Stronger: Epistemic Standards and Moral Beliefs'

Abstract: This paper considers one way in which moral epistemology is special compared to non-moral epistemology by looking to a neglected aspect of moral epistemology: epistemic standards. I argue that moral beliefs typically enjoy a higher epistemic standard than non-moral beliefs, which roughly means that moral beliefs typically require more justification than non-moral beliefs in order to be fully justified. After first locating a judgment that moral beliefs are typically less justified than analogous non-moral beliefs by looking to a series of cases, I consider two rival accounts that would explain this judgment, the 'Morality is Hard' view and the 'More
Defeaters’ view. Finding the ‘Morality is Hard’ view lacking explanatory power and the ‘More Defeaters’ view not being a genuine rival to my ‘Higher Standards’ view, I argue that the best explanation of the initial judgment of differences in justification is that moral beliefs typically have a higher epistemic standard.

— Comments: Robert Beddor (Rutgers University)

19) Luke Elson (University of Reading), 'A Bad Character Response to Gratuitous Harm'

Abstract: I defend satisficing consequentialism against the worry that it allows agents to act rightly whilst gratuitously preventing goodness. I argue that satisficers should bite the bullet that such acts are morally permissible, but direct their criticism at the character of such agents.

— Comments: Daniel Muñoz (Massachusetts Institute of Technology)

20) Mylan Engel (Northern Illinois University), 'Simplifying the Case for Ethical Veganism'

Abstract: Leiter reports the results of his highly unscientific survey of over 2000 philosophers’ eating habits as follows: 8% of philosophers are vegan; 25% are vegetarian; 67% are carnivores [Presumably, he meant ‘omnivores’]. Over half of the meat eaters had ethical doubts about their eating practices. Presumably, these meat eaters thought that they should be vegetarian (or vegan). I argue that they are right – they morally should be vegans. In my paper, I identify several commonsense moral principles that undergird the case for ethical vegetarianism. I argue that these very same principles entail that eating other animal products (eggs and dairy products) is wrong. I show that if you are an ethical vegetarian, your own ethical principles entail that you should be an ethical vegan. Since meat eaters accept these same ethical principles, their own ethical beliefs and commitments entail that they too should be ethical vegans.

— Comments: Jake Monaghan (University at Buffalo)

21) David Faraci (Georgetown University), 'Knowledge, Necessity, and Defeat'

Abstract: A staggering amount of work in the philosophies of mathematics, logic and ethics concerns the so-called Benacerraf-Field Challenge and its relatives: Knowledge requires that our beliefs correspond to the truth. In the domains just mentioned, such correspondence can seem troublingly mysterious. It calls out for explanation; yet many think we have none to offer. If there is indeed no way to explain belief-truth correspondence in these domains, some claim this should undermine those beliefs. Yet despite its ubiquity, there is little agreement on what, if any, epistemological challenge reflects this intuitive gloss. In this paper, I defend a particular understanding of the challenge. I then respond to an argument that it poses no threat in the domains in which it is typically raised.

— Comments: Aaron Elliott (University of Nebraska, Lincoln)

22) Laura Gillespie (University of California, Los Angeles), 'The Participant View: A Theory of Childhood Punishment'

Abstract: The practice of punishing children is a pervasive one, and one, too, about which many of us are deeply ambivalent. It is also a practice that resists the various forms of justification offered in defense of the state punishment of adult citizens, including, I argue, the standard moral education views. In the course of this paper I defend what I call the participant view, a species of moral education view on which the educatory aim of punishment is not merely to make children understand what acts are forbidden and why, but to make them competent navigators of a particularly fraught and vitally important realm of human life: that of
interpersonal conflict. What we learn—and what we can only learn—by being subject to some practice of punishment, properly conceived, is the capacity to engage in such conflict decently.

— Comments: Claudia Mills (University of Colorado, Boulder)

23) Kerah Gordon-Solmon (Queen’s University), 'Not as a Means: Killing as a Side Effect in Self-Defense'

Abstract: A person who keeps her car well maintained and always drives cautiously and alertly decides to drive to the movies. Freak circumstances cause the car to go out of control. It has veered in the direction of a pedestrian whom it will kill unless she, or a third party, blows it up with a grenade. Whether the driver is liable to be thusly killed is the most polarizing question in philosophical debates about the ethics of self-defense. But existent debates frequently conflate the questions of whether the driver is liable to be killed and how, or by what means the driver is potentially liable to be killed. I hypothesize separating these questions illuminates the source of widely shared intuitions about the case. I argue, drawing on Frances Kamm’s account of subordination, that there’s a moral asymmetry among different means of side-effect killing, which has important ramifications here.

— Comments: Paul Bowman (University of Colorado, Boulder)

24) Matthew Haber (University of Utah), Eleanor Gilmore-Szott (University of Utah), and Madeline Bannon (University of Utah), 'The Ethics of Mitochondrial Replacement'

Abstract: The UK recently voted to permit mitochondrial replacement (MR) techniques to help women avoid passing mitochondrial diseases to their children. This is accomplished by changing the mitochondrial genetic profile of recipient eggs or zygotes. This decision has been celebrated and condemned in both the scientific and popular press. Advocates see MR as an effective and justified means of preventative medicine, where critics bring several concerns, ranging from potential harms to individuals (donors and recipients), to implications for health policy, to the specter of eugenics. We seek to isolate those issues of concern that are specific to MR, concluding, on balance, both that MR is morally permissible and clinical access ethical.

— Comments: Eric Vogelstein (Duquesne University)

25) Nathan Hanna (Drexel University), 'Desert’s Moral Significance Reconsidered'

Abstract: Many philosophers think that when someone deserves something, it’s intrinsically good that she get it or there’s a pro tanto non-instrumental reason to bring about her getting it. Call this the standard view. Assumptions about desert are central to debates about punishment. Many retributivists assume the standard view. In previous work, I’ve argued against the standard view to raise a problem for retributivism. My argument appealed to certain desert claims and related claims about reasons and value that I assumed most people would find intuitively plausible. But I’d rather not assume that. So I gathered data on people’s intuitions about desert, value, and reasons. In this paper, I report my findings and discuss their implications for the standard view and for retributivism. The results support my earlier argument against the standard view.

