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Unscrutable Morality: Could Anyone Know Every Moral Truth?

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To begin to answer the question of whether every moral truth could be known by any one individual, this paper examines David Chalmers' views on the scrutability of moral truths in Constructing the World. *Chalmers deals with the question of the scrutability of moral truths ecumenically, claiming that moral truths are scrutable on all plausible metaethical views. I raise two objections to Chalmers' approach. The first objection is that he conflates the claim that moral truths are scrutable from PQTI with the claim that moral truths are scrutable from non-moral truths. The upshot of this objection is that Chalmers has not in fact shown the scrutability of moral truths from the scrutability base from which he proposed to do so, PQTI. The second objection concerns his handling of moral sensibility theory, which fails to take into account certain features of the emotions—features which generate what I term synchronic and diachronic emotional co-instantiation problems. The upshot of this objection is that we have good reason to deny that any one individual could ascertain all moral truths, if moral sensibility theory is true, no matter how idealized the emoter.*

Keywords: David Chalmers, moral sensibility theory, moral epistemology, moral psychology, philosophy of emotion.

1. *Introduction*

It seems many philosophers would agree that it is important to know moral truths. Some might think that knowing moral truths is important for the purposes of correct moral behavior and moral evaluation of oneself and others, but others might allow that knowing moral truths is important as an end-in-itself; moral truths are the sorts of things that it is just good to know. This raises the question of whether there

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are any constraints on the moral truths any one individual could know. As the limiting-case, could any one individual could know every moral truth? In this paper I begin an investigation of this question by examining one influential epistemological proposal that has the upshot that all moral truths could be known; David Chalmers' discussion of "scrutability" in *Constructing the World*. I first outline Chalmers' view that, on all plausible metaethical theories, moral truths are scrutable from PQTI. I then offer two objections. First, Chalmers conflates the claim that moral truths are scrutable from PQTI with the claim that moral truths are scrutable from non-moral truths. Second, Chalmers' discussion of moral sensibility theory fails to take into account certain features of the emotions which prevent any given person from ascertaining all moral truths—emotions generate what I term synchronic and diachronic emotional co-instantiation problems. I conclude that, on at least one influential metaethical theory, it is not possible for someone to know every moral truth.

2. *Chalmers on Scrutability and Moral Truths*

According to Chalmers, given certain truths a hypothetical ideal reasoner would be able to know certain other truths. The former truths would be a "scrutability base," and the latter truths would be "scrutable" from the former. Chalmers has in mind an epistemological analogue to the idea of supervenience; just as facts of type x determine facts of type y, so too given truths of type x a hypothetical ideal reasoner could know truths of type y. Chalmers suggests that all truths are scrutable from four classes of truths; physical truths (P), phenomenal truths (Q—qualia), indexical truths (I), and a "that's all" sentence (T) (Chalmers 2012: 22).

To help illustrate the idea of scrutability, Chalmers uses two imaginative devices. One is the familiar idea of the Laplacean demon who, given a scrutability base consisting of all the truths about the present state of the universe, is able to scrute all the truths about the past and future states of the universe (Chalmers 2012: xiii–xv). The second is the idea of a Cosmoscope, a device that contains and displays to its user all the truths contained in the scrutability base; "information about the distribution of matter…[and]… a virtual reality device to produce direct knowledge of any phenomenal states" (Chalmers 2012: 114). Compared with the Laplacean demon, the Cosmoscope "simply offloads some of the work [of calculation, of imagination] from ourselves onto the world" (Chalmers 2012: 116). Such a device "will deliver a sort of supermovie of the world" (Chalmers 2012: 118). So, according to Chalmers, someone using a Cosmoscope that displayed to them all the PQTI truths, would in principle—given sufficient time—be able to ascertain all truths.

