Tietjens Meyers, Diana, ed. *Poverty, Agency, and Human Rights.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2014. Pp. 376. $99.00 (cloth); $39.95 (paper).

It may seem obvious that recognizing people's human rights involves freeing them from poverty and thereby allowing them to exercise their agency. On closer inspection, however, it is not at all clear what recognizing people's human rights, freeing them from poverty, and respecting their agency requires. Diana Meyers's nice collection of essays carefully examines the meanings and practical normative implications of poverty, agency, and human rights in a way that points out various conceptual connections and potential practical dilemmas. The authors consider, for instance, ways in which fighting poverty can compromise, as well as promote, aspects of women's agency. They also consider how we can respect migrants' human rights to take up decent jobs abroad without worsening their children's experience of poverty back home. One general strand of argument running through the papers is that the narrow focus on individual agency and responsibility for harms is misplaced in our globalizing world. Recognizing this fact may better help us achieve global justice.

The essays in the first part focus on the meaning of poverty—both the subjective experiences of the poor and the meanings observers associate with poverty. These essays emphasize the way that poverty constrains people's agency by imposing coercive structures under which people can only choose among sets of undesirable alternatives (53). Claudia Card, in her interesting essay "Surviving Poverty," draws her attention to the actual experience of the poor (experience which she herself has shared). She brings out the fact that the poor are often extremely engaged individuals. While some of them successfully leave poverty behind, others remain at the brink of poverty or only "tread water in subsistence poverty" (33). But some of those who escape poverty must sacrifice something important, such as "good character" (26). Lying may, for example, become the "weapon of choice" of those seeking exit from poverty (39).

David Ingram, in his subtle essay "Poverty Knowledge, Coercion, and Social Rights," argues that social scientists too often explain poverty in terms of individual-level choices. Doing this neglects the environments within which the poor act, environments in which they cannot but make bad decisions. A better understanding of the situation of the poor, Ingram suggests, requires empathy for their situation. A direct, dialogical engagement with the poor would nurture such empathy and allow for the construction of context-sensitive narratives of poor people's experiences.

Meyers, in her delightful essay "Rethinking Coercion for a World of Poverty and Transnational Migration," argues that severe poverty in developing countries which offers few decent work opportunities is coercive. She therefore suggests that poor people be able to claim refugee status in developed countries. She endorses arguments made by other political philosophers (such as Thomas Pogge) for the conclusion that there is significant coercion in international affairs (Thomas Pogge, *World Poverty and Human Rights: Cosmopolitan Principles and Reform* [Cambridge: Polity, 2002]; see also Gillian Brock, *Necessary Goods: Our Responsibilities to Meet Others' Needs* [New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998], and Nicole Hassoun, *Globalization and Global Justice: Shrinking Distance, Expanding Obligations* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012]). Meyers adds, however,

that just as the actions of many men can coerce women into leaving their jobs by creating a hostile work environment, the actions of many involved in global markets may make it the case that poor people have few options but to emigrate in search of decent opportunities. Coercion, in other words, does not require individual-level responsibility.

The essays in the second part explore conceptions of responsibility for severe poverty. Elizabeth Ashford's thought-provoking essay, "Responsibility for Violations of the Human Right to Subsistence," like that of Meyers, suggests that no single agent need be responsible for severe poverty for it to constitute a human rights violation. Ashford thinks that all of us are implicated in complex causal chains resulting in severe poverty for many and that we are collectively responsible for the resulting human rights violation.

Gillian Brock's creative essay, "Global Poverty, Decent Work, and Remedial Responsibilities," engages in two tasks. First, Brock notes there are many ways in which "effective states and active citizens" can contribute to poverty reduction, notably by making decent jobs more readily available (128). Such jobs are a critical component of the fight against poverty. Second, Brock considers several alternative understandings of "responsibility" and how virtually all of them generate significant obligations for First World agents to reduce global poverty.

Leslie P. Francis and John G. Francis's thorough essay, "Trafficking in Human Beings: Partial Compliance Theory, Enforcement Failure, and Obligations to Victims," deals with trafficking, "the coerced exploitation of people" (146). The paper asks whether industrialized countries have special obligations to trafficking victims that they do not have to the global poor more generally. It argues that "nonideal theory"—which addresses "the wide variety of ways in which our world today fails to measure up to ideal justice" (148)—cannot ground any such special obligations. Rather, such obligations must be grounded in a particular understanding of "partial compliance theory," which considers "failures to adhere to [legally] recognized requirements of justice" (147–48).