— Comments: Hailey Huget (Georgetown University)

26) Jennifer Hawkins (Duke University), 'Happiness, Suffering, and Prudential Asymmetry'

Abstract: There is an asymmetry in the way that happiness and suffering contribute to prudential value. Although I assume that happiness has intrinsic welfare value (and suffering
intrinsic disvalue), I am not a hedonist. Many other things besides happiness, including non-mental things, can contribute positively to welfare. However, I argue that happiness has a very different relationship to the non-mental components of welfare than suffering does. Unlike happiness, which can co-exist easily with other prudential goods, suffering, when it occurs, makes it difficult or impossible for other things to count as either prudentially good or bad. The defense of this claim proceeds in two stages. I first offer novel accounts of the nature of happiness and suffering according to which they are affective states. Second, I defend a thesis making positive affective response a necessary requirement of something’s counting as good for an individual. Together, these claims support the asymmetry described.

— Comments: Doran Smolkin (Kwantlen Polytechnic University)

27) Marcus Hedahl (United States Naval Academy), 'Owing it to Us: How Directed Duties to Collectives Can Inform Collective Responsibility for Future Generations'

Abstract: Although there have been numerous important, and in many ways successful, theoretical frameworks that attempt to justify either collective responsibility or responsibility for future generations, one might nonetheless fear that when considering collective duties to future generations—duties that may prove to be enormously important given the climate crises in our current, corporate age—a straightforward consolidation of these issues could be saddled with a tension with methodological individualism that increases exponentially as these two issues are considered simultaneously. However, a straightforward consolidation of collective responsibility and duties to future generations is not the only, or even the most appropriate, way to analyze apparent cases of collective responsibility to future generations. The duties involved in these cases are not, I contend, duties irreducibly collective actors owe to not yet existing future entities, but rather duties currently existing individuals owe to currently existing, enduring collectives.

— Comments: Benjamin Hale (University of Colorado, Boulder)

28) Amelia Hicks (Kansas State University), 'Moral Uncertainty and Moral Fetishism'

Abstract: In this paper, I defend the view that one ought to take into account one’s moral uncertainty when deliberating about moral problems. Brian Weatherson has argued that taking moral uncertainty into account requires "moral fetishism," that is, it requires caring about rightness as such while not caring about the features of the world that make an action right. Because Weatherson holds that moral fetishism is always unacceptable, he concludes that taking moral uncertainty into account is inappropriate. In response, I argue (a) that taking moral uncertainty into account does not always involve what Weatherson describes as "fetishism," and (b) that Weatherson may, in fact, commit himself to the very practical recommendations he intends to argue against.

— Comments: Jay Geyer (University of Colorado, Boulder)

29) Sukaina Hirji (Princeton University), 'Virtue and Happiness: A Genuinely Aristotelian Alternative'

Abstract: According to neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics, agents have reason to acquire virtuous character traits and perform virtuous actions because doing so will reliably guarantee their own happiness. One of the chief attractions of virtue ethics is its apparent ability to explain why it’s in an agent’s own interests to be ethically good. However, the form that this explanation takes renders virtue ethics vulnerable to the charge of egoism. In fact, virtue ethics is accused of being egoistic both in its explanation of the source of an agent’s normative reasons and in its
description of an agent’s motivating reasons. In this paper, I sketch what I take to be the structure of Aristotle’s own ethical theory, and suggest why it deserves renewed philosophical attention in its own right. It will turn out, on the interpretation I defend, that neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics gets the structure of Aristotle’s ethical theory almost entirely backwards. Aristotle’s theory, as I reconstruct it, gives us a way of understanding the necessary connection between being virtuous and being happy without being vulnerable to the charge of egoism.

— Comments: Garret Merriam (University of Southern Indiana)

30) A.G. Holdier (Colorado Technical University), 'The Pig’s Squeak: Towards a Renewed Aesthetic Argument for Veganism'

Abstract: In 1906, Henry Stephens Salt published a short collection of essays that presented several rhetorically powerful, if formally deficient arguments for the vegetarian position. By interpreting Salt as a moral sentimentalist with ties to Aristotelian virtue ethics, I propose that his aesthetic argument deserves contemporary consideration. First, I connect ethics and aesthetics with the Greek concepts of kalon and kalokagathia that depend equally on beauty and morality before presenting Salt’s assertion: slaughterhouses are disgusting, therefore they should not be promoted. I suggest three areas of development since Salt’s death that could be fruitfully plumbed to rebuild this assertion into a contemporary argument: (1) an updated analysis of factory farm conditions, (2) insights from moral psychologists on the adaptive socio-biological benefits of disgust as a source of cognitive information, and (3) hermeneutical considerations about the role of the audience that allow blameworthiness for slaughterhouse atrocities to be laid upon the meat-eater.

— Comments: Cheryl Abbate (University of Colorado, Boulder)

31) Stan Husi (University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee), 'Why We (Almost Certainly) are Not Moral Equals'

Abstract: Faith in the moral equality of people enjoys close to unanimous consensus in political philosophy. Yet this faith is hard to sustain, in light of the pervasive variances among people. Confronting the central problem of why, given the innumerable physical and mental differences that separate people, we should assign them all the same moral status, George Sher proposes that we are moral equals because we are equally centers of consciousness. Identifying subjectivity as the ground of equal moral status strikes me as the most promising proposal available, but even this proposal is doomed. The general problem is that equality in moral status requires not only the presence of a universally equalizing factor, but also the absence of a differentiating factor. Yet the difficulty in keeping the lid on differentiation turns out insurmountable. Subjectivity differentiates people no less than any other factor. I use the example of psychopathy to show why.

— Comments: Gopal Sreenivasan (Duke University)

32) Brian Hutler (University of California, Los Angeles), 'Rawls on Accepting the Punishment for Civil Disobedience'.