Not wishing to have to take on the burden of arguing for a specific ontological view about moral truths but wishing to argue that moral

truths are scrutable from PQTI, Chalmers notes the most influential types of views of the ontological status of moral truths. He then briefly examines whether, on each of these types of views, moral truths are plausibly scrutable from PQTI. He notes five types of view;

1. Types of anti-realism.
2. Types of moral relativism, in which "moral sentences are adjudged true insofar as they are true according to an appropriate standard (that of a speaker, or an assessor)" (Chalmers 2012: 265).
3. Types of moral realism based on *a posteriori* identities between non-moral and moral expressions.
4. Types of moral sensibility theories on which one "must have a certain sensibility (certain emotional responses, say) in order to appreciate moral truths" (Chalmers 2012: 265).
5. Types of moral realism in which "moral truths that are not knowable even on full knowledge of nonmoral truths and ideal reflection" (Chalmers 2012: 266).

On (1), there are no moral truths to be scruted. On (2), moral truths are scrutable from social truths about the standards of the speaker. On (3), moral truths will be scrutable insofar as they are identifiable with certain non-moral truths, and insofar as we have access to the non-moral truth that these non-moral truths regulate our positive moral responses (Chalmers 2012: 265). Chalmers suggests in relation to (4) that, if it is the right metaethical view, then the scruting process "may have less of a rationalist upshot than one might have supposed… ideal reasoning will require the right sensibility, involving components that one might take to be emotional as well as traditionally rational" (Chalmers 2012: 266). He claims that (5) is independently implausible because he supposes it to involve a problem of the knowability of moral truths, when "the best reason for being a moral realist stems precisely from our apparent knowledge of moral truths" (Chalmers 2012: 266). With this, Chalmers takes himself to have shown how moral truths, on the gamut of metaethical views, are plausibly scrutable from PQTI or, as with (5), why such metaethical views are implausible.

3. *Objection 1—The Conflation of PQTI with Non-moral Truths*

Chalmers conflates the hypothesis that moral truths are scrutable from PQTI with the hypothesis that moral truths are scrutable from non-moral truths. He begins his discussion by noting that "One could ask the question: are moral truths scrutable from *PQI*? But it is easier to ask the more general question: are moral truths scrutable from non-moral truths?" (Chalmers 2012: 264). If non-moral truth were synonymous with PQTI this would be unproblematic. But non-moral truth is a broader scrutability base than PQTI and includes the truths of the

numerous other "hard cases" that Chalmers discusses; mathematical truths, other normative and evaluative truths (epistemic and aesthetic), ontological truths, modal truths, intentional truths, social truths, deferential terms, names, metalinguistic truths, indexicals and demonstratives, vague truths, truths about secondary qualities, and counterfactual truths.

This conflation is especially problematic because Chalmers seems to make similar conflations with regards to some of his other hard cases. For instance, he suggests that "deferential truths are scrutable from nondeferential truths" (Chalmers 2012: 281) and that "metalinguistic truths will be scrutable from nonmetalinguistic truths" (Chalmers 2012: 285) rather than "x truths will be scrutable from PQTI." In each case, it is questionable whether Chalmers is dialectically entitled to make use of all the "non-x truths" in scruting the "x truths," and it might be that the scrutability of each hard case from PQTI rests on an assumption of the success of the scrutability of the other hard cases from PQTI, a disturbing circularity.

With regards to some of these other hard cases—such as names—whether they can or cannot be scruted from PQTI—rather than "non-name truths"—is unlikely to have any bearing on the question of the scrutability of moral truths from PQTI rather than from non-moral truths. However, with regards to some of the other hard cases, proving their scrutability from PQTI rather than from "non-x truths" does seem necessary to Chalmers' discussions of the metaethical views on offer. To wit; it seems that the inscrutability of intentional truths from PQTI alone would impact upon the scrutability of moral truths on (2), on most forms of (3), and on (4), since these metaethical views typically suppose that one must have intentional states of various sorts in order to access moral truths. The inscrutability of social truths from PQTI would impact upon the scrutability of moral truths on (2) and on some forms of (3), e.g. social truths about one's role that ground associative or contractive moral duties. The inscrutability of normative epistemic and modal truths from PQTI would have sundry impacts. Therefore, proceeding immediately to the scruting of moral truths from PQTI alone, only on (1) do they remain obviously scrutable, an unremarkable conclusion.

