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Author(s): Evan Simpson
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BETWEEN INTERNALISM AND EXTERNALISM IN ETHICS

By Evan Simpson

Internalists in ethics hold that moral beliefs have practical implications: to accept the authority of a moral claim is to be motivated to act accordingly. Externalists reject this thesis: one can recognize that something has a morally desirable or undesirable property (it would fulfil an obligation or do harm, say) yet deny that this recognition alone provides a corresponding motive for action. The thesis of this paper is that internalism and externalism do not exhaust the possibilities. They are contrary rather than contradictory positions, and both of them are false. This suggestion has been abstractly made before, by Jonathan Dancy among others,[1] but it has lacked any psychological interpretation going much beyond questioning the obviousness of Hume's view that beliefs are motivationally inert. I shall elaborate the suggestion concretely by developing a new proposal about the contribution of moral beliefs to motivation. I shall also show how the basic issue of 'motives internalism' impinges upon 'reasons internalism' and internalist theories of the good and the right.

I. THE LOGICAL ISSUE

The basic issue is easily formulated. According to David Brink, if internalism is correct then 'moral considerations *necessarily* motivate'.[2] If externalism is correct, the relationship between moral beliefs and motives for action is only

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[1] See J. Dancy, *Moral Reasons* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), p. 6; cf. J.D. Velleman, 'The Possibility of Practical Reason', *Ethics*, 106 (1996), pp. 694–726, at p. 716.

[2] D. Brink, *Moral Realism and the Foundations of Ethics* (Cambridge UP, 1989), p. 42; cf., e.g., T. Nagel, *The Possibility of Altruism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 7.

contingent. Believing one is under a moral obligation is connected with desiring to fulfil it only if one also happens to feel sympathy towards those to whom one has the obligation, or is concerned about the impact of law or custom upon persons who neglect their obligations, or has a general desire to fulfil whatever one believes one is obliged to do, or has some other motive for compliance extrinsic to the belief in question.

Motives, on the externalist characterization, are desire-related states without which, in the Aristotelian and Humean pictures, no action can occur. In another sense of the word, motives can be distant from agency. The police may assign a motive for murder to me and my siblings when they discover that we stand to gain a handsome inheritance upon our uncle's death. The ascription of such motives need not be a psychological characterization, since we may lack any vestige of intention or inclination to act, and might never have considered that we had a motive before being in-formed that we were suspects. These 'motives' are not central to the debate, since externalists can grant that beliefs entail them without conceding any-thing to internalists about inclinations to act.

Externalists rightly seek a concession from internalists, who appear to ignore instances of moral indifference and other kinds of failure to connect beliefs with motives in the sense primary for the issue at hand. However, it is possible to rescue conceptual connections between beliefs and motives by specifying logical relations weaker than logical necessitation. We can say, for example, that one kind of thing *logically depends* upon another if it is logically impossible for things of the first kind always to occur in the absence of the second, but logically possible that the first should sometimes occur alone. This is a logical relationship, but unlike necessitation it does not make it logically impossible for the first thing to occur without the second's also occurring.

This sort of logical relationship is well recognized in other areas of philosophy. One example can be found in Wittgenstein's notion of criteria, on which mental states are in their nature expressible even if they are not always expressed. For instance, pain is typically but not invariably associated with pain behaviour. This is not a contingent relationship, because although it is possible for pain to occur unaccompanied by pain behaviour, it is im-possible for pain never to be manifested in behaviour. Another example is clearly to be seen in Donald Davidson's view that 'most of a person's beliefs must be true', although it is not necessarily the case that any one particular belief is true. The impossibility (if such it is) of massive error enables Davidson to say 'belief is in its nature veridical'.[3]

[3] Davidson, 'A Coherence Theory of Truth and Knowledge', in E. LePore (ed.), *Truth and Interpretation: Perspectives on the Philosophy of Donald Davidson* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), at p. 314.