Abstract: Rawls says that citizens have a right to engage in civil disobedience. Yet he also claims that citizens should be willing to accept the punishment for the laws that they break when they engage in civil disobedience. These two claims lead to contradiction given two additional (and plausible) premises: punishment is a violation of the right to engage in civil disobedience, and citizens ought to resist violations of that right. Rawls can avoid this contradiction by denying that punishment is a violation of the civil disobedience right. Such a move illuminates the special
structure of the right: it is an “imperfect right” that corresponds to an imperfect duty on the part of the government and others in the community to take the citizen’s civilly disobedient protest seriously, to treat it as different from a “normal” crime, and to try to understand and respond to the citizen’s reasons for the protest.

— Comments: Rishi Joshi (Princeton University)

33) Ryan Jenkins (Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo) Duncan Purves (University of Wyoming), 'Robots Must Be Consequentialists'

Abstract: Today, many morally important decisions are left to algorithms: stock trading and the distribution of government benefits are two examples. In the future, many more decisions will be outsourced to machines, perhaps including whether to punish criminals and whom to kill in warfare. Any decision making process for artificial intelligence—including moral reasoning—will have to balance considerations in order to rank its options. In ranking options along a monist continuum, robots are reasoning as consequentialists. If robots must reason as consequentialists, and some form of non-consequentialist moral theory is true, then it would seem that moral algorithms are problematically incapable of accommodating non-consequentialist moral considerations. However, we suggest this worry can be overcome: given Portmore’s work in “consequentializing” ethical theories, robots could successfully obey any plausible moral theory, so long as they were programmed with the correct decision procedure. Once this limitation is overcome it becomes apparent that robots hold the potential to be superior to humans in their capacity for moral reasoning.

— Comments: Helen L. Daly (Colorado College)

34) Stephen Kershnar (State University of New York at Fredonia), 'How Consent Works'

Abstract: Consent is, roughly, the means by which one waives a right. Consent lies at the heart of many topics in law, medicine, politics, and ethics. A common idea is that consent in itself matters toward the right and the good. This paper rejects this idea. More specifically, it defends two theses. First, the maximization theory of consent is true. The maximization theory asserts, roughly, consent functions to maximize what justifies rights (for example, autonomy or interests). Specifically, the model asserts that the features (dimensions) of consent depend on, and only on, the degree to which it maximizes the ground of rights. Second, consent does not matter in and of itself. Specifically, consent by itself it does not matter for the right or the good.

— Comments: Shlomo Cohen (Ben Gurion University of the Negev)

35) Jen Kling (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill), 'Who Owes What to War Refugees'

Abstract: In this paper, I argue that war refugees have been wronged as well as severely harmed. This is the case even for those war refugees that are the result of necessary and proportionate military actions. As such, war refugees are owed recompense by the national and extra-national groups involved in the relevant military actions. Additionally, I argue that war refugees are overwhelmingly likely to be members of systemically oppressed groups, and so are due extra protection and care. So even if (contrary to my initial argument) war refugees have not been wronged, they are still owed recompense by the relevant national and extra-national groups, because such groups have an extra obligation to protect and care for war refugees.

— Comments: Michael Growden (United States Air Force Academy)

36) Victor Kumar (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor), 'Nudges and Bumps'
Abstract: Nudges are ways of influencing behavior without coercion and without introducing incentives. They operate by exploiting common heuristics and biases that underlie judgment and decision-making. However, nudges are for this reason manipulative; they circumvent rational agency. I use recent empirical work in learning theory to develop an alternative to nudges. “Bumps” influence behavior without coercion or incentives, like nudges, but they operate by exploiting rational learning mechanisms. Because they engage rational agency, I argue that bumps are not problematically manipulative in the way that nudges seem to be.

— Comments: Agnieszka Lekka-Kowalik (John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin)

37) Nicholas Laskowski (University of Southern California), 'What Moral-Mary (Allegedly) Didn’t Know'

Abstract: The knowledge argument against physicalism about phenomenal consciousness has been enormously influential in the philosophy of mind since Frank Jackson (1982, 1986) put it forward 35 years ago. Helen and Richard Yetter-Chappell (2013) recently argue that naturalism about morality faces an analogous argument in metaethics. In this paper, I argue that naturalism is not vulnerable to the so-called moral knowledge argument, because the adequacy conditions on the case that motivates it are jointly unstable. This result suggests that there are substantive differences between the subject matters of morality and phenomenal consciousness – differences that prevent us, appearances notwithstanding, from simply copying-and-pasting the explanatory agenda in the philosophy of mind into metaethics, and vice versa.

— Comments: Spencer Case (University of Colorado, Boulder)

38) Adam Lerner (Princeton University), 'Empathy, Partiality, and Moral Status'

Abstract: Philosophers and non-philosophers alike have drastically different intuitions about the permissibility of eating animals, deporting illegal immigrants, and punishing criminals. In this paper, I argue that people often have different moral intuitions on these topics because they exhibit different patterns of empathy, and that this is epistemically significant. I argue that some patterns of empathy are more conducive to reliable moral judgment than others, and that we have reason to privilege the intuitions of those who exhibit these epistemically privileged patterns of empathy. Because people who exhibit these epistemically privileged patterns of empathy are more likely to grant a higher moral status to traditionally neglected groups than others, we have reason to grant a higher moral status to these groups. In particular, we should take more seriously the interests of nonhuman animals, foreigners, and wrongdoers. The upshot is that we should oppose factory farming, immigration restrictions, and retributive punishment.