4. *Objection 2—Sensibility and Scrutability*

Views falling under (4) refuse "the concession that values are not genuine aspects of reality" (McDowell 1998: 143), and assert that moral claims are truth apt, but that they are not knowable by the more usual epistemological means. Rather, they are learned from emotional, affective, and sentimental reactions. For simplicity of expression I will use the term "emotions" in subsequent discussion—this term should be understood loosely, as including a variety of affective states, sentiments, moods, feelings, and so forth. The person with refined moral emotions has "a reliable sensitivity to a certain sort of requirement

which situations impose on behaviour" (McDowell 1979: 331–332), and through their emotional reactions to various life-situations comes to learn moral truths. Views falling under (4) are by no means rare or niche; flowering in the hands of British Enlightenment figures such as Adam Smith, David Hume, and the Earl of Shaftesbury, they remain important contemporary metaethical theories.

On (4), imperfect reasoners and imperfect emoters like us can often learn some moral truths by having the right sorts of emotional states in the various situations that we find ourselves in. The question for Chalmers' project is whether an ideal emoter—with "a big heart as well as a big brain" (Chalmers 2012: 266)—would be able to scrute all moral truths in this manner if they were to use the Cosmoscope to insert themselves into enough of the circumstances and perspectives in which the various the salient emotional states arise. I suggest that the answer to this question is "no." I specify and give criticisms of the scrutability of moral truths on two differing understandings of the Cosmoscope, before proceeding to some more general criticisms.

I explore two alternatives about what using a Cosmoscope would be like for the ideal emoter, since Chalmers' account is ambiguous. Let's call the first possibility the *engrossed* option. On this option, the Cosmoscope "will enable us to know just what it is like to be that subject" (Chalmers 2012: 275). That is, when using the Cosmoscope the user experiences a phenomenologically perfect reconstruction of someone else's experience. The user is immersed in all and only the physical truths, phenomenal truths, and indexical truths that the original experiencer had access to. For instance, if the user explored "what it was like to be Agamemnon in battle" they would have access to all and only the phenomena, and so on, that Agamemnon had. For this to happen it seems necessary that in the engrossed option the ordinary aspects of one's own self such as one's own memories, desires, beliefs, proprioception, etc., would be completely unavailable, on pain of one's experience being phenomenologically unfaithful to Agamemnon's.

In the alternative *unengrossed* option, the user retains their ordinary sense of self even as they experience all the phenomena, and so on, of Agamemnon in battle. The unengrossed option is much easier to imagine. In the unengrossed case the user of the Cosmoscope has an experience of this event that is not quite faithful to Agamemnon's experience, because they remain aware that they are in fact not in ancient Greece on a battlefield, but sat in a basement somewhere; there remains a doubleness of perspective that is absent in the engrossed option. In the unengrossed option the user is able to react to the experiences given by the Cosmoscope from their own ordinary perspective. For instance, such a user would be able to think "How curious to see ancient Greece, and through the eyes of a Greek hero, whilst sat in this basement!," which would not have been a thought available to one whose only perspective on the world was one patterned on Agamemnon's, as in the engrossed option.

