

# Standing, Requesting, and Wronging

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## 1 Introduction

Here's a case:

*Bar* Stefan and Eva are old friends with plans to tie one on at a local bar well into the day. When they arrive, Stefan happens to catch the attention of the bartender before Eva. So, Stefan orders the first round. When Stefan and Eva finish their round, Stefan says to Eva, "I bought the first round - would you buy the next?", thereby requesting that Eva buy the second round of drinks.

Because Stefan bought the first round, it might seem in some sense *appropriate* or *okay* that Stefan requests of Eva that she buy the next round. But if you sit with the case long enough, it won't continue to seem that way. At least, it doesn't for us. *Of course* Eva's got the next round - she was just on the receiving end of an act of generosity from an old friend.

Consider another case:

*Wedding* Aoife's son Bill is engaged to Cara. Bill's family is large yet close. Likewise for Cara's family. Cara and Bill do well for themselves, but they'll still need to borrow a substantial sum of money to organize a wedding that accommodates all of their family members, let alone friends and colleagues. Cara's family would love to help, but they can't afford it. So, Aoife offers. As planning for the wedding commences, Aoife recalls the traditional Irish music (trad) that played during her own wedding fondly. Aoife is aware that Bill and Cara aren't fans of trad. Still, at various points after writing a few checks for the wedding, Aoife says to the couple things like "I'd really like the two of you to put some trad songs on the DJ's reception playlist", thereby requesting of the couple that some trad songs are played during the reception.

Because Aoife is Bill's *mother*, and especially because Aoife wrote checks for a significant sum of money, it might seem *okay* that she requests of Bill and Cara that trad songs are played at their wedding reception. Again, however, we have a different reaction when we sit with the case. The wedding will be Bill's and Cara's *big day* - *their day* to commit to each other in front of friends and family. So, it's *not okay* for Aoife to request of them that trad music is played at the wedding reception.

Our responses to *Bar* and *Wedding* are in tension. We claim that it's worth understanding how to resolve it. What is it about generosity or benefaction, and especially generosity or benefaction among friends, family, or interpersonal relationships more generally, that makes it *seem*

okay to make such requests? What is it about making these requests that's not okay, ultimately? Our primary goal in this paper is to defend a way of resolving the tension.

In Section 2, we discuss ways of understanding *Bar* and *Wedding* on which it's a mistake to think that Stefan's and Aiofe's requests violate anything like a strict moral code. We offer several arguments against them. In Sections 3 and 4, we leverage recent developments on the nature of "standing" to develop an account of when agents have it generally. We then use it to explain why Stefan and Aiofe have standing, but why it's not okay or wrong for them to act on it. In Section 5, we answer an objection to our view from the nature of *requesting* itself that clarifies the commitments of our views, the result of which is a take on requesting that calls into question dominant theorizing on the topic.<sup>1</sup>

## 2 Clearing the Stage to Set the Terms for Debate

We think Stefan's and Aiofe's requests are not okay. We also think *deontic* concepts of *moral permissibility* and *obligation* make best sense of our thought. We don't defend the *moral* bit of that claim,<sup>2</sup> but we defend the *deontic* bit in this section against non-deontic approaches from Feinberg (1961) and Driver (1992).<sup>3</sup> In other words, we think that Stefan's and Aiofe's requests are *wrong* and we argue against views on which it's wrongheaded to think of the cases in terms of wrongness.

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<sup>1</sup> Note that we described our intuitive reactions to the cases using the terms 'okay'. That's not us reflecting on the cases loosely; it's deliberate. We want our discussion to hook up with ordinary ways of thinking. If you do moral philosophy long enough, you run into a lot of folks looking for moral advice. You also encounter a lot of blank expressions when you start saying things like "Well, I don't think x would be *fitting*, but it would be *good* for you to do it!". Ordinary normative thinking doesn't directly hook up with the *recherche* thoughts of professional moral philosophers. We see the moral philosopher's conceptual toolkit as providing different ways for people to make sense of their own lived experiences. We claim that the set of such conceptual tools that we use below has advantages over others, which we go at length to defend

<sup>2</sup> In other words, we're assuming a view of the relevant *flavor* of normativity at issue. Candidates for the flavor of norms at issue include *sui generis*, *aesthetic*, *prudential*, *epistemic*, *rational*, or *moral*. The latter strikes us as the most plausible candidate, so we presume the relevant norms are moral.