Finally, Alison Jaggar's engaging essay, "'Are My Hands Clean?' Responsibilities for Global Gender Disparities," critiques the World Bank's *World Development Report* (2012) on gender equality. She argues that the report "places too much emphasis on seeking remedies at the local and national levels and pays insufficient attention to the ways in which gender inequalities in particular locations are not coincidental but instead are linked with transnational arrangements" (171). In making her case, Jaggar discusses "gender-structured institutions" which limit women's choices; these are institutions that "operate not only on national scales but also extend across transnational spaces" (179–80).

The essays in the third part, much like those in the second part, consider different ethical responses to poverty. In her stimulating essay "Agency and Intervention," Ann Cudd defines poverty as a lack of normative agency, which she views as "the ability to be part of the creation and maintenance of social norms, and to hold oneself and others to account for those norms" (204). Cudd aims at avoiding an overly individualistic understanding of agency, which concentrates on an individual's ability to follow a plan of life. She also highlights the benefits that citizens of the Global North would derive from alleviating global poverty. Such alleviation would open up new opportunities for trade and dampen the gender stereotypes that are associated with poverty around the world.

In her insightful essay "Empowerment through Self-Subordination? Microcredit and Women's Agency," Serene Khader deals with the ways that successful poverty-reducing interventions may "leave gender inequality intact" (225). It is widely assumed that income increases are positively correlated with women's empowerment. But when, for example, women accept being viewed as collateral from a microcredit agency, they might wind up supporting patriarchal norms while improving their incomes. Thus, it is important to pay attention to the ways in which poverty reduction and women's empowerment can come apart.

In her intriguing essay "Paradoxes of Development," Amy Allen proposes a novel way of conceiving the right to development (RTD). A common understanding of this right says that the international community is the primary duty-bearer who must ensure that human rights are met everywhere. Allen rejects this view, for "the leaders of developing countries . . . [should not be] off the hook for how they treat their own people" (264). On her conception, the RTD entails plural obligations: all governments must be accountable to their citizens as well as ensure that their foreign policies "do not undermine or violate the RTD of citizens of other states" (266).

The essays in the final part all deal with agency—in particular, with the agency that poor people demonstrate in acting under incredibly trying conditions. Alan Wertheimer's careful essay, "Poverty, Voluntariness, and Consent to Participate in Research," for example, is concerned with research (primarily medical) conducted in the low- and middle-income countries. Wertheimer considers the principle that valid consent must be voluntary, which most research ethicists take for granted (281). On common ways of understanding voluntariness, poor people's participation in research may be involuntary but, intuitively, permissible. If voluntary consent is required, many poor people would not have any chance of obtaining access to potentially lifesaving medical techniques. Research ethicists must either reject the principle that valid consent must be voluntary or develop a different understanding of voluntary consent.

Anca Gheaus's innovative essay, "Children's Rights, Parental Agency, and the Case for Non-coercive Responses to Care Drain," tackles the problem of care drain. This problem arises when workers (mostly women) leave their children behind while working in wealthy countries. These workers' children suffer from the resulting absence of "continuity in care." Despite this fact, Gheaus argues against restricting such migrations, as "parents who must choose between poverty and migration suffer from a form of impaired agency and are not therefore to be blamed for imposing on their children years-long separation" (300). Instead, the migrants' home countries should ensure adequate care for these children, including "counseling programs meant to ensure robust guidance and emotional support" (301). A small tax on the remittances migrant workers send home should adequately fund such programs.

In his thoughtful essay "Human Rights and Global Wrongs," John Christman argues that human trafficking is not simply a human rights violation but part of a system of global exploitation in which all of us are implicated. We are all responsible to varying degrees for the global conditions which generate both the supply and the demand for forced labor (e.g., in contributing to poverty and purchasing sweatshop-made goods). Insofar as people in developed countries benefit from this economic system, and do not sufficiently work to change it,

they are complicit in it and are obligated to protect the rights of its victims. Christman is skeptical of the human rights paradigm's ability to recognize the particularity of survivors of human trafficking and respond to their individual needs, in part because of its inability to deal fully with survivor agency. He believes it is juridical and prosecutorial and does not help people escape the trafficking web (323).