5. *Criticism of the Engrossed Cosmoscope*

It seems that there is a tension between the faculties of the ideal emoter and the engrossed-Cosmoscopic experience. Suppose that the ideal emoter uses the engrossed-Cosmoscope to experience "what it was like to be Vlad the Impaler." Presumably an ideal emoter would look upon the impaled with emotions of horror, revulsion, disgust, and sadness. But to experience these emotions whilst using the Cosmoscope would mean that the ideal emoter's experience of "what it was like to be Vlad the Impaler" would be very unfaithful to Vlad's own experiences. This would mean that certain moral truths would be unavailable to them. For instance, let's suppose that the real Vlad the Impaler grew less bloodthirsty for a time as he came under the sway of a pacifist preacher—he became troubled, then rueful, then repentant, of his old ways. However, when he campaigns, he finds that he lapses back into violence with an especially wild abandon, and when he returns home becomes repentant again. Presumably, the ideal emoter's responses to the Cosmoscopic experiences would differ very drastically from the warps and wefts of Vlad's very unideal emotional life, but in doing so would necessarily miss out on much—in having nothing to repent of, in not knowing what it is like to take joy in moral violation, what it is like to repent of taking joy in moral violation, what it is like to be morally unstable, etc. On the other hand, if the emotional responses of the ideal emoter are absent, and only the emotional responses of various historical and future figures to their circumstances are present, it is unclear that all moral truths (the relevant standard for Chalmers' project) would ever be revealed by use of the engrossed-Cosmoscope, since the user would only have access to a huge array of the unideal emotional responses of actual historical and future persons, lacking access to whatever the ideal emotional responses to their various situations were.

6. *Criticism of the Unengrossed Cosmoscope*

In discussing the Cosmoscope, Chalmers says that there are certain emotional states, for example of "anger or of stupor," the entering of which "may undermine the capacity for reasoning" such that it is best to "think of the Cosmoscope as inducing imaginative states… without actually having those experiences" (Chalmers 2012: 116). On such a supposition, it seems that the user of the Cosmoscope would retain their own perspective whilst entertaining these imaginative states. It seems, *prima facie*, then, that the unengrossed option avoids my objections to the engrossed option.

However, on the unengrossed option it seems that the user of the Comoscope, even an ideal emoter, would not ever experience all the emotional states requisite for scruting all moral truths. Due to the presence of their own perspective assessing the deliverances of the Comoscope, the emotions the user experienced would not simply be copies

of the emotions experienced by the historical (and future) figures over whose shoulders they were peering. For example, take a case of righteous indignation which reveals certain moral truths. It seems that for the user of the unengrossed-Cosmoscope vivid imaginings of the emotional states of the righteously-indignant would involve very different emotional states than those occurent in the righteously-indignant themselves. The unengrossed user might admire the righteously-indignant person or be inspired with a feeling of elevation by their example. These emotions may indeed reveal moral truths, but not necessarily the very same moral truths as the righteous-indignation. The righteously indignant person was presumably not self-admiring, nor inspired by their own example. Imagining the emotional states of others and experiencing one's own emotional reaction in response to these is clearly different than having the very emotional states to which one is reacting. There is therefore no guarantee that an ideal emoter would eventually be able to scrute all moral truths through the use of the unengrossed-Cosmoscope, gaining instead an enormous repository of their own emotional reactions to the emotional states of others.

A similar problem is that plausibly the unengrossed-Cosmoscope user would lack access to a host of moral emotions relating to the felt exercise of agency. For instance, for Agamemnon the faculty of acting and emoting were likely richly interwoven; the swinging of the blade is colored and aided by his righteous anger, which in turn is modified and strengthened or satisfied by carrying out this action—the doing is essential to the distinctive sort of emoting. Whilst an engrossed-Cosmoscope user could experience the illusion of this exercise of agency and the sentiments that arise in relation to it, an unengrossed-Cosmoscope user could not; at best being able to imagine what these states are like, as with any cinema-goer.

7. *Moral Emotions and Co-instantiation Problems*

I turn now to outlining some features of the emotions that, as well as constituting problems for Chalmers' account, seem more broadly to pose impediments to any articulation of the claim that, on (4), any one individual could know every moral truth.