<sup>3</sup> Another issue on which we take something of a stand concerns normative *substantivity*. Following, *inter alia*, Copp (2005), one might already be wondering whether we're interested in "generic normativity", which is to say norms like those of which govern chess that are merely, as Parfit (2011) puts it, "rule-involving". Or one might wonder whether we're interested in "authoritative normativity" - norms like those of morality that are not merely rule-involving. Substantivity is tricky, as is most likely clear from our struggle to even articulate this prominent distinction concerning it. We presume that the normativity at issue in *Bar* and *Wedding* is authoritative. But we want to stress that we're very much open to the possibility that the norms at issue in these cases are *conventional*, and at bottom, a matter of the patterns of behavior we that we happen to care about. They could turn out to be a lot like etiquette, as far as we're concerned.

But being open to the possibility that the norms one cares about as a moral philosopher are like those of etiquette is usually enough to land one on the *generic* side of the generic/authoritative distinction. So much the worse for the distinction, we think - there's more to it (See Wodak 2019). All we mean to convey by taking a stand in calling the norms at issue in this paper *authoritative* is that the norms are not normatively trivial, whatever that might turn out to mean. See Eklund (2017) for an in depth discussion of the difficulties in expressing such positions in English. See also McPherson (2018) for an original take on what it could mean for a norm to be authoritative.

## 2.1 Oughts and Obligations<sup>4</sup>

Think about an adolescent child ripping leaves off bushes, absentmindedly, on their walk home from school. One might think that it's not okay for the child to rip the leaves but that it would be misguided entirely to understand the sense in which it's 'not okay' as 'wrong', as a *violation* of a moral obligation. Similarly, while one might think that Stefan and Aiofe are committing *some* kind of normative error in issuing their requests, one might add that it's wrongheaded to think of the error in terms of wrongness, as a kind of moral-rule violation. It's just a mistake to think of these cases in terms of permissions and obligations altogether. Or so at least one might suggest.

There are various ways of fleshing out the point. We think that proponents of this line of thought might benefit from taking cues from Feinberg's (1961) influential distinction between "oughts" and "obligations", which he makes in the context of attempting to understand the notion of supererogation. Memorably, Feinberg imagines a case in which a stranger at a street corner asks him for a match politely. Most people would agree, Feinberg says, that he *ought* to give the stranger a match but that Feinberg's *not obligated* to do it. Accordingly, if he didn't, Feinberg wouldn't be violating a moral obligation.<sup>5</sup> Perhaps, then, the sense in which Stefan's and Aiofe's requests are in "error" is Feinberg's - they *ought not* to make such requests but they're *not* violations of a moral *obligation*.

One of the main considerations that Feinberg offers in support of distinguishing oughts from obligations is *semantic*.<sup>6</sup> Consider the following sentences:

- 1a 'He should give the stranger a match.'
- 1b 'Stefan should not request a round from Eva.'
- 2a 'He's obligated to give the stranger a match.'
- 2b 'Stefan's obligated not to request a round from Eva.'

Feinberg would say that 1a-b sound more felicitous than 2a-b. With this assessment in mind, consider the following sentences:

- 3a 'He ought to give the stranger a match.'
- 3b 'Stefan ought not to request a round from Eva.'

Feinberg would say that 3a-b pattern more closely with 1a-b than 2a-b. That's important, because felicitous uses of 'should' are a natural indication of the presence of evaluative norms or at least, weaker norms than those of moral obligation. The thought would then be that because uses of

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<sup>4</sup> Thanks to Bradford Cokelet and Matthew Caulfield for inviting us to consider the ideas of this section. We're also indebted to them for some of the examples found in this section.

<sup>5</sup> For Feinberg, there's an important distinction between what an agent *ought* to do or not and what an agent has an *obligation* to do or not. The latter, according to Feinberg, affix to agents when and because either they've been "imposed" by a "authoritative injunction" (Ibid: 277), they've made a contract (e.g. a promise), or they occupy some kind of professional role (e.g. a doctor's obligation to do not harm). It seems that oughts, on Feinberg's view, depend for their existence on not being the case of an obligation but also something that an "honorable" or "ideal" or "virtuous" person would do. Because moral philosophers don't fully appreciate this distinction, according to Feinberg, they see actions that agents are obligated to perform everywhere where there's only actions that agents ought to perform.