— Comments: Robyn Gaier (Viterbo University)

39) Hallie Liberto (University of Connecticut), 'Promises and the Backward Reach of Uptake'

Abstract: This paper explores a particular way that theorists of promising constrain the scope of promissory obligation via the uptake criterion. An “uptake criterion,” for the purposes of this paper, will amount to any conditions on promissory obligation pertaining to the receipt or acceptance of a promise on the part of the promisee. I will present a set of cases that pose problems for existing accounts uptake. These cases will involve scenarios in which (i) there is delayed receipt and/or acceptance of a promise, but the obligation seems to arise before the receipt or acceptance has taken place; (ii) there is a delay or absence of agency on the part of the promissee – making it impossible to satisfy the various suggested uptake criteria, but in which there still seems to be promissory obligation; (iii) the promise is made to someone, de dicto – that is, the person who will be the promisee has not yet been filled in. I will suggest a
strategy for resolving the problems associated with uptake. The strategy involves looking for
clues within each theory of promissory obligation to determine the temporal and agency-related
boundaries on promissory obligation and, what I will call, the backward reach of uptake.
— Comments: Shane Gronholz (University of Colorado, Boulder)

40) Eden Lin (Rutgers University, Newark), 'Sophisticated Theories of Welfare'
Abstract: A sophisticated theory of welfare is one according to which everything that is basically
good for you is related to you in a way that involves a fair amount of psychological
sophistication (e.g., you value it, or you believe it to be good for you). In this paper, I argue that
sophisticated theories of welfare are false. The correct theory is simple: it claims that you need
only have relatively simple psychological capacities (e.g., the capacity to feel pleasure, or to
have desires) for something to be basically good for you. First, I argue that sophisticated
theories of welfare are false. The correct theory is simple: it claims that you need
only have relatively simple psychological capacities (e.g., the capacity to feel pleasure, or to
have desires) for something to be basically good for you. First, I argue that sophisticated
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have desires) for something to be basically good for you. First, I argue that sophisticated
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have desires) for something to be basically good for you. First, I argue that sophisticated
theories of welfare are false. The correct theory is simple: it claims that you need
only have relatively simple psychological capacities (e.g., the capacity to feel pleasure, or to
have desires) for something to be basically good for you. First, I argue that sophisticated
—the backward reach of uptake.
— Comments: Shane Gronholz (University of Colorado, Boulder)

41) Barry Maguire (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill), 'There Are No Reasons for
Attitudes'
Abstract: There are no reasons for attitudes. There are no wrong kinds of reasons for attitudes,
and there are no right kinds of reasons for attitudes. Putative ‘right kinds of reasons’ have a
different character from (normative) reasons. Reasons are contributory — they have weights —
and slack — they weigh against each other in quantitative explanations of strict deontic facts.
Putative right kinds of reasons are neither slack nor contributory. They directly make attitudes
fitting. The more complex the considerations, the more complex the fitting set of attitudes
(think of the last time you saw someone stand on the end of a rake). Explanatory reasons for
fittingness facts are not reasons either; they participate in qualitative not quantitative
explanations. These remarks further support a familiar debunking dilemma against putative
‘wrong kinds of reasons’: these are either facts about value rather than reasons, or reasons for
something other than an attitude.
— Comments: Paul Boswell (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor)

42) Don Marquis (University of Kansas), 'What's Wrong with the Future of Value Argument'
Abstract: I show that the future of value analysis that implies that abortion is wrong is self-
contradictory. This seems to be a serious flaw. I then discuss whether or not the analysis can be
repaired.
— Comments: Michael Tooley (University of Colorado, Boulder)

43) Joshua May (University of Alabama, Birmingham), 'The Death of Double Effect'
Abstract: The Doctrine of Double Effect states roughly that it’s sometimes permissible to bring
about as a byproduct what one shouldn’t directly intend. In addition to proponents of the truth
of this Doctrine, many have recently argued that it’s tacitly accepted in ordinary moral thought.
Appealing to some existing experiments, as well as reporting my own, I show the psychological
claim is dubious, since the relevant intuitions are diffident, lacking stability and confidence,
which sheds light on how best to measure moral judgment. Ultimately, our moral judgments
may be affected by something close to the Doctrine—“agential involvement”—but this is not
best conceived as a general principle. Rather, our moral norms are often agent-centered,
prohibiting intentional violations, which are somewhat sensitive to the means/byproduct distinction. This undermines Double Effect as both a psychological and normative principle, but without debunking deontological intuitions generally.

— Comments: Molly Gardner (Bowling Green State University)

44) Jessica Mefford Katz (Bowling Green State University), 'Moral Realism: All You Need is Truth'

Abstract: It is an essential component of non-naturalistic moral realism that moral entities are both irreducible to natural facts and metaphysically sui generis. Thus, non-naturalism has the burden of explaining how such entities can be captured by or compatible with a naturalistic worldview. Nonetheless, not all proponents of non-naturalism accept that the view entails moral ontological commitments. Most notably, Derek Parfit has recently defended a form of non-naturalism which allegedly avoids such ontological commitments.

The aim of this paper is to challenge the claim that moral non-naturalism has moral ontological commitments. In so doing, I illuminate Parfit’s metaphysics and respond to one of the perennial objections to non-naturalism. I argue that the claim that moral non-naturalism has moral ontological commitments rests on controversial assumptions, ones which we can reject. Once these assumptions are exposed for what they are, it becomes evident that non-naturalism has a means of avoiding moral ontological commitments altogether.

— Comments: Anthony Kelley (University of Colorado, Boulder)

45) Ashlie Meredith (San Francisco State University), 'The Pitfalls of Contempt in Liberatory Struggles'

Abstract: In this paper I critique Macalester Bell’s defense of contempt as a morally valuable emotion. I argue that in the context of liberatory struggles, contempt may be an inappropriate emotion for activists to foster and encourage. I examine how the disengagement and withdrawal associated with contempt may motivate nonnormative (e.g. violent) methods of resistance and devolve into a vice of self-righteousness. These consequences present unique problems for the activist, for example: the potential for alienating allies, incurring retaliatory harm, and perpetuating oppression. Using sociological data and research in moral psychology, I question the efficacy of contempt and violence in bringing about change as well as address issues of privilege, political solidarity, and advocate burnout. In the end I look at some practical methods for fostering empathy and self-reflection in liberation movements.

