

SOUTHWEST PHILOSOPHY REVIEW

Editor

Todd Stewart, Illinois State University

Area Editors

Robyn Gaier (Moral Philosophy), Viterbo University  
Sarah Woolwine (Continental Philosophy), University of Central Oklahoma

Advisory Board

Randal Auxier, Southern Illinois University Carbondale  
David Beisecker, University of Nevada-Las Vegas  
Joseph Bien, University of Missouri-Columbia  
Gregg Caruso, SUNY Corning Community College  
E.M. Dadlez, University of Central Oklahoma  
Deborah Heikes, University of Alabama in Huntsville  
David Hildebrand, University of Colorado-Denver  
Russ Jacobs, Washburn University  
Julie Kuhken  
Alastair Norcross, University of Colorado-Boulder  
Kenneth Rogerson, Florida International University  
Stuart Rosenbaum, Baylor University  
Thomas Senor, University of Arkansas  
J.K. Swindler, Illinois State University  
Robert Talisse, Vanderbilt

Southwestern Philosophical Society Executive Committee

President: Mark Silcox, University of Central Oklahoma  
Vice-President: Robyn Gaier, Viterbo University  
Secretary-Treasurer: Deborah Heikes, University of Alabama in Huntsville

Executive Committee Members at Large

John Symons, University of Kansas  
Scott Aikin, Vanderbilt

WebMaster

David Hildebrand, University of Colorado-Denver  
<http://www.southwesternphilosophical.org/>

SOUTHWEST PHILOSOPHY REVIEW  
Vol. 33, No. 1  
January, 2017

ARTICLES

- MARK SILCOX  
HOMO LUDENS REVISITED  
PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS  
1
- CHRISTOPHER M.P. TOMASZEWSKI  
INTENTIONALITY AS PARTIAL IDENTITY  
15
- CHRISTOPHER A. BOBIER  
DEFLATING MOODS  
25
- SAMUEL ARNOLD  
SOCIAL EQUALITY AND THE DUTY TO PARTICIPATE IN  
PERSONAL AND POLITICAL RELATIONSHIPS  
33
- MATTHEW WILSON  
IS EPISTEMIC PERMISSIVISM A CONSISTENT  
POSITION TO ARGUE FROM?  
43
- DEBORAH K. HEIKES  
ON BEING REASONABLY DIFFERENT  
53
- TORSTEN MENGE  
THE UNCANNY EFFECT OF TELLING GENEALOGIES  
63
- DON BERKICH  
THE PROBLEM OF ORIGINAL AGENCY  
75
- R. BENSEN CAIN  
MALICE AND THE RIDICULOUS AS SELF-IGNORANCE:  
A DIALECTICAL ARGUMENT IN PHILEBUS 47D-50E  
83
- ANDREW MORGAN  
SOLVING THE PUZZLE OF AESTHETIC ASSERTION  
95
- LARRY ALAN BUSK  
TWO WOMEN IN FLIGHT IN BEAUVOIR'S FICTION  
105



<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank the participants at the Southwestern Philosophical Society's 2016 conference in Corpus Christi, especially Robyn Gaier, for their helpful feedback.

Works Cited

- Beedie, Christopher, Peter Terry, and Andrew Lane. (2005) Distinctions Between Emotion and Mood. *Cognition & Emotion* 19(6): 847-878.
- Clore, Gerald L., Norbert Schwarz, and Michael Conway. (1994) Affective Causes and Consequences of Social Information Processing. In Robert Wyer, Jr. and Thomas Skroll (eds.), *Handbook of Social Cognition* (pp. 323-417). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- Frijda, Nico H. (2010) Moods, Emotion Episodes, and Emotions. In Michael Lewis and Jeannette M. Haviland-Jones (eds.), *Handbook of Emotions* (pp. 381-403). New York: Guilford Press.
- Goldie, Peter. (2009) Getting Feelings into Emotional Experience in the Right Way. *Emotion Review* 1(3): 232-239.
- Lerner, Jennifer S. and Dacher Keltner. (2001) Fear, Anger, and Risk. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 81(1): 146-159.
- Lorrand, Eric. (1985) Toward a Theory of Moods. *Philosophical Studies* 47(3): 385-407.
- Russell, James A. (2003) Core Affect and the Psychological Construction of Emotion. *Psychological Review* 110(1): 145-172.
- Siemer, Matthias. (2001) Mood-Specific Effects on Appraisal and Emotion Judgments. *Cognition & Emotion* 15(4): 453-485.
- \_\_\_\_\_. (2005) Moods as Multiple-Object Directed and as Objectless Affective States: An Examination of the Dispositional Theory of Moods. *Cognition & Emotion* 19(6): 815-845.
- \_\_\_\_\_. (2009) Mood Experience: Implications of a Dispositional Theory of Moods. *Emotion Review* 1(3): 256-263.