It is not my intention to endorse the views of Wittgenstein or Davidson, or any general account of necessary yet defeasible relationships. I aim only to explicate one such relationship and defend it. If saying that it is possible for a person's beliefs to occur 'sometimes' but 'not always' in the absence of motives appears weak and uninformative, one can think instead of the motives that 'normally' accompany certain of the agent's beliefs. Dancy does this, and I shall use the same gloss myself, but the temporal concepts are in one way preferable. Their truth-conditions are clear and precise, whereas those of 'normally' are not. 'Normally' may also be too strong, suggesting connections that usually or ordinarily obtain, whereas there are circumstances discussed below in which this is not the case.

In the absence of an accepted analysis of normality, further specification of the dependency relationship can be provided, not by more logical analysis, but by a psychological interpretation of moral dispositions. This is needed because nothing in logic alone makes sense of a modal connection between beliefs and motives. The psychological character of the interpretation also clarifies an important point. Speaking only of a general conceptual relationship between 'moral beliefs and motives' would not provide a convincing formulation of logical dependency, which should characterize a relationship between the beliefs and motives of particular agents. It is not enough that motivation normally accompanies moral beliefs across a community or the species. That would be a significant concession to externalism, since there could then be any number of people whose moral beliefs never motivated them. I therefore claim that motivation is included in the moral beliefs of individual people. It is part of making moral judgements that one is sometimes moved in virtue of the content of those judgements.

Suppose, then, that some beliefs and motives are related through logical dependency in this way, so that these beliefs are in their nature practical. Would internalism be vindicated? No, because on a given occasion one can have a belief without having any motivation at all. However, externalism would not be vindicated either, because the relationship between beliefs and motivations is not contingent: it is necessarily the case that anyone who has beliefs of this kind will sometimes be motivated to act.

II. A PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION

Are there any beliefs of this kind? Yes, and there are moral beliefs among them. Both points are readily evident as long as affective states are not assumed to be fundamentally non-cognitive. One of the most interesting

features of the beliefs typical of familiar emotions is that (speaking a little loosely for the moment) they are not always motivationally inert, but possess the disposition which I shall often summarize as 'concern'. At least some moral beliefs belong to this larger family of emotional beliefs, and can be expected to share their dispositional property. Taking first a simple non-moral illustration, the belief in impending danger which is typical of fear: to have beliefs about danger is normally to be concerned about the situation to which they apply. Normally they motivate us, but it also sometimes happens that we recognize something as dangerous without having any concern at all. This may occur in cases of emotional exhaustion or when the danger perceived lies so far in the future as to be beyond the normal scope of prudence. There are also cases of foolish overconfidence.

Concern does not always result in action, since one may have a motive without acting upon it. It is plausible only to say that where a motive is present one is disposed to act unless certain conditions constrain one or render concern inactive. On this point there is no inherent difference between internalism and externalism, since the issue lies in the capacity of beliefs to include or generate concern, where internalism is challenged by the occasional impotence of emotional beliefs.

Internalism might nevertheless be saved through a further dispositional account, according to which these beliefs motivate unless certain conditions obtain. It seems sufficient to restrict the set of conditions relative to which certain beliefs do necessitate relevant motives, in a way indicated by my examples. The belief that one is threatened by harm necessitates motivating concern, provided one is not exhausted or foolishly overconfident, the harm does not lie too far in the future, etc. It may not be possible to give an exhaustive enumeration of the additional conditions that must be satisfied in order for belief to entail motivation, but it is possible to say at least that, necessarily, where belief occurs and no defeating circumstances are present, then motivation occurs as well. One might speak here of a presumption of motive. Motivation is necessarily present unless a defeating condition obtains, in which case the presumption is falsified in that instance but not generally. Since this dispositional account retains necessitation as the rela-tionship between beliefs and motives, it remains strictly internalist.