— Comments: Michael Glawson (University of South Carolina)

46) Kristina Meshelski (California State University, Northridge), 'Socially Constructed Identities and Rawls's Original Position'

Abstract: In Rawls's original position, the parties to his hypothetical social contract are not supposed to know their class, race, or gender, in order that they will choose principles that are general and unbiased. But since Rawls we have increasingly come to believe that class, racial, or gender identities are socially determined and not something we are born with. Given this, the parties to Rawls's contract cannot even have a concept of class, race, or gender. I survey a variety of social construction theories and their consequences for Rawlsian principles of justice, finding that the principles of justice are more successful at addressing class based oppression because of the way that the social construction of class differs from the social construction of race and gender.
47) **Geraldine Ng** (University of Reading), 'Practical Agents and the Social World'

*Abstract:* Bernard Williams argues that what he calls ‘the morality system’ does not allow for the individualism that is fundamental to ethical life. His own view, however, threatens radical ethical contingency. My project is to defend the possibility of ethical conviction while adhering to the individualism that Williams insisted is fundamental to ethical life.

My case can be summarized as the practical agency argument:

1. Practical agents are attuned to the social world.
2. Agents who are attuned to the social world pose Socrates’ question.
3. Constitutive ethical constraints bear on agents who pose Socrates’ question.
4. Practical agents are under constitutive ethical constraints. (the practical agency thesis)

If I can develop something useful, we can come to understand why ethical reasons present themselves rightly to practical agents as practical reasons. Even if we cannot provide a theoretical foundation for moral values, we can still have a kind of ethical conviction.

— *Comments:* Christian Golden (Georgetown University)

48) **Howard Nye** (University of Alberta), 'Objective Goods, Beneficial Lives, and Morality'

*Abstract:* Many philosophers and policymakers hold that there are much weaker moral reasons to preserve the lives of intellectually disabled individuals, on the alleged grounds that their lives will inevitably contain few objective goods and consequently be much less good for them. In this paper I argue that this view is unsound for reasons of general theoretical importance for understanding the relationships between well-being, objective goods, and morality. I contend that the strength of our moral reasons of beneficence to preserve someone’s life are determined, not by how choiceworthy it will be, but by how strongly we should prefer her survival out of care for her. I argue, moreover, that while someone’s life’s involving greater objective goods may make it intrinsically more choiceworthy, our reasons to prefer its preservation out of care for her are determined primarily by how much she enjoys it and how fully and richly it engages her.

— *Comments:* Hasko von Kriegstein (Ryerson University/Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

49) **Jay Odenbaugh** (Lewis and Clark College), 'A Guilt Trip: Expressivism, Moral Judgment, and Basic Emotions'

*Abstract:* In this essay, I first sketch Allan Gibbard’s (1992) norm expressivism. Second, I consider Shaun Nichols’ (2004) critique of Gibbard’s account of moral judgment. In essence, Nichols argues that since norm expressivism assumes moral judgment requires the experience and attribution of guilt and that children younger than 7 - 8 cannot experience and attribute guilt, they cannot make moral judgments. However, he contends they can given that they can pass the moral/conventional task. Thus, Gibbard’s norm expressivist account of moral judgment is fatally flawed. Third, I provide a response on behalf of Gibbard. Fourth, I articulate an account of guilt as an emotion. Finally, I consider an objection with regard to my analysis.

— *Comments:* Camil Golub (New York University)
50) Tyler Paytas (Washington University in St. Louis), 'Between Scylla and Charybdis: Sidgwick’s Axioms and the Partial Dualism of Practical Reason'

Abstract: Sidgwick provides a set of ethical axioms from which he deduces a principle of impartialism stating that “each one is morally bound to regard the good of any other individual as much as his own…” (1907: 382). However, he ultimately abandons this conclusion due to the possibility that ‘good’ is agent-relative. This worry leads to Sidgwick’s infamous “Dualism of Practical Reason.” Roger Crisp (2006) and Derek Parfit (2011) avoid this bleak view by championing an account I call Partial Dualism. On this view, although everyone’s welfare is an equal part of agent-neutral good, each individual is justified in prioritizing their own good. Implicit in Partial Dualism is the rejection of one of Sidgwick’s key axioms. I argue that the grounds provided for rejecting this axiom stand in tension with commitments shared by Parfit and Crisp, and that given these commitments they should accept the axiom and embrace impartialism.

— Comments: Peter Zuk (Rice University)

51) David Phillips (University of Houston), 'Deontology Without Paradox'

Abstract: Both normative egoism and standard deontological constraints have been found paradoxical or at least seriously philosophically problematic. I argue that the charges against egoism fail. By contrast the same charges against standard deontological constraints are much harder to rebut. This provides reason to explore forms of deontology which deviate from consequentialism by introducing something agent-relative, as egoism does, rather than by introducing something constraint-like, as contemporary versions of deontology tend to do.

Sympathetically interpreted W.D. Ross develops a deontological view of just this kind, a view I label “Classical Deontology”. Classical deontologists agree with consequentialists that reasons always derive from goods. But, according to classical deontologists, consequentialists are wrong to think that all goods have the same weight for all agents. Instead there are a small number of distinct kinds of agent-relative intensifiers: features that increase the reason-giving weight of certain goods for certain agents.

— Comments: Ed Sherline (University of Wyoming)

52) Matjaz Potrc (University of Ljubljana) and Vojko Strahovnik (University of Ljubljana), 'Reasons and Phenomenology: Experiencing the Space of Reasons'

Abstract: Phenomenology of the space of reasons is investigated, the focus being at two key aspects within it. The first aspect involves recognition of a reason and of acting (in the widest possible sense of agency involving e.g. belief formation or attitude formation) in the light of reasons. The second aspect involves providing reasons-based justification for our actions and attitude formation (reason giving). In our investigation we rely on Maurice Mandelbaum and his book the Phenomenology of Moral Experience (1955). With the term phenomenology of reasons we mean phenomenal, qualitative, “what-it’s-like” features of experience related to reasons that are available to introspection. Based on this we propose and investigate the following four characteristic of the phenomenology of reasons: (i) telos, means-end teleological structure, purposiveness aspect; (ii) demand and motivation aspect; (iii) rational “because” aspect; and (iv) chromatic illumination aspect.