Social Equality and the Duty to Participate in Personal and Political Relationships

Samuel Arnold

TCU

It is commonly thought that while people should have equal *opportunity* to participate in processes of personal and political decision-making, morality does not require individuals to *exercise* this opportunity. Non-participation is morally neutral. Or is it? In this essay I draw on recent work in the literature on "social egalitarianism" to construct a novel defense of the duty to participate in decision-making, both within personal relationships and (more controversially) within certain political relationships as well. Social egalitarianism holds (*inter alia*) that "justice requires the establishment of a society of equals, a society whose members relate on a footing of equality" (Scheffler, 2015, p. 21).<sup>1</sup> My core claim is that good-faith participation from all members is essential to realizing such a society. If—as is required by justice—people are to live together as equals, then each of them must participate, at least occasionally, in many of the processes through which decisions affecting their common affairs are reached. This social egalitarian duty to participate applies most clearly and forcefully in small-scale settings where one's participation might actually make a difference. These include not only personal relationships like friendships and romantic partnerships, but also certain political relationships, such as those between members of the same neighborhood association, town, or workplace. Insofar as one's participation in these distinctively political settings is integral to the satisfaction of egalitarian norms, one has a duty to participate in these settings as well, or so I argue.

The upshot is that *one has a duty to participate in at least certain kinds of political activity*: a result that is both practically relevant and theoretically interesting, since it conflicts with much recent work on the ethics of participation.<sup>2</sup>

1. Social Egalitarianism

According to the social egalitarian ideal, relationships, whether personal or political, should be relationships among equals. To satisfy this ideal, relationships must meet at least the following two conditions.<sup>3</sup>

First, all parties to the relationship must have roughly equal power to influence decisions affecting the relationship. If I enjoy significantly

greater control than you over these matters, then ours is not a relationship between equals. (Consider, for instance, relations between a parent and his or her 5-year-old child.) Call this requirement *equal power*.

Second, the relationship must be marked by *equal concern* for the interests of all members. ("Interests" should be understood broadly to include needs, values, and preferences.) This requirement of equal concern is met insofar as the "equally important interests" of all members of the relationship "play an equally significant role in influencing decisions made within the context of the relationship" (Scheffler, 2015, p. 25). No one's preferences, values, or needs may be discounted or ignored. Instead, decisions made within the relationship must be equally sensitive to the equally important interests of all members.

To illustrate, suppose that you and I are deciding what to make for dinner. You want chicken; I want tofu; our preferences are of equal strength; and for some reason, it is not possible to make both foods. Suppose I were to say: "I know you want chicken, but I simply don't care what you want. So let's make tofu." This would be a (rather egregious) failure of equal concern. Much better—because more egalitarian—would be a reply that tries to accommodate both of our interests, such as the following: "Well, we seem to be at a culinary impasse. What about chicken tonight and tofu tomorrow? Or perhaps you have a better idea: I am all ears."<sup>4</sup>

Notice that equal power and equal concern can come apart. The relationship between a parent and a child, for instance, might satisfy equal concern, but (as noted above) it does not satisfy equal power. (Or, of course, it might satisfy neither, as when a parent systematically favors his or her own interests over the equally important interests of the child, thus violating equal concern.) The inverse configuration is also possible. Imagine a relationship between two equally capable adversaries, both of whom are disposed not only to discount, but actually to oppose the interests of the other when making joint decisions. ("She wants chicken for dinner? Tofu it is, then!") This relationship would realize equal power, but not equal concern.

Still, we might expect that relationships satisfying equal power would tend, in the normal course of things, to satisfy equal concern. Or at least they would if the parties to the relationship were *committed* to satisfying equal concern (as they should be, by social egalitarian lights). If you and I have equal power to influence our relationship, and if we both *want* our relationship to be equally sensitive to the equally important interests of each, then surely—over the long run at least—our relationship will in fact tend to be equally sensitive to the equally important interests of each?