There is a problem with this view for internalists, however. A necessary connection between beliefs and motives should be explicable, whereas the proposal simply asserts the existence of a connection, without in any way explaining it or justifying confidence that all potential defeaters of internal-ism have something in common that makes it possible to identify the unusual cases when they occur. James Dreier says that 'What the sceptic really suspects is that the only way of capturing the commonality is: "case in

which A believes x is good and A is not motivated to promote x".... The upshot of internalism would be to point to a common object of desire, note that there are exceptions, and then dress this fact in a specious logical thesis.'[4] We are owed an account of why one *must* be motivated by impending danger, other things being equal – but resorting to a technical device to save internalism does not provide this. Dispositional internalism does little to remedy the obscurity accepted by the early emotivists in suggesting that moral claims convey a 'very subtle ... suggestion' through 'complicated instinctive reasons', influencing action 'through the contagion of ... feelings'.[5] Moreover, because resorting to defeasibility conditions does not explain what it is about beliefs that enables them to motivate, it leaves externalists able to suppose that the connection is contingent after all, needing to be completed by desire.

If externalists are mainly interested in defeating the internalist thesis that beliefs necessarily motivate, then dispositional internalism is a good response. If their challenge is that beliefs alone cannot possibly motivate or even that the motivating capacity of beliefs is mysterious, then the response is insufficient. What the argument needs is a fuller explication of the connections between beliefs and motives, one that represents beliefs neither as always linked to motives nor as obscure sources of motives. The psychological interpretation of the dependency account offers an explication when augmented by a semantic characterization that shows how emotional beliefs figure in motivation.

David Wiggins has suggested such a characterization for the efficacy of certain beliefs, in proposing that 'a property and an attitude are made for one another', so that 'it will be strange for someone to use the term for the property if he is in no way party to the attitude in question'.[6] My explanation of this strangeness identifies an aspect of linguistic competence. In the case of the property of dangerousness and the attitude of fear, the dependency account ties the meaning of 'danger' to a motivating attitude. Nothing would constitute a danger if nothing were ever feared. Given the connection between fear and danger, though, the identification of something as dangerous gives the belief an inherent link to action, even though this link is not necessitation. Such a connection is equally clear in the case of moral emotions, for example, pity, which leads me to want to remove your suffering because I regard it as a bad thing. If I did not believe it to be bad, my rationale for helping you might simply be to relieve myself of this

[4] J. Dreier, 'Internalism and Speaker Relativism', *Ethics*, 101 (1990), pp. 6–26, at pp. 12–13.
[5] C.L. Stevenson, *Facts and Values: Studies in Ethical Analysis* (Yale UP, 1963), pp. 17, 23, 29.
[6] D. Wiggins, 'A Sensible Subjectivism?', in *Needs, Values, Truth: Essays in the Philosophy of Value* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987), p. 199.

distressing emotion rather than to cause your pain to stop. The evil of suffering is tied to pity as danger is tied to fear, so that to identify suffering as evil normally motivates, though sometimes one may harden one's heart against it. This inherent tendency is not consistent with an externalist account on which my moral belief that people ought not to suffer leads me to act when conjoined with the contingent fact of sympathy. The problem is that I would not have the moral belief at all if I did not sometimes feel the pity that includes the perception that someone is suffering miserably. But it is not consistent with an internalist account either, since I can have this be-lief and not care to help. It is only that I cannot both have beliefs of this kind and never care to help.

III. HOW BELIEFS MAY MOTIVATE

This view might be taken to share much the same error as the internalist thesis that it is impossible to hold certain beliefs without being motivated to act on them. Thus one instance of my view is that, necessarily, on occasions of perceiving that something is threatening to me, I am sometimes motivated to escape it: it cannot be that I believe myself endangered but am never motivated. However, it seems easy to imagine Stoics who have trained themselves to have no concern for the harms that come to them. They would hardly agree with my claim that 'nothing would constitute a danger if we were not sometimes concerned in this way', for the point of their reflection is to escape the disturbing impulses previously caused by recog-nizing harm. But this case presents no serious difficulty, for our Stoics are people who were once motivated by fear of harm. Having now subdued their emotions, they can still be said to understand the concept of danger, and it remains true that to perceive that something is dangerous is, in the standard logical sense, sometimes to be appropriately motivated. Some such background is needed in order to understand someone who sincerely claims to believe that something is dangerous but displays complete equanimity when confronted by it.