— Comments: Chris Howard (University of Arizona)
53) **Phil Robichaud** (Delft University of Technology) and **Jan Willem Wieland** (VU University Amsterdam), 'Blame Transfer'

*Abstract:* Suppose that you are a doctor and that you prescribed a drug to a patient who died as a result. Suppose further that you could have known about the risks of this drug, and that you are blameworthy for your ignorance. Does the blameworthiness for your ignorance 'transfer' to blameworthiness for your ignorant action? Although many philosophers are inclined to accept this, others deny that blameworthiness simply transfers. Inspired by Holly Smith’s pioneering paper, we raise a new problem for transfer proponents. Our solution to this problem, the 'concern constraint' as we call it, constitutes our main contribution to the debate.

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54) **Abe Roth** (Ohio State University), 'Intention, Expectation, and Promissory Obligation'

*Abstract:* The acceptance of a promise bears on the normative significance of the promise itself; promisee acceptance helps to ensure that promissory obligation is in place. But what is it to accept a promise? Here’s a new proposal in terms of intentions: for B to accept A’s promise to ɸ is (among other things) for B to intend A’s ɸ–ing. The distinctive role intentions play in practical reasoning will help us understand the rational agency exercised on the side of the individual who accepts a promise. I then turn to Cognitivism about intentions, the view that one’s intention to ɸ involves a special, non-evidentially warranted belief or expectation regarding the ɸ–ing. Cognitivism, in conjunction with the proposal about acceptance, can be used to defend Scanlon’s expectation-based view of promissory obligation against recent criticism by Kolodny and Wallace.

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55) **Jeff Sebo** (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill), 'Reconsider the Lobster'

*Abstract:* In this paper, I ask how we should treat nonhuman animals in cases of uncertainty about whether or not they are sentient (on the assumption that sentience is necessary and sufficient for moral status). I present and evaluate three options. First, we can follow an incautionary principle that permits us to treat animals as non-sentient in cases of uncertainty. Second, we can follow a precautionary principle that requires us to treat animals as sentient in cases of uncertainty. Third, we can follow an expected value principle that requires us to multiply our credence that animals are sentient by the amount of moral value that they would have if they were. I then draw two conclusions. First, we should reject the incautionary principle. Second, if we accept either the precautionary principle or the expected utility principle, then it will follow that we morally ought to treat many animals, such as invertebrates, much better than we currently do.

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56) **Clerk Shaw** (University of Tennessee, Knoxville), 'Poetry and Hedonic Error in Plato's *Republic*'

*Abstract:* Towards the end of Plato’s *Republic*, Socrates critiques tragedy and imitative poetry in general (595a-608b). That passage is often found unexpected and out of place in relation to the *Republic*’s main argument. I offer a new reading, on which this discussion of poetry forms part of Socrates’ third, "greatest and most decisive" argument for the main thesis of the *Republic*.

First, I review Socrates' core claims about hedonic error and real hedonic magnitudes in book IX. Next, I show that most of his discussion of poetry uses the earlier framework to argue that tragic pleasures are much smaller than they seem. Finally, I explain the sources of genuine
pleasure in tragedy, by Socrates’ lights. This effectively provides a new, Platonic account of the paradox of painful art. I conclude by saying how my reading, appropriately supplemented, allows us to understand Republic 595a-608b as a single, continuous line of argument.
— Comments: Samuel Shook (University of Wyoming)

57) George Sher (Rice University), ‘Blame and Moral Ignorance’
Abstract: Can a person legitimately be blamed for acting wrongly when he knows what he is doing, but doesn’t know that it is wrong? Like a good many others, I believe the answer is sometimes “yes,” but that whether blame is appropriate in any given case depends on whether the agent was at least in a position to recognize that his act was wrong when he performed it. In this paper, I discuss a number of questions about this familiar view that either are matters of ongoing controversy or else have not yet made it onto the philosophical radar.
— Comments: Jon Spelman (University of Colorado, Boulder)

58) James Skidmore (Idaho State University), ‘From Act to Scalar to Rule: Formulating Utilitarianism and the Analogy of Law’
Abstract: Among the many recent formulations of utilitarianism, one of the most interesting and challenging is scalar utilitarianism. Defended most prominently by Alastair Norcross, scalar utilitarianism presents a version of the theory that eliminates the binary moral categories of ‘right’ and ‘wrong’, instead evaluating actions as (morally) better and worse than various alternatives. I argue that the theory poses a challenging question to proponents of utilitarianism: Why not eliminate the categories of ‘right’ and ‘wrong’? What is lost in doing so? The answer is not obvious, and in particular I argue that scalar utilitarianism constitutes an improvement on traditional act utilitarianism. Nevertheless, the scalar challenge can be met, and doing so points us in the direction of a form of indirect utilitarianism—one that evaluates actions as morally right or wrong by appeal to the optimal system of praise and blame rather than by direct appeal to utility.
— Comments: Alastair Norcross (University of Colorado, Boulder)

59) Matthew Smith (University of Leeds), ‘Legitimate Authority and States of Exception’
Abstract: Are the norms of political authority eternal? Is the consent of the governed or respect for human rights or some other criterion being met the one and only ground for some institution legitimately governing people? Or, could conditions in the world shift such that the norms of legitimate authority shift, so that, for example, where the consent of the governed was once required for legitimate authority, it is no longer? This paper explores these questions with a concluding discussion of whether the threat of global climate change has triggered such a shift in norms of legitimate authority.
— Comments: Adam Hosein (University of Colorado, Boulder)

60) Valerie Soon (Duke University), ‘Honor, Dignity, and Collective Resistance’
Abstract: This paper compares two competing accounts of oppression’s harm: the dignity account, which is closely identified with Western humanism, and the honor account, which has been given voice by the more radical elements of oppressed groups. The dignity account situates oppression’s harm in its disrespect of individuals, whereas the honor account focuses on the group as the foremost unit of respect. I argue that activists’ use of the language of honor is not merely a rhetorical choice, but also captures important insights into why the concept of honor is more apt than the concept of dignity for explaining and remedying the harm of
oppression. First, the honor account can better account for oppression’s group-oriented nature. Second, the honor account requires that a self-respecting person resist the oppression of her relevant identity group(s). Thus, honor is more efficacious than dignity at motivating collective resistance.