<sup>6</sup> "The word "ought" has several jobs, but at least one of them is not performed equally well by "duty" and "obligation"." (Ibid: 278)

‘ought’ are more like ‘should’ than ‘obligation’, we have strong reason to reject our claim that Stefan and Aiofe flout an obligation in making requests in *Bar* and *Wedding*.

Consider, however, the following sentences:

- 4a. ‘Elsa’s friends should attend her wedding. Elsa’s family are obligated to attend.’
- 4b. ‘Elsa’s friends ought to attend her wedding. Elsa’s family are obligated to attend.’

We claim that 4a is more felicitous than 4b. But if Feinberg were right that ‘ought’ patterns more closely with ‘should’ than ‘obligation’, 4a and 4b would sound equally felicitous. So, it’s not true that ‘ought’ patterns more closely with ‘should’ than ‘obligation’ for all uses of ‘ought’. If ‘ought’ at least doesn’t reliably pattern closer with ‘should,’ then the semantics of ‘ought’ and ‘obligation’ does not make for strong evidence that obligations aren’t in play in *Bar* and *Wedding*.<sup>7</sup> So, semantic considerations don’t provide *strong* reason to doubt our claim that Stefan’s and Aiofe’s requests are violations of moral obligations.<sup>8</sup>

Still, one might agree with us that there aren’t strong *semantic* reasons to reject our claim, but nevertheless insist that there’s something to the idea that a non-deontic perspective on *Bar* and *Wedding* is more fruitful than the obligation-centered one that we’re floating. That’s an idea we discuss next.<sup>9</sup>

## 2.2 Suberogation<sup>10</sup>

Consider a situation in which a couple are boarding a nearly full train right behind another person traveling alone. There’s two seating options remaining of which these three individuals are aware, only one of which is such that the couple can sit together. Because that option is slightly more convenient for the person traveling alone, the person takes it, thereby leaving the couple with no options for sitting together. According to Driver (1992), who introduced the case, it seems like the person traveling alone does something morally *bad* but not something that violates a moral *obligation*. Driver calls actions that are bad but not forbidden *suberogatory* actions. They’re the flipside of the more familiar category of supererogatory actions that are good but not obligatory.

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<sup>7</sup> To put it in Feinberg’s terms, there’s an obligation that traces its origin to an “authoritative injunction”.

<sup>8</sup> Our claim is not that there’s no distinction between oughts and obligations. Our claim is just that Feinberg’s semantic considerations don’t strongly support the claim that oughts rather than obligations are operating in our cases. The semantic evidence is messy and up for grabs.

<sup>9</sup> On another reading of Feinberg’s discussion, he’s making a distinction not between the evaluative and the deontic, but rather between two normative flavors of the deontic – *social* and *moral*. Accordingly, Stefan and Aiofe have an obligation<sub>social</sub> not to make requests but not an obligation<sub>moral</sub> and that because the former is in some sense a weaker form of normativity, it best captures the error of Stefan’s and Aiofe’s requests. But as indicated above, we don’t think social norms are necessarily any “weaker” than moral ones. We’re fine with claiming that Stefan and Aiofe are violating social norms. But if the next thought is that this means what they’re doing is less significant, we disagree. Insisting otherwise strikes us as close to question begging.

<sup>10</sup> Thanks to Julia Driver for inviting us to think about the cases in such a way.

Perhaps something similar is occurring in *Bar* and *Wedding*. There's no obligation Stefan and Aiofe violate upon making their requests for another round and trad music, respectively. Still, it's *bad* that they make such requests. On this line of thought, it's a mistake to read our cases as involving permissions and obligations.