   This background has been described by psychologists who study the effects of brain damage on emotion. Persons whose intelligence seems unim-paired, who are not lacking in social knowledge and have a normal capacity for attention and memory, may become dispassionate spectators insensitive to displays of 'buildings collapsing in earthquakes, houses burning, people injured in gory accidents or about to drown in floods'. One patient reported 'without equivocation that his own feelings had changed from before his illness. He could sense how topics that once had evoked a strong emotion no

longer caused any reaction, positive or negative.'[7] Although this inadvertent Stoic may no longer be concerned to choose an advantageous course of action, his ability to remember making appropriate practical decisions reinforces the logical thesis that having emotional beliefs requires sometimes having a characteristic motive.

In order to see the peculiarity of this case in more useful detail, let us consider an interesting variation in which normal people try to master the concept of danger by learning about possible circumstances in which fear would be appropriate without ever facing actual threats. Having learnt to use the word 'dangerous' through such imaginative understanding, people could steel their emotions before facing things they deem to be in fact dangerous. They would then have beliefs about dangerous things without having had to experience emotional concern about them. Of course this is a fantastic scenario, whose implausibility may limit its relevance for ethical theory. None the less the case is readily generalized to any other physically normal but affectless agent whose unconcern about recognized danger constitutes an apparent counter-example for the thesis that understanding danger depends upon sometimes being motivated by fear.[8] However, there is actually a failure of understanding if in such cases we can take seriously the proposition that the meaning of 'danger' ties it to action. It is then possible to see that affectless agents can recognize that events may make them worse off – they may do damage to their bodies by smoking, say – but also that this recognition falls short of demonstrating mastery of the concept of danger by these persons. This distinction needs further explanation, but its basis is that an objective description differs from an emotional characterization, only the latter being logically related to motivation. The fearless agent does not understand why one should be concerned about danger, just as a pitiless observer does not understand why a creature's suffering can demand a response. In contrast with the Stoic, our affectless learner has a truncated concept of danger and suffering.

The distinction between an objective description and an emotional characterization leaves it open for a fearless agent to be averse to physical injury. In this case the motive for action will be conjoined to the perception of impending damage as an independent desire to avoid it. Here we have the contingent connection identified by externalists. People who want to act on stage normally do not want to break a leg, but the motive to step cautiously derives from this independent desire (along with many others, no

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[7] A.R. Damasio, *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1994), p. 45.

[8] See A.R. Mele, 'Internalist Moral Cognitivism and Listlessness', *Ethics*, 106 (1996), pp. 727–53.

doubt). This is not the connection typical of the perception of danger. Recognizing dangers includes a characterization of them as fearful, making it unnecessary to look beyond these evils for an originating motive. Understanding what danger is should be distinguished in this way from understanding such purely descriptive expressions as 'breaking a leg' or 'being physically injured', the grasp of which need exhibit no emotional competences or motivational tendencies. Externalism correctly displays one pattern of practical reasoning, but in neglecting the difference between descriptive and emotional beliefs it fails to recognize how the latter can be tied in a dependency relationship to motivation.

By placing a semantic question at the heart of the issue between internalism and externalism, I am obliged to explain why exactly there is a failure of understanding when affectless agents ascribe danger to things. The obvious manifestation of the problem is that such ascriptions do not distinguish properly between the role of intrinsic and instrumental values in assessing elements of practical reasoning. To be physically injured, damaged, hurt or incapacitated is instrumentally undesirable for anyone whose purposes depend upon a healthy body, but these descriptions do not warrant the judgement that they are fear-worthy. People for whom the only real dangers are spiritual would contest the judgement. Everyone can agree that dangerous things are fear-worthy – danger is intrinsically undesirable – but it is more difficult to agree about which things these are. Externalism recognizes that no description of the objects of one's particular desires by itself establishes that these objects are dangerous or fear-worthy. In order to make this connection, fear must have a constitutive role in identifying dangerous things. Although no instance of the emotion establishes the validity of the characterization on a particular occasion, familiarity with the emotion is essential for posing the question. The emotion is thus a condition of competent judgements of fear-worthiness, placing such judgements beyond the capacity of affectless agents. This distinctive property of emotional judgement is especially clear in the case of pity for others. Recognizing undue suffering stands to recognizing another's pain as recognizing danger stands to anticipating physical injury. The perception of another's pain alone does not warrant pity, since many pains must simply be borne. I mention below just one example of persons whose various distresses make no plausible claim for relief by others. Pitiful suffering is only recognized emotionally, and only that recognition includes a motive to help.