— Comments: Yujia Song (Purdue University)

61) David Sussman (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign), 'Self-constitution and the Limits of Integrity'

Abstract: In a gripping contest between Team Duty, comprised of Kant and Korsgaard, and Team Love, comprised of Nietzsche and Williams, I argue that love conquers all. You might be forgiven for wishing a plague on both their houses, but someone has to take these clowns seriously. And that someone is me.

— Comments: Max Parish (University of Oklahoma)

62) Steve Sverdlik (Southern Methodist University), 'Giving Wrongdoers What They Deserve'

Abstract: Retributivist approaches to the philosophy of punishment are usually based on certain moral claims. Some of these claims are also accepted, or at least treated sympathetically, by contemporary consequentialists. I focus on one principle

Censuring Principle (CP): There is a moral reason to censure guilty wrongdoers painfully.

Principles like CP are often supported by the construction of examples similar to Kant’s ‘desert island’. These are meant to show that there is a reason to impose suffering on wrongdoers, even if none of the familiar goals of punishment, such as deterrence, will be achieved. When suitable variants of such examples are presented, however, it is evident that there cannot be much reason to impose such suffering even if there is some. The same problem besets claims that there is intrinsic value in the suffering of wrongdoers, or that wrongdoers deserve to suffer. All such claims are relatively weak normatively.

— Comments: Sameer Bajaj (University of Arizona)

63) Brian Talbot (Washington University in St. Louis), 'Collective Action and Conflicting Obligations'

Abstract: It is common that achieving some important goal - avoiding climate change, eliminating sweatshops, electing the right president - requires that a great many people act appropriately. It is also common that, given what ordinary individuals know, their participation in these sorts of collective actions has negative expected utility. Even so, it seems that individuals still ought to participate, at least sometimes. This paper is about how the obligation to participate in these sorts of collective actions weighs against other obligations. It answers the following question: when two obligations to participate in collective actions conflict, or when the obligation to participate in collective action conflicts with an obligation that has nothing to do with collective action, what should we do?

— Comments: Rebecca Chan (University of Notre Dame)

64) Christian Tarsney (University of Maryland, College Park), 'Rejecting Supererogationism'

Abstract: In a recent article, Jacob Ross argues that any positive degree of belief in a non-nihilistic moral theory is sufficient grounds to reject moral nihilism (the view that there are
never moral reasons for or against action) as irrelevant to practical deliberation, since straightforward dominance reasoning over moral theories will always support the course of action that one's non-nihilistic beliefs recommend. I argue, for analogous reasons, that whatever one's degree of belief in supererogationist moral theories, those beliefs are (largely if not entirely) irrelevant to practical deliberation, so long as one believes to some degree that the actions the theory designates as supererogatory might be obligatory. I show that this conclusion avoids two objections confronting Ross's dismissal of moral nihilism, and hence that we can reject supererogationism more confidently than nihilism.

— Comments: Caleb Pickard (University of Colorado, Boulder)

65) George Tsai (University of Hawaii, Manoa), 'Expressives as Oppressive Speech'

Abstract: In recent years, philosophers have begun to uncover the role played by verbal conduct in generating identity-based structural oppression. If we accept that speech can generate oppressive social structures, we might want to know just which kinds do. I examine the oppressive illocutionary uses and perlocutionary effects of expressives: speech acts that are not truth-apt but simply express attitudes, like desires and emotions. In particular, I focus on expressions of disgust in a conversational context. I argue that expressions of disgust can activate in the local, conversational context the oppressive power of the underlying structures of oppression. More specifically, conversational expressions of disgust can oppress by enacting permissibility facts that make it appropriate for individuals to say and do oppressive things to disadvantaged persons or groups. I also argue that conversational expressions of disgust can, via the dynamic process of accommodation, contribute to morally problematic cases of disgust contagion—the spreading around of disgust attitudes in a population. More specifically, the accommodation of (presupposed) disgust attitudes can function to transmit among conversational participants disgust toward disadvantaged persons or groups.

— Comments: Ryan Hubbard (Syracuse University)

66) Mikhail Valdman (Virginia Commonwealth University), 'It Ain’t what You Say or the Way that You Say it: Consent, Permissibility, and Interests'

Abstract: Consent seems to have the power to transform moral relations between persons, making permissible what would otherwise be forbidden. It’s the difference between sex and rape, borrowing and theft, and a boxing match and assault. But what is this power’s source? In this paper I argue that if consent is understood as consisting essentially or primarily in a kind of act (either an observable public act or a private mental act), then it would have no such power. The power in question resides in a person’s interests. The relevant acts, I argue, are important only because they provide evidence of a person’s interests. We don’t wear our interests on our sleeve; the psychological states that ground them aren’t directly observable. But if they were, we’d have no use for the acts that we normally take to signify (or constitute) consent.

— Comments: Eric Chwang (University of Colorado, Boulder)

67) Jan-Willem van der Rijt (University of Bayreuth), 'Lawgiving, Dignity and Human Rights'

Abstract: Dignity is often seen as the basis of human rights. Exactly how rights can be derived from dignity is, however, far from clear. This paper argues that in order to explain how human rights are grounded in dignity, neither a purely inherent nor a fully contingent conceptualisation of dignity will suffice. Through a careful analysis of the traditional linkage between dignity and lawgiving, an account of dignity is developed that incorporates contingent and inherent features in a coherent fashion. Identifying three distinct features of lawgiving (legislation, adjudication
and imposition), the paper demonstrates that only two of these features can be regarded as inherent to human beings, whereas possession of the third is always a contingent matter. Linking inherent and contingent dignity to these three distinct features, having inherent dignity is shown to generate a claim to contingent dignity. This in turn allows us to understand human rights as protective of contingent dignity, whilst derived from inherent dignity.