No, not necessarily. There is a missing ingredient here: namely, the

good-faith participation of all parties to the relationship.

## 2. Participation and Social Equality

The idea that social equality requires participation is surprisingly controversial. Niko Kolodny, for instance, writes that what matters for social equality "is opportunity for influence, not the exercise of this opportunity" (2014, p. 309). There is some truth to Kolodny's claim. Non-participation leaves intact *one* prerequisite of social equality, namely, equal power. You and I could have perfectly equal power over, say, dinner choices, even if I never actually deploy this power. However, social egalitarian relationships must feature equal concern as well as equal power, and (as I will now demonstrate) it is this requirement that non-participation jeopardizes.

To draw this out, imagine that you and your partner must decide a complex issue of mutual concern—say, where to send the kids to school. Further suppose that your partner knows very little about your opinion on this issue (perhaps it has never come up before). "I'm torn," your partner says. "The local public school seems pretty bad, but private schools are really expensive. Maybe we should homeschool? But are we really qualified to direct the kids' education? Plus, how would we find the time to teach the kids while working?" Now suppose you were to reply: "Your choice, honey. I'm sure you'll figure it out."

This would be, of course, a rather flip and dismissive move to make, given the gravity of the decision and your partner's obvious desire for joint deliberation. But more than this, it would be an *inegalitarian* move to make. By declining to participate, you are jeopardizing equal concern.

This is so for multiple reasons. First, your non-participation makes it much less likely that the decision will be appropriately sensitive to your interests. By hypothesis, your partner doesn't know what your interests are in this particular case. How, then, could he or she possibly take your interests regarding school choice into proper account? The answer is that he or she can't. Absent your participation, then, your relationship—with respect to this decision, at least—will not satisfy equal concern, hence, will not conform to social egalitarian standards.<sup>5</sup>

Further reasons why your non-participation is anti-egalitarian come into view when we shift from your perspective to that of your partner. Now, at first glance, it may seem that your non-participation cannot possibly damage any of your partner's interests. After all, by declining to participate, you are empowering your partner to choose whatever option he or she deems best. Isn't this optimal, from his or her point of view? No, not necessarily. For three main reasons, your partner may lament rather

than celebrate your non-participation. The first has to do with outcomes; the second, with mutual acceptability; and the third, with sharing the burdens of decision-making.

*Outcomes.* Often, a person's main concern is to reach a good decision rather than to enjoy any particular degree of control over that decision. We might describe this as having an "outcome orientation" as opposed to a "control orientation." Now, there are conceivable cases in which having an outcome orientation dictates seeking greater control. Suppose you badly bungle any decision you touch: your mere involvement in a decision-making process leads to worse results. Then your partner has good reason to seek unilateral control, not for its own sake, but for the sake of producing a better outcome. In this sort of fringe case, your non-participation, far from undermining your partner's interest in realizing good outcomes, actually promotes it.

However, it is important to see that this is a fringe case: few of us subtract more than we add to processes of joint decision-making. Usually, more inclusive processes are epistemically better processes.<sup>6</sup> Why might this be? The basic reason (at which I can only gesture here) is that collective deliberation pools information and arguments, enabling the *hoi polloi* to judge better than the excellent few (in Aristotle's famous formulation). More heads, as the saying goes, are better than one.<sup>7</sup>

*Mutual acceptability.* Earlier I argued that your non-participation makes it less likely that your specific opinions will receive appropriate consideration. This is obviously bad for you. But it is also bad for your partner, assuming that he or she—*qua* committed egalitarian—wants to reach a decision that is not merely correct from some objective standpoint, but which can be *seen* to be correct—or at least sufficiently reasonable—from the subjective perspectives of all relevant parties. This desire, which seems integral to social equality in general and to equal concern in particular, is a desire for mutual acceptability. Egalitarians do not want to ram decisions, even good decisions, down the throats of partners who cannot perceive that these decisions are indeed good. Here we see the importance of participation: what better way to test a decision for mutual acceptability than actual dialogue and deliberation among all affected parties? After all, the surest evidence that someone finds a particular outcome acceptable is his or her explicit, considered, unforced approval. Yet when you fail to participate, you short-circuit this reliable method for reaching mutually agreeable decisions. You force the decider to guess, rather than know, which policies or outcomes you could live with. This runs contrary to *your* interests (you might be saddled with a choice you cannot accept) but *also to those of your partner*, who—being

an egalitarian—wants (among other things) to author decisions that are acceptable to all involved.