The nature of this inclusion is now evident. Certain characterizations depend (in the sense I have specified) upon emotional states that entail purposes, so that the beliefs these characterizations express must sometimes express concern as well. Pity entails the desire to help. The perception of

pain and suffering does not; but judgements about suffering possess the features necessary for ensuring that motivation sometimes occurs. This is not quite to insist that beliefs sometimes motivate. To say that beliefs motivate or include motives is acceptable shorthand for the more complex idea that being able to formulate an emotional belief entails sometimes being motivated to achieve the purpose characteristic of the emotion in question. It is not to say, with internalists, that the belief may motivate in the absence of the emotion, nor is it to say, with externalists, that the belief motivates only when conjoined with factors logically independent of it.

Externalism thrives in discussions limited to 'thin' moral considerations such as goodness and obligation, but the subtler vocabulary of emotional belief permits ambiguities between pain and suffering, injury and danger, to be displayed, and the active role of emotional belief to be identified. As I have suggested, externalism is also analytically adequate when action is motivated by sympathetic feelings that attach contingently to the moral belief that pain should be alleviated; but this sympathy is to be distinguished from the pity that has a belief about suffering as an integral part. Externalism is again plausible in accounts of conventional moral practices: having made a promise, one is under an obligation, but may have no desire to keep it. However, such special obligations are generally recognized as being amenable to prudential analysis: promising, as Hume said, is part of the 'interested commerce of mankind'. Whoever makes a promise 'is immediately bound by his interest to execute his engagements, and must never expect to be trusted any more, if he refuse to perform what he promis'd' (*Treatise* III ii 5). It is notable that trust is here conflated with reliance, which can be warranted by knowledge of a person's dependable habits or prudential motives that are compatible with ill will.[9] The desire to be relied upon can thus be satisfied by a calculating person. By contrast, the desire to be trusted is characteristic of conscientious persons who are motivated to keep their promises even if it goes against their interest to do so. Being trustworthy rather than merely reliable, they lack ulterior motives. They are also capable of recognizing that others may be similarly motivated, and thus have the capacity to trust others whom they believe to be of good character, in a way merely reliable persons do not. It is unclear how an externalist account could accommodate trust of this kind, whereas on the dependency account it is an affective–cognitive state which explains how the acceptance of an obligation can motivate morally rather than prudentially.

This concludes my defence of a dependency thesis which identifies a middle ground between internalism and externalism; but I should add that

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[9] Cf. A. Baier, 'Trust and Antitrust', *Ethics*, 96 (1986), pp. 231–60, at p. 234.

this middle ground is wider than a single theory. I can offer any who yet remain unconvinced a weaker thesis which still occupies an intermediate position. In contrast with my view that merely understanding the concept of danger entails sometimes being concerned for security, there is another possible view, that having first-person beliefs about danger, believing that one is personally threatened, entails that one must sometimes be concerned. Some of the affectless agents who loomed as counter-examples for my stronger thesis do not threaten this view: even if they have never felt endangered, they may understand that, necessarily, agents who believe themselves to be in a dangerous situation are sometimes motivated to escape it. Since almost everyone has first-person beliefs about danger, this weaker dependency thesis applies to almost everyone; but, for the reasons already given, it does not represent either of the standard views. The weaker thesis also mitigates the problem of conceding to externalism the possibility that some people might never be motivated by certain moral beliefs. Rare individuals may understand the concept of suffering, for example, without ever being motivated to help relieve it. They may believe that no such duty ever applies to them, as those who merely rely upon others feel bound only by requirements of prudence. It will require more subtle enquiry to determine whether they have none the less mastered the concept of suffering, so that the contest between weak and strong dependency has still to be decided. But it does not have to be decided in order to reject both internalism and externalism.