— Comments: John Lawless (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill).

68) Christina van Dyke (Calvin College), 'Adding Fuel to the Fire? Orthorexia and Gendered Eating Patterns'

Abstract: Discussions of eating disorders increasingly involve ‘orthorexia’, understood as an obsession with identifying and maintaining the perfect diet for optimal health (and corresponding avoidance of foods perceived as unhealthy or harmful). In this paper, I situate orthorexia in its cultural context, making reference both to general social norms and specific gendered ideals of health. (‘Health’ for men tends to be linked to strength and endurance; for women, with attractiveness and ‘empowerment.’) The cultural grounds for orthorexia don’t themselves explain why the quest for a healthy diet should turn destructive, however. I argue that orthorexia is just the newest manifestation of an age-old tendency towards body-loathing and transcending rather than embracing physical existence—that is, it is somatophobia by another name. This recognition gives us strong reason, I believe, to resist cultural assignations of certain sorts of food as ‘good’ or ‘bad’ and, in particular, to push hard against the normative force those terms acquire in the endless quest for ‘healthy living.’

— Comments: Abigail Gosselin (Regis University)

69) Benjamin Wald (University of Toronto), 'Normative Force and Right Reasons'

Abstract: In this paper, I defend the motive of duty thesis from recent challenges made by Markovits and Arpaly and Schroeder. The views of Markovits and Arpaly and Schroeder successfully account for one of the traditional motivations for the motive of duty thesis - the demand that morally worthy actions be non-accidentally right. However, in this paper I outline an alternative requirement on moral worth that only the motive of duty thesis can capture, the requirement that the agent who performs a morally worthy action recognize that the action is required, and not treat it as merely optional. I also respond to the objection that the motive of duty requires the agent to have “one thought too many”. I argue that we can diffuse this worry by finding a role for the normative judgment required by the motive of duty thesis other than as the agent’s motivating reason.

— Comments: Brian Ballard (University of Pittsburgh)

70) Justin Weinberg (University of South Carolina), 'What We Want to Hear'

Abstract: One plausible answer to his question, “Why is there so much bullshit?”, that Harry Frankfurt does not consider is that people want it. Bullshitting is, roughly, speaking without regard to the truth of what one is saying. Sometimes, people engage in the listening analog of bullshitting—listening without regard to the truth of what they’re listening to. I argue for a pluralism about the ethics of listening according to which such listening may be unobjectionable. I then argue that in such cases, the bullshitting itself is unobjectionable. The narrow conclusion is that we need a more subtle ethics of bullshitting (and other forms of putatively objectionable activities). The broader thought is that our moral theories should be more sensitive to human psychological complexity and diversity.

— Comments: Chuck Goldhaber (University of Pittsburgh)
71) **Peter West-Oram** (Christian-Albrechts-University Kiel), 'Hidden Harms and Material Deprivation: On the Non-Neutrality of Conscientious Objection'

*Abstract:* In this paper I examine some potentially worrying implications of guaranteeing broad rights to conscientiously object to duties correlating to the fulfillment of important rights. Specifically, I focus on the way that conscience objections by health care providers can restrict or deny rights to reproductive autonomy. I argue that conscientious objection is not a morally neutral act, and that state endorsement of specific conscience claims can cause significant harms to vulnerable persons – even where no immediate or direct material deprivations of contested goods occur. My goal is not to reject outright the existence of a right to conscientious objection. However, I do wish to illustrate how conscientious objection can have profoundly complex consequences, and demonstrate how the actions of states can inflict harm on vulnerable persons through granting seemingly benign concessions to apparently reasonable demands.

— *Comments:* Joe Chapa (United States Air Force Academy)

72) **Daniel Wodak** (Princeton University), 'Does the State Lack Standing?'

*Abstract:* This paper has three aims. First, to show how we can appeal to two independently plausible views--about the expressive function of punishment and the ethics of blame--to understand the nature, importance and scope of an intuitive but under-theorized challenge to the legitimacy of criminal punishment. Second, to show that this challenge has problematic implications, which require us to reject or revise the independently plausible views that support it. Third, to show how this problem can be solved once we reject a common philosophical assumption---by eschewing strict conditions, we can reach a more complex yet more commonsensical understanding of the nature and significance of standing and the legitimacy of punishment.

— *Comments:* Timothy Houk (University of California, Davis)

73) **Special Session:** ‘Ethics in Practice: Can Philosophers Change the World?’ Participants: **Ramona Ilea** (Pacific University), **Julinna Oxley** (Coastal Carolina University), **Kathie Jenni** (University of Redlands), and **Michael D. Burroughs** (Penn State University)

This panel argues that ethicists are well-suited for practically addressing ethical and political issues by engaging their students in social change projects. Julinna Oxley will give an overview of three ways to involve students in social change via experiential learning: Service Learning, Civic Engagement, and Philosophical Activism. These pedagogies emphasize engaged learning: students learn more, have deeper connections to the material, and are more likely to use what they learn in the future, when they participate in practical experiences related to philosophy courses. Ramona Ilea will articulate several kinds of student-initiated civic engagement projects in philosophy and provide data showing that these have measurable positive effects: improved student-perceived achievement in citizenship, communication, critical thinking, and practical skills. Kathie Jenni will present a course in animal ethics that combines service at animal rescues with ethical inquiry. Students form personal relationships with nonhuman animals and experience pertinent facts first-hand about killings in shelters and about animal minds as they examine the philosophical material. The experience elicits personal transformations and activist commitments. Michael Burroughs will present on a Philosophy in K-12 Schools course that places undergraduate students as philosophy and ethics teachers in a local middle school, related graduate student-led philosophy outreach efforts (in schools, retirement communities,
and prisons), and the ethical and educational value of these forms of engaged philosophy. He will argue that these engaged philosophy projects provide for a reflexive and potentially transformative impact on participating students, the populations engaged, and the discipline of philosophy itself. Julinna Oxley will conclude the session by raising several objections to the use of experiential learning as a vehicle for social change in philosophy courses. These objections and others will be discussed further in the Q&A.