Put yourself in the shoes of the couple, however. We suspect that you'll find it apt to *resent* the solo passenger for their action. Or so at least we, the authors, find it apt upon projecting ourselves into the couple's position. But the aptness of such attitudes is some evidence that the norms in play are deontic.<sup>11</sup> Or at the very least, evidence that the case is normatively noisy enough for us to maintain that deontic norms can't be ruled out as wrongheaded. So, it's defensible to think of the train case as involving a violation of an obligation, likewise with *Bar* and *Wedding*. To be clear, then, the mere availability of thinking of all of these cases in terms of the suberogatory doesn't force us to do so.

### 2.3 Imperfect Duties<sup>12</sup>

Though one might agree with us that it's not wrongheaded to think of Stefan's and Aiofe's requests in terms of violations of obligations, there are a variety of reasons why one might still resist thinking of them exactly as we do. In particular, one might agree that it's not wrongheaded to think in terms of obligations, but deny that we've characterized the normative mistakes in these cases perspicuously. That's the starting point of the next explanation.

Consider Kant's familiar distinction between *perfect* and *imperfect duties* to others. On one way of understanding it, it's a distinction concerning the ways in which we're obligated to pursue ends. An agent has a perfect duty when there is an end they ought to pursue, and a specific means by which they're also obligated to pursue it. An agent has an imperfect duty when there is an end they ought to pursue and a variety of permissible means by which to do so. Uncontroversial examples illustrating the distinction are few and far between. One common example of a perfect duty is *the duty to tell the truth*. The idea would be that we're obligated to pursue the goal of truth telling and the only means by which it's permissible to do so is by telling the truth. A common example of an imperfect duty is *the duty to help others*. We're obligated to pursue the goal of helping others, Kant might say. But he'd add that there are many permissible ways of doing so, e.g. giving to charity, doing favors for friends, or whatever.

One might appeal to Kant's distinction to explain the normative features of *Bar* and *Wedding*. Partly in virtue of Stefan's and Aiofe's generosity toward Eva and Bill and Cara, respectively, the latter incur an imperfect *duty of gratitude* toward the former. This is to say that Eva is obligated to pursue the end of expressing gratitude toward Stefan, but that it's permissible for Eva to so express it in a variety of different ways. Likewise for Bill and Cara with respect to Aiofe. Because a variety of means of expressing gratitude are permissible, Eva and Bill and Cara are under no obligation to express it in any *specific* way. But one might think that's exactly what Stefan is requesting in requesting of Eva that she pick up the next round, and exactly what Aiofe is requesting when requesting of Bill and Cara that they play trad music.

Such a result wouldn't seem to entail our claim that Stefan and Aiofe are violating a moral obligation *per se*. After all, it's Eva and Bill and Cara that are under an obligation. But it would

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<sup>11</sup> There's tremendous controversy over how to distinguish the evaluative from the deontic. But one not terribly controversial test for the deontic is whether reactive attitudes are apt. See Smith (2005).

<sup>12</sup> Thanks to Nathan Robert Howard for the suggestion.

seem to entail that Stefan and Eva have misunderstood the normative landscape - they don't quite *get* how their beneficent acts engender obligations, and so they request that Eva and Bill and Cara do what they're not specifically obligated to do. Obscurely, but for lack of a better way of putting it, Stefan and Aiofe would seem to be making an error "internal" to the nature of benevolence. Perhaps, then, what we're claiming is a violation of a moral obligation is really this other kind of deontic error.

We have two responses. Firstly, because the explanation doesn't seem to entail the denial of our claim that Stefan's and Aiofe's requests violate a moral obligation, it's not obvious that we can't accept both. It seems like we can accept that Stefan and Aiofe are making some kind of normative mistake "internal" to benevolence and still insist that they violate a moral obligation in the vicinity.

Secondly, we think there's reason to reject this explanation of the mistake "internal" to benevolence. Imagine that Stefan doesn't make the specific request of Eva that she buy the next round. Imagine, instead, that Stefan made a less specific request, by uttering "I bought the first round - would you mind doing *something* in return?". Imagine, too, that Aiofe doesn't request that, specifically, trad music is played at the reception. Rather, Aiofe makes a less specific request, by uttering "I'd really like the two of you to find *some* way of arranging this wedding that'll please me". These requests are less specific, so they do not treat the imperfect duty of Eva and Bill/Cara as a perfect duty for a particular expression of gratitude. Yet they still seem to violate a moral obligation. Indeed, they somehow seem to violate an even more significant moral obligation! So, appealing to imperfect duties doesn't even seem to explain the error "internal" to their benevolence.