The nature of the emotions makes the idea of one person being able to know all moral truths impossible. To see this, compare the emotions with more squarely cognitive states such as belief. From our own experience we know that it is possible to entertain numerous beliefs at once. From our own experience we know that it is possible to have certain different emotional states at once; it seems we can feel both angry and sad at once. But it seems that certain emotional states are incompatible and cannot be experienced simultaneously. For instance, it seems that one cannot feel both jovial and reverent, or feel both malicious and compassionate, simultaneously, even with regards to different objects. Moreover, even of emotional states that seem compatible when

only two or three of them are experienced simultaneously, it seems like there is an upper limit on the number of emotions we can experience simultaneously. For instance, though I can feel sad as well as feeling angry, or hopeless, or bitter, or detached, or self-pitying, or resigned, or bored, or afraid, it seems hard to imagine that someone could feel all of these simultaneously, even if nothing about any one of these emotions seems to exclude experiencing any one of the others. From this, it seems impossible that one could experience every emotional state simultaneously, or, more weakly, that one could experience every emotional state salient to scruting moral truths simultaneously. Let's call this the *synchronic emotional co-instantiation problem*.

One question is whether the synchronic emotional co-instantiation problem is something contingent to human or non-ideal emoters, or something in the nature of emotional states themselves. It is hard to adduce a case in which something about "belief x" seems of its nature to exclude the simultaneous entertainment of "belief y." It seems in the case of beliefs that our inability to have millions of occurrent beliefs all at once is merely a contingent fact about us. The impossibility of my having occurrent beliefs about "the ontological argument," "the factors affecting the price of fish," and "every capital of Africa" seems to be a limitation about me, rather than something to do with the nature of these beliefs or the nature of beliefs or concepts in general; "there are no concepts whose possession is mutually incompatible" (Chalmers 2012: 114). So, there doesn't seem to be a *prima facie* bar here to the idea of an ideal reasoner able to apprehend all beliefs, and so truths, at once. In the case of the emotions it seems that there is something about the phenomenological experience of certain emotional states that necessarily excludes the simultaneous experience of other emotional states, and about the nature of emotions which puts a cap on the number that can be experienced simultaneously. It is difficult to prove that this is not merely a contingent limitation of ours, but I offer three speculative indications for thinking that it is not.

A first indication is given by the way in which, in ordinary experience, most emotions seem to modify one another. For example, rather than saying that one has an emotion of joy and also an emotion of amazement that stand separately in the same phenomenological field, it seems more accurate to say that one experiences a "joyful amazement" or an "amazed joy"—a single sort of compound or alloy-emotion. Our emotions themselves tend to blend with one another or contaminate one another. Were the emotions of an ideal emoter not to do this, we might plausibly say that the ideal emoter simply did not have the same sorts of emotions as us, and so perhaps was missing out on whatever class of moral truths our own alloy-emotions illuminate.

A second indication is that there is something confused about the idea of experiencing some emotions simultaneously on various theories of the purported constituent features of the emotions. According

to various theories, emotions necessarily or paradigmatically involve certain patterns of attention or interpretations of experiences (Roberts 2003), certain judgements (Nussbaum 2004), or action tendencies (Frijda 2008), or bodily feelings (James 1884). Take fear and "feeling safe." It seems that one cannot both attend to and not attend to potential dangers, or endorse the constitutive judgements of fear and the feeling of safety at once ("The fearful is (not) present"). Likewise, the action tendency of fear and the feeling of safety seem opposed; being inclined to run away and to stay put. Likewise, the bodily feelings of the two are very different. For the constitutive features of one to be present means for the constitutive features of the other to be absent.

A third indication is given by the way in which we talk about emotions as against more squarely cognitive states such as belief. John believes that Copernicus was Polish. Most of the time, this is a dispositional belief for John, very rarely becoming an occurrent belief. We nevertheless say of John at any given time that he believes that Copernicus was Polish; it is a belief that we may say John has at any time of day. John also has the capacity to experience many different emotions. We talk about the frequency with which John experiences these various emotions in terms of his dispositions, his traits, or his character; if he often gets angry he is an angry man. Nevertheless, it seems that we do not speak of these dispositions as being the emotional states themselves. The disposition explains or summarizes John's frequent bouts of anger but is itself is not the anger. Whereas numerous items of dispositional belief can be said to co-exist in the same mind at once even when they are not called to attention, there seem to be no analogous "dispositional emotions" of which the same can be said. It would be bizarre to say, for instance, that John has dispositional envy even though he hasn't had an episode of envy for two years, whereas it makes sense to say that John has a dispositional belief that Copernicus was Polish even though this belief hasn't become occurrent for two years.