The themes central to this volume—poverty, agency, and human rights—fully merit the impressive attention given them here. But there remain many difficult questions raised by this book that deserve further analysis. By way of a conclusion, we will raise several of them.

Consider first the book's inquiry into responsibility for severe poverty. A robust understanding of responsibility is critical for developing a proper normative response to poverty, and a problematic understanding can limit the effectiveness of any response. In an otherwise-strong essay, for example, Ashford relies on a causal conception of responsibility for harm, but it is not obvious that this is the best way of distributing responsibility. A conception of responsibility on which those well-placed to address the sources of a problem are obligated to do so may help us better overcome it. Moreover, there is some reason to endorse the ability-to-contribute conception of responsibility in institutional contexts (e.g., in specifying human rights standards) where we are distributing fundamental duties that are in the first place universal. Although we have some sympathy for her view, it might be reasonable to hold states, or agents in positions of power, responsible for changing the rules of the market rather than individual consumers, and so on. Only in cases of institutional failure may we all have to do our part to fill the breech without free-riding unsustainably on others' efforts. In the absence of other relevant considerations, perhaps responsibility should be shared equally in such circumstances.

Similarly, we agree with Brock that different principles of responsibility may be appropriate in different circumstances and that reliance on a single principle may prove too limiting. At the same time, we think it is important to get clear on when different principles apply. Brock contends that "governments of developed countries have special responsibilities" to end policies facilitating severe deprivation, responsibility that can be derived from benefits received, capacity to help, prior causation of harms, or other factors (140). Brock is quite correct that the governments of developed countries have serious responsibilities for a variety of reasons. Still, factors like causal responsibility, benefit, and capacity will surely come apart in many real world situations, and so it is important to know just when each principle comes into play.

Similar questions can be raised regarding agency, both in its own right and in its relationship to poverty. Wertheimer's paper, for example, highlights how important agency can be even to those in dire circumstances. Failure to recognize that agency—by deeming those in the Third World incapable of granting valid consent, for example—can close the doors on the few options they have left. But this still leaves unanswered the question of which understanding of agency should be adopted. Wertheimer compares both "value-neutral" and "moralized" understandings of consent. But while his critique of the former seems to point naturally to the latter, he seems reluctant to embrace a moralized understanding, in part because he believes that the value-neutral account does capture some-

thing in our ordinary usage of the term "consent." And so which account of consent (an account which of necessity will require an account of agency as well) should be embraced? Or does Wertheimer's paper prove, as Brock's paper suggests for responsibility, that consent should be understood in different ways in different circumstances? If so, a more complex account of consent and agency will be required.

The book also demonstrates just how complicated the relationship between poverty and agency can be. A number of the authors (notably Jaggar) stress the relationship between gender and poverty. They note that poverty alleviation measures that leave women disempowered may ultimately prove self-defeating. Khader, however, stresses the ways that gender and poverty can come apart. For her, it is precisely because poverty can be alleviated (to some extent, at least) without regard to women's agency that both issues must be consciously addressed at once. Khader's essay thus reminds us that while poverty is clearly not a standalone issue, neither is it connected to every other social ill.

The volume *Poverty, Agency, and Human Rights* is an important contribution to the fields of global ethics and justice. It tackles difficult moral questions that arise when considering not only who should realize relatively uncontroversial claims like those to human rights and freedom from poverty but also how they should be realized. The second and third parts' focus on responses to poverty and the promotion of development reflect, in particular, this orientation toward practice. For instance, nearly all of the essays in these parts engage with the vast social-scientific literature on foreign aid's structural effects.

The volume is, thus, deeply concerned about practical issues in nonideal theory. We believe that this represents a significant improvement over several of the earlier contributions to global ethics and justice. The volume's tripartite concern with poverty, agency, and human rights illustrates how a narrow focus on any of these concepts would ignore the interplay between them. This interplay is where the action is.

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Schroeder, Mark. *Explaining the Reasons We Share: Explanation and Expression in Ethics*, vol. 1.
Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. Pp. 249. $65.00 (cloth).

This volume is a collection of eleven essays by Mark Schroeder, including one previously unpublished paper, divided into four parts. Schroeder's substantive introduction to the volume explains the unifying argumentative thread running through these essays and will be useful even to those who have read the essays