*Shared burdens of decision-making.* Consider one final interest jeopardized by non-participation: the interest, held by many, in sharing the cognitive and moral burdens associated with decision-making. Being in charge has its drawbacks. Decision-making can be time- and energy-intensive. It can be tedious and unenjoyable. More than this, it puts the decider in a potentially unwanted position of power. Some people simply don't want to decide for others, even if they would decide well. Others would be fine with deciding, provided they would decide well, but they doubt whether they *can* decide well on their own. In light of these considerations, many people reasonably reject a "control orientation," preferring instead to share the various burdens—cognitive, temporal, and moral—of decision-making. But insofar as this is the case, then equal concern for everyone's interests (including those of the authority-averse) recommends a roughly egalitarian distribution of decision-making tasks. Such a distribution, in turn, rules out non-participation: you can't bear your fair share of the decision-making burden while sitting on the sidelines.

In sum, systematic non-participation *does* threaten social equality. You and I cannot relate as equals if one of us rarely participates in joint decision-making. Non-participation knocks the relationship off course, making it less likely to track the interests of its members. This is pretty obvious with respect to the interests of the non-participant: how can the decider take the interests of the non-participant into appropriate account (as required by equal concern) if the non-participant does not make them known? But non-participation also threatens the interests of those parties who *do* participate. These parties generally want to reach *objectively good* decisions that are *subjectively acceptable to all*, and this through a process that *divides the cognitive and moral burdens of decision-making fairly*. As argued above, systematic non-participation undermines each of these aims. It thus represents a failure of equal concern. "You decide, honey" cannot be a general policy in a genuinely egalitarian relationship.

### 3. From the Personal to the Political?

What, it might be asked, does any of this have to do with politics? "Not much," a skeptic might reply. Perhaps it will be granted that there is a duty, rooted in equal concern, to participate in personal relationships, but why think that this duty extends beyond the personal to the political case?

In reply, notice that social egalitarian norms are meant to apply to all relationships—political as well as personal. This is true, in particular, of

equal concern.<sup>8</sup>

However, this does not yet show that individuals have an obligation to participate in political relationships. From the fact that individuals have an obligation to promote equal concern in a given relationship, a duty to participate in the decision-making processes that arise in that relationship follows *only if participating in those processes is actually a way of promoting equal concern in that relationship*. And this may be doubted in the political case for the rather compelling reason that individual political participation, being causally impotent, is not actually a way of promoting anything—hence, is not a way of promoting equal concern in particular.

To elaborate: it is a well known if discouraging fact that individual political activity makes no difference. Your votes, your political tweets, your letters to the editor, your water-cooler conversations, even your campaign contributions are but infinitesimal drops in a vast ocean of political inputs. This is not to deny the causal force of all our political inputs taken together. But it is to deny the causal force our political inputs considered singly. As Jason Brennan observes, “votes have significant value collectively but not individually...How we vote matters, but how any one of us votes does not” (2011, p. 20). The same can be said of political behavior more generally.<sup>9</sup>

But if our individual political inputs make no difference to outcomes, then they do not make any difference to *egalitarian* outcomes in particular. Vote (and tweet and donate and converse...) or not, just as you please: your behavior will have precisely zero impact on the degree to which our society realizes social egalitarian norms, including equal concern. That being the case, it makes little sense to ground an individual duty to participate in politics in a broader duty to promote egalitarian outcomes: again, individual participation is not actually a way of promoting these outcomes.

To sum up, social egalitarianism may rule out individual non-participation in *personal* relationships, but—according to the argument just sketched—it seems perfectly compatible with individual non-participation in *political* ones.

#### 4. Defending an Egalitarian Duty to Participate in (Small-scale) Politics

There are two ways to challenge this argument, corresponding to two assumptions on which the argument relies. The first assumption is that one cannot have a duty to perform an action that makes no difference. The second is that individual political participation makes no difference. Both assumptions may be questioned, but I shall focus here on the second.

To begin, notice that not all politics is national in scale. Some is local: think town halls and PTA meetings. Furthermore, not all politics involves the state or its subsidiaries. Some involves the governance of workplaces and other voluntary associations—churches, clubs, and so on. But with this diversity of political fora in view, we can see that political participation’s causal efficacy varies across cases. Granted, your input to a national election makes no difference. But can the same really be said of, say, your input to a departmental meeting? Or to a neighborhood association?