IV. DEPENDENCY AND THE GOOD

Brink (pp. 45, 49) complains that internalism may make moral theories hostage to agents' desires: if, thinking as internalists, we believe that people are morally obliged to do something but find that some people have no desire to do it, then our beliefs about their obligations need revision. A dependency view lacks this implication, because its less stringent logical requirement makes emotional beliefs subject to refinement, correction and occasional rejection on grounds other than agents' desires. Good judgement is demonstrated when emotions survive examination, just as an empirical claim is demonstrated when observation adequately confirms it. To be capable of fear is to have a place for danger in one's conception of the world and to be in a position to assert that there are dangerous things; but which things are really dangerous can be reflectively considered. A child who fears going to the doctor may later see that nothing fearful happens there, so that the emotional belief was misplaced. The child's parent, who at first finds the

child's mental pain an object of pity, may lose patience if the child does not learn this lesson soon enough but rather, in the parent's judgement, suffers without good reason. In these simple cases, we have obvious examples of acceptable tests of appropriateness that are readily available.

Accepting such tests again displays an important but incomplete agreement between the internalist and dependency accounts of belief and motivation. In both cases it is reasonable to insist that in matters of moral judgement there is nothing more fundamental than genuinely possible human sentiments (cf. Wiggins p. 188). Nevertheless emotional beliefs remain free from subjection to agents' desires, in virtue of their capacity to shape the second-order desires that have desires as their objects, including desires not to have certain desires. My belief that routine pain does not justify pity may lead me to want to be free of the desires typical of sentimental people. Caution should be observed here, however. To specify some desires as undesirable is to offer beliefs which belong to one's conception of the good, but I hesitate to elaborate these formal points into a strictly internalist theory of the good. It is a plausible thesis that something can be good for a person only if that person cares about it or would care about it in appropriate circumstances,[10] but if the tendency to this motivational engagement is construed along the lines of the dispositional internalism I criticized earlier, it is subject to a similar failure of explanation. Why may one not fail to care about one's good, just as one may be unmoved by evil? The possibility can be acknowledged without accepting that one can be radically mistaken about one's good, by recognizing that the logical connection with motivation falls short of necessitation. Because beliefs about one's good share the emotional conditions of understanding evils, one cannot always be unconcerned about it. This thesis displays the pattern of logical dependency, suggesting that an acceptable theory of the good must include its own compromise between internalism and externalism.

V. REASONS INTERNALISM AND EXTERNALISM

Assuming that there is a dependency relation between certain beliefs and motives, it is interesting to ask whether this relation also holds between beliefs and reasons. Then, necessarily, when I perceive that something is dangerous to me, sometimes I have a reason to be concerned about it. It follows that externalism as a thesis about reasons is as mistaken as when it is a thesis about motives. However, it is arguable that reasons are entailed by

[10] See C.S. Rosati, 'Internalism and the Good for a Person', *Ethics*, 106 (1996), pp. 297–326, at pp. 307–8.

emotional beliefs, so that, necessarily, *whenever* I perceive that something is dangerous to me, I have a reason to be concerned. This internalism about reasons is plausible, although the thesis needs to be qualified to the extent that recognition of the reason is tied to prior experience of the emotion.

The pattern is similar in the moral case. Whenever I pity others, I believe that something is hurtful to them, giving me a reason to offer relief even if I am not always motivated to provide it. Of course, I might note that although concern would be appropriate, it is not rationally incumbent upon me, and wonder whether there can be reason to help even where no disposition to help occurs. The parochialness of pity may seem to justify saying that there is not. One cannot help all of those one knows to suffer, so that care should be observed in saying that one ought to. Similar care should be taken in saying that one is obliged to help all those whom one can, since the circumstances of friends and neighbours make claims upon compassion which distant strangers do not.[11] However, these reflections are without force if the obligations that should be considered are *prima facie* obligations. The *ought implies can* principle does not apply to the *prima facie* obligation to help all who suffer, and the *prima facie* obligation to help strangers in distress may be defeated by a more urgent obligation to help close friends. Internalism about moral reasons is preserved, although again only against the background of the dependency relationship that ties the capacity for reasons to sometimes experiencing fear, pity and the like.