To use a metaphor, beliefs are like tabs in a minimized computer window—they are there, even if you haven't checked them in a while. Emotions are like the wavy patterns displayed by a 1990s screensaver; one is now displayed, the patterns that were displayed no longer exist, and the patterns that will be displayed do not exist yet, even though we can say which are likely to be displayed next, or which patterns are often displayed. If this observation is correct then its upshot is to reinforce the first two indications by showing that there is no way to sneak in "dispositional emotions" that are all somehow "had" by an emoter yet lie dormant and do not modify one another or prompt contradictory action tendencies, bodily feelings, etc.

One response to the synchronic emotional co-instantiation problem is to note that even if an ideal emoter could not experience every emotion at once, they are at any rate surely able to experience every emotion sequentially. Once a sufficiently long series of the appropri-

ate emotions have been experienced, these emotional reactions will have scruted every moral truth. Against this, I suggest instead three reasons for thinking that there is also a *diachronic emotional co-instantiation problem*—meaning that it seems impossible that one could experience every emotional state sequentially, or, more weakly, that one could experience every emotional state salient to scruting moral truths sequentially.

First, some emotional episodes alter our characters, tending to give rise to recurring emotional episodes, or staining a broad spectrum of future emotional episodes in very specific ways. That some emotional episodes have this effect is an important aspect of the moral truths they seem to reveal (or hide). As well as making the idea of learning moral truths by sequentially undergoing differing emotional experiences overly simplistic, this fact plausibly excludes the learning of every moral truth by any given individual. The person whose character develops in one particular direction may not be able to access the moral truths learned by someone whose character develops in a very different direction.

Second, it would be a mistake to think that every given moral truth can be revealed by a single episode of an emotion. Rather, certain moral truths may only be learned through repeated emotional episodes and through complex patterns of emotional episodes.

Third, the memory of an emotional episode is not the same as experiencing the emotional episode itself. Whilst, plausibly, most moral truths are such that they can be revealed by an emotional reaction and then recorded by the memory, plausibly not all moral truths are like this. Some moral truths may be revealed in an emotional reaction but not admit of being added to a permanent stock of belief or knowledge, being instead temporary and situational. For instance, it is plausibly only during the-moment-at-which-you-think-you-will-now-die or only during the religious experience or only during the DMT-trip that you could be said to fully grasp the moral truths that the emotional aspects of these experiences conveyed.

To illustrate these points three I give two literary examples. First, the character des Esseintes from Joris-Karl Huysmans' *Against Nature* explaining his motivations for bringing a young boy to a brothel:

> … I'm simply trying to make a murderer of the boy. See if you can follow my line of argument. The lad's a virgin and he's reached the age where the blood starts coming to the boil. He could, of course, just run after the little girls of his neighbourhood, stay decent and still have his bit of fun, enjoy his little share of the tedious happiness open to the poor. But by bringing him here, by plunging him into luxury such as he's never known and will never forget, and by giving him the same treat every fortnight, I hope to get him into the habit of these pleasures which he can't afford. Assuming that it will take three months for them to become absolutely indispensable to him—and by spacing them out as I do, I avoid the risk of jading his appetite—well, at the end of those three months, I stop the little allowance. I'm going to pay

> you in advance for being nice to the boy. And to get the money to pay for his visits here, he'll turn burglar, he'll do anything if it helps him on to one of your divans in one of your gaslit rooms... I shall have contributed, to the best of my ability, to the making of a scoundrel, one enemy the more for the hideous society which is bleeding us white. (Huysmans 2003: 66)

And, from Friedrich Hölderlin's *Hyperion*:

> I know as well as you do that I could still trump up some kind of existence for myself, could, now that life's meal is eaten, still sit playing with the crumbs; but that is not for me, nor for you. Need I say more? (Hölderlin 1990: 116)