In these smaller, more participatory settings, what you say and do—or fail to say and do—can appreciably affect outcomes, and in particular, egalitarian outcomes, for all the reasons canvassed in section 2. Consistently fail to participate in departmental governance, for instance, and a host of anti-egalitarian effects loom. Decisions made are unlikely to display appropriate sensitivity to your interests (since you haven’t made these interests known). These decisions are also likely to fare worse on the *good outcomes* and *mutual acceptability* dimensions than they would have with your good faith input, thus setting back your colleagues’ interests in reaching decisions that perform well by these metrics. And finally, your coworkers certainly might resent having to bear more than their fair share of the decision-making load. So your behavior in this political setting is anything but causally impotent. What you do makes a difference. And in particular, it makes a difference for egalitarian outcomes: participate in the right way, and equal concern can be satisfied; fail to participate in the right way, and it cannot.

To be clear, this line does not establish an egalitarian duty to participate in national politics, or indeed, in any kind of politics where one’s individual contribution makes no difference.<sup>10</sup> But—together with the argument of section 2—it does establish an egalitarian duty to participate in “politics in the small,” as it were. In short: Where one’s participation is integral to realizing equal concern, one’s participation is morally obligatory; in at least some political settings, one’s participation is indeed integral to realizing equal concern; therefore, in at least some political settings, one’s participation is morally obligatory.

#### 5. Conclusion

Living together as equals is no easy task. As Scheffler writes, “sustaining an egalitarian relationship requires creativity, the exercise of judgment, and ongoing mutual commitment” (2015, p. 30). It requires, in short, the good-faith participation of all parties. Or so I have argued here. This participatory requirement applies most clearly to personal relationships,

as suggested in section 2. But it also applies beyond these relationships. As argued in sections 3 and 4, social egalitarians should recognize a duty to participate not only in personal relationships, but in a wide variety of political relationships as well.<sup>11</sup>

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Important statements of social egalitarianism include Scheffler (2003), Anderson (1999), and Miller (1997).

<sup>2</sup> See Brennan (2011), especially chapters 1 and 2, and Lomasky and Brennan (2000).

<sup>3</sup> For fuller treatment, see especially Viehoff (2014, pp. 352-361), and Scheffler (2015).

<sup>4</sup> As the example illustrates, often it is not possible for everyone's preferences to be satisfied in each and every decision. This does not mean that equal concern is unrealizable, however. It can be achieved across time. Tonight your dinner preference wins; tomorrow, mine does. Or perhaps we should seek out other solutions, like cooking separately. Or perhaps we should defer to you in the arena of food, and to me in some other equally significant (or insignificant) area of our lives—which shows to watch, say. As this brief and incomplete sketch suggests, socially egalitarian solutions to practical conflicts abound, but they take some creativity and mutual engagement to identify: a theme to which I will return in section 2.

<sup>5</sup> It might be objected that your partner could get lucky and hit upon the decision that you in fact prefer. He or she decides, all on his or her own, to (say) send the kids to public school, just as you would have hoped. Wouldn't this preserve the egalitarian character of the relationship? No, it would not. Equal concern requires that decisions be appropriately sensitive to the relevant interests of all parties. Sensitivity is not the same thing as correspondence. In the mooted case, your partner's decision corresponds to your preference, but was not influenced by your preference; your preference for public school played no role in determining his or her choice. This is serendipity, not equal concern.

<sup>6</sup> For a recent discussion of these issues, see Landemore and Elster (2012).  
<sup>7</sup> To support this "wisdom of crowds" point in the present case, simply consider the many difficult tasks facing your partner as he or she chooses between schools. The available options must be discovered (public, private, etc.); standards for evaluating them, identified (educational quality; cost; political values; and so on); these standards must then be applied, using whatever empirical information seems relevant (which information must itself be identified and gathered), all the while paying attention to the impact of specific school choices on other areas of concern in your lives (e.g. will private school tuition render impossible adequate retirement savings?); a final, all-things-considered judgment must then be reached (e.g., forget retirement: this is the kids' futures we're talking about); and, finally, a plan of action devised to implement this judgment (how do we sign the kids up

for their new school, etc.?). These are no simple tasks: surely sincere, good-faith collaboration improves the odds of handling them successfully.