My identification of a position between internalism and externalism in ethics may not be fully general in another respect. Nothing said here definitively rules out the occurrence of moral beliefs that are not emotional beliefs. The principles of right central to a line of thinking from Kant to Rawls represent a notion of purely rational agents for whom, as Dancy describes them, 'emotions ... are not necessary ... for the discovery of moral truth'.[12] The truth might include the need to view strangers as objects of justice if not compassion. Should there be a class of emotion-independent moral beliefs, the internalism/externalism debate remains alive for them, although perhaps only barely alive. Kant develops a form of internalism in which reason governs desire only by postulating an empirically unconditioned motivational basis for heeding moral demands. Externalists might reasonably regard this as a disguised concession to their position, for in its own way it renders the force of moral beliefs as mysterious as in Stevenson's account. In any event, my account of moral motivation is potentially general. In contrast with Dancy's, its psychological interpretation of the

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[11] Cf. A. Gibbard, *Wise Choices, Apt Feelings: a Theory of Normative Judgement* (Harvard UP, 1990), pp. 126–7, on anger.

[12] Dancy, 'Caring about Justice', *Philosophy*, 67 (1992), pp. 447–66, at p. 448.

dependency relationship suggests a scarcity of reasons for thinking that moral truth can be identified independently of moral emotions. Beliefs about right and justice can themselves be identified in the passions of recti- tude, that is, emotions of anger and indignation, resentment and respect. The meanings of these concepts, too, are tied to motivating attitudes.

VI. FURTHER VIRTUES OF THE ACCOUNT

I have not claimed that my account of logical dependency provides the only intermediate position available between internalism and externalism. It is part of Dancy's view, for example, that there are 'intrinsically motivating' beliefs with the properties needed for defining an alternative position and making the standard dichotomy questionable. Unlike 'essentially motivating' states, intrinsically motivating beliefs 'can be present without motivating, but ... when they do motivate [they] do so in their own right' (*Moral Reasons* p. 24). These beliefs may on occasion be deprived of their normal motiva- tional force, but when they possess that force, it is built into them. However, as formulated by Dancy, this position is difficult to distinguish from dispositional internalism, which leaves open the possibility that one could have personal moral beliefs that never motivate because defeating condi- tions are always present. Dreier's objection then applies. A particular virtue of a dependency account is that it blocks this, and thereby preserves the essential point that a satisfactory intermediate position can be defined. There is reason to worry that any weaker account of relationships between beliefs and motives leads down the slippery slope towards externalism, as a stronger modal connection slides into internalism. The primary alternative to a logical or semantic relationship between moral beliefs and motives is a strong and deep, but contingent, connection between judgement and concern. No such connection satisfies the internalists' view of practical reasoning.

Dancy's view might alternatively be compared with the weaker depend- ency view outlined above. It accepts that one may *retain* a moral belief without retaining the original motivation, making it only a small further step to acknowledging that one may *acquire* such a belief without having any mot- ivation to act (cf. Mele p. 749). In this case the belief might never become motivating, but the weaker view allows this for all except first-person beliefs. However, two problems remain. Dancy's view is not precisely enough articulated to determine where to place it among possible accounts. Moreover, while a full examination of contenders for the middle ground constitutes a further task, the weaker view leaves it unexplained how, in any

normal case, one might understand emotional concepts without ever having the associated concern.

The more comprehensive virtues of the present suggestion are provided by the details of the plausible philosophical psychology with which it naturally connects and by the absence of any need to refer to moral facts in articulating this psychology. The authority of moral belief depends rather upon a capacity to interpret the world emotionally, which is to say meaningfully, consistently, richly and collaboratively. There is therefore no evident need to be diverted into the epistemological competition between cognitivism and non-cognitivism or the metaphysical competition between realism and anti-realism which forestall any resolution of the central logical question of defining the space between internalism and externalism in ethics.[13]

Memorial University of Newfoundland