It seems that the emotional reactions of des Esseintes' boy-victim would cascade throughout his life in complex ways. Plausibly, he would learn moral truths unavailable to someone who enjoyed a life of voluntary celibacy, and likewise the moral truths learned by the celibate would be unavailable to this boy. Similarly, it seems that the sentiments of Hölderlin's character are provoked by an entire life of varied experiences, will color the remainder of their life, and could not be viscerally experienced by, say, a young person who faces a terminal illness and is eager to eat as much of "life's meal" as they can. Importantly, note that simply reading about these characters, or receiving testimony of the experiences of real people, although no doubt crucial for learning many moral truths, are not completely adequate substitutes for having these experiences; although readers may be able to imagine something of what it would be like to be des Esseintes' boy-victim, there is surely much we cannot begin to grasp.

Lastly, some hold that different sorts of emotions are appropriate for those of different ages, professions, genders, without any given constellation of emotional responses being better or worse or more complete (Grimshaw 1993, Smith 2002). The concept of an ideal emoter is therefore indeterminate, admitting of multiple differing instantiations, in a way that the concept of an ideal reasoner is presumably not. For instance, Seneca writes:

> It is a matter of great prudence, for the benefactor to suit the benefit to the condition of the receiver: who must be either his superior, his inferior, or his equal; and that which would be the highest obligation imaginable to the one, would perhaps be as great a mockery and affront to the other (Seneca 1882: 44).

One and the same emoter cannot be the superior, the inferior, and the equal, of the gift giver, and so cannot experience the emotions appropriate to each station in life.

8. *Conclusion*

It seems that not even an ideal emoter with a Cosmoscope would be in a position to scrute all moral truths if (4) is true, due to the synchronic and diachronic emotional co-instantiation problems. Whereas there seems nothing in-principle impossible about the idea of a single person

having access to all the other sorts of truths, moral truths are a special case. If an ideal emoter, with Cosmoscopic access to all the PQTI truths—or, to widen the scrutability-base beyond Chalmers' claim, all non-moral truths—could not scrute all moral truths, then *a fortiori* non-ideal emoters without Cosmoscopic access to these truths could not scrute all moral truths.

For his own purposes, Chalmers might not be too bothered by this conclusion, since despite the co-instantiation problems, it might still be the case that although no individual could scrute every moral truth on (4), the human community might be able to scrute every moral truth, these truths being known in a disaggregated way by millions of individuals, each having a sliver of these truths—just as presumably no individual will ever know everything there is to know about chemistry and anthropology, but the human community or an ideal reasoner might. For our purposes, however, it is a significant result that on (4) not every moral truth can be known by a given individual, even an ideal emoter. It is presumably not at all troubling that each of us is not able to know every truth about chemistry. A dispersion of knowledge and a division of intellectual labour is both inevitable and useful. There are lots of crucial chemical and anthropological truths that it is probably important only that a few people know, and there are lots of trivial chemical and anthropological truths that it is probably not important that anyone know. However, it is potentially troubling that each of us is not able to know every moral truth because we tend to think that knowing about moral truths is each individual's business, whatever else they wish to know or do, and that no moral truth is too trivial that it is not worth knowing since it is very important that we always behave permissibly and that we properly evaluate the behavior of ourselves and others.

The finding that, on (4), any one individual cannot know every moral truth, should give us pause to consider what the proper ends of moral inquiry and moral learning may be; perhaps we should come to think that only knowing certain moral truths is our business, or that some moral truths are too trivial to be worth knowing. We should also pause to consider how this conclusion bears on our moral evaluations of others; if ignorance of a moral truth can be a moral excuse, and if we are all necessary ignorant of some moral truths, then we all enjoy slightly differing sets of moral excuses, excuses which in turn it may be very difficult for one another to know about.

I note that my conclusions here are limited in their extent in that further work is necessary to find out whether any individual can know every moral truth on other metaethical theories.

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