<sup>8</sup> As Samuel Scheffler writes, "a version of the deliberative constraint that plays a central role in egalitarian personal relationships is also central to the idea of a society of equals." More specifically, "a society of equals is characterized by a reciprocal commitment on the part of each member to treat the equally important interests of every other member as exerting equal influence on social decisions" (2015, pp. 35-36). So equal concern applies to political relationships no less than personal ones, or social egalitarianism claims.

<sup>9</sup> Notice the contrast here between the political and the personal cases. In the political case, it doesn't matter how you act; in the personal case, it matters greatly. As argued in sections 1 and 2, your good-faith participation is integral to the satisfaction of egalitarian norms in personal relationships. When you, say, decline to participate in decisions about the children's schooling, this actually diminishes the degree to which your relationship conforms to equal concern (by leading to worse decisions, decisions that are not mutually acceptable, imposing an unfair burden on your partner, and so on, as discussed in section 2). Nothing parallel can be said in the political case, or so it might be argued.

<sup>10</sup> And certainly more needs to be said to clarify the content and weight of the duty to participate in politics that is established by the argument of this section. I leave these tasks for future work.

<sup>11</sup> Thanks to Molly Scudder for helpful feedback on a draft of this article.

## Works Cited

- Anderson, Elizabeth. (1999) What is the Point of Equality? *Ethics* 109(2): 287-337.
- Brennan, Jason. (2011) *The Ethics of Voting*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Kolodny, Niko. (2014) Rule Over None II: Social Equality and the Justification of Democracy. *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 42(4): 287-336.
- Landemore, Helene and Jon Elster (eds.). (2012) *Collective Wisdom: Principles and Mechanisms*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Lomasky, Loren and Geoffrey Brennan. (2000) Is There a Duty to Vote? *Social Philosophy and Policy* 17(1): 62-86.
- Miller, David. (1997) Equality and Justice. *Ratio* 10(3): 222-237.
- Scheffler, Samuel. (2003) What is Egalitarianism? *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 31(1): 5-39.
- \_\_\_\_\_. (2015) *The Practice of Equality*. In Carina Fourie, Fabian Schuppert, and Ivo Wallmann-Helmer (eds.), *Social Equality: On What It Means to be Equals*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Viehoff, Daniel. (2014) Democratic Equality and Political Authority. *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 42(4): 337-375.

## Is Epistemic Permissivism a Consistent Position to Argue from?

Matthew Wilson  
Baylor University

Epistemic permissivism ("EP") is the view that, sometimes, it is possible for two people to rationally adopt different doxastic attitudes towards a proposition given the same body of evidence. In other words, epistemic permissivists ("EPists") maintain that it is possible for S to rationally believe that  $p$ , and S\* to rationally believe that  $\sim p$ , even though they both have the same evidence relevant to  $p$ .<sup>1</sup> EPists thus deny rational uniqueness. UNIQUENESS is the view that there is one unique doxastic attitude a person may rationally take towards a proposition, given one's total body of evidence.<sup>2</sup> In cases where two people adopt opposing attitudes toward a proposition given the same body of evidence, UNIQUENESS claims at most one of their attitudes can be fully rational.

Numerous arguments have been advanced both for epistemic permissivism (Schoenfeld, 2014; Brueckner and Bundy, 2012; Douven, 2009; Rosen, 2006, 2001; van Fraassen, 2002) and against it (Matheson, 2011; Sosa, 2010; Feldman, 2009, 2007; Christensen, 2010; White, 2005), but neither side seems convinced. This makes one wonder whether EP, as an epistemological thesis, is itself is a permissive case or whether one side is simply holding a view that is not rational. Of course the answer to such a question will depend on which side of the debate one is on. In this paper I argue that the question of whether the entire EP/ UNIQUENESS debate (hereafter, "EP debate") is a permissive case – one where both sides are rationally holding opposing views – is a question that EPists must answer. I provide reasons to think that EPists *should* consider the EP debate to be a permissive case. If I am right in this, however, then EPists have an internal tension in their view that defenders of UNIQUENESS do not have. Namely, if EP itself is a permissive case, then EPists should not wish to argue that defenders of UNIQUENESS give up their views since they are rationally holding them. That is unless EPists are able to put forth some sort of new relevant evidence.

In Section I, I explore what it means to be a permissive case and argue that EPists should consider the EP debate to be a permissive one. In section II, I lay out and defend an argument which shows that, if EPists do take the EP debate to be a permissive case, then unless they have new evidence to contribute to the debate, they should not wish to convince defenders of