## 2.4 Gifts<sup>13</sup>

The explanations above aim to undermine our claim that the requests made in *Bar* and *Wedding* are wrong. The first and second do so by attempting to show that it's best to think of the normativity of Stefan's and Aiofe's actions non-deontically, in terms of oughts or badness, respectively. We argued that these explanations don't force us to give up our claim. The third explanation doesn't quite share the aim of undermining our claim that the actions in *Bar* and *Wedding* are wrong, since it agrees that obligations are in play. Rather, it purports to show that we've misidentified obligation-involving normative profile of the cases. We responded with two objections. But before developing our own explanation of such wrongness, we consider one more rival explanation - one that shares our claim that Stefan's and Aiofe's requests are wrong.

Consider a case in which Stacy decides to buy a gift card for her friend Ryan. The gift card is redeemable for \$15 of music. Stacy herself really likes U2. So, as Stacy gives the gift card to Ryan, she requests him to use it to purchase U2's 1983 classic, *War*.

Intuitively, Stacy's request violates an obligation. One highly natural explanation of why appeals to the notion of *gifts*. It's a norm of giving gifts that givers do not make requests regarding uses of the gift. Similarly, it could be that the drinks Stefan purchases and the checks that Aiofe

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<sup>13</sup> Thanks to Erik Encarnacion for pressing us to consider gifts more seriously.

writes are gifts. Perhaps, then, Stefan's and Aoife's requests are wrong because they violate a norm of giving gifts.<sup>14</sup>

Deeper explanations from gifts are available that turn on answers to why there's a norm forbidding givers to make requests in the first place. Consider a variation on *Bar*, for example, in which Stefan is buying the first round as a gift, but he does so with the intention of leveraging the good will engendered by his gift to receive a round from Eva. It would be *deceptive* and *manipulative* to give a gift in such a way—giving something as a gift and then treating it like a kind of exchange<sup>15</sup>—and such deception and manipulation is *wrong*. Alternatively, we may take the wrong of particular requests following gifts to be a manifestation of the wrong mentioned in the last section, of treating imperfect duties as perfect duties. Expressions of gratitude are often owed in response to giving gifts. But while certain kinds of responses might be licensed when gratitude is insufficiently expressed (perhaps resentment (Darwall 2012) or remonstrance (Manela 2015)), gift givers cannot request particular expressions of gratitude.

We agree that there are norms of gift giving that could be wrong to violate. The question is whether such norms are being violated not in *variations* of *Bar* and *Wedding*, but in *Bar* and *Wedding* themselves. We can see how *Wedding* has the look of a case of gift giving. But it's clear that in *Bar*, Stefan is not offering some impromptu gift for Eva. Sure, he has done something nice in buying the first round. But the case is set up such that there is an expectation of reciprocity between Stefan and Eva. This expectation is not codified by contract. If they happen to call it a night after one drink, that will surely be totally fine. There is an understanding, however, that, should they remain at the bar, the next round is on Eva. To our ears, it sounds odd to call Stefan's purchase a gift. So, the explanation from gifts isn't general enough to cover the phenomenon of interest in this paper.

But one might think, especially someone more convinced than us that *Wedding* is a case of gift giving, that the explanation appears insufficiently general only if *Bar* and *Wedding* are wrong for the same reason. Without hearing more about why *Bar* and *Wedding* are best thought of together, one might doubt our objection to the explanation from gifts.

We think this concern is overblown. These cases clearly have quite a lot in common in their immoral use of requests, requests that it is appropriate for the requestees to resent, and it is far from impossible to construe *Wedding* as distinct from pure gift-giving. While it might be disrespectful (express a lack of gratitude) to simply throw away a gift, recipients of gifts often have quite a lot of leeway in how they use their gifts. For Bill and Cara, however, they are not permitted to simply blow the money given to them on building a backyard basketball court. If they did so, Aoife would be reasonably upset. Instead, the money is clearly *for the wedding*. We think that the fact that the money is in service to this end is important for distinguishing this case from one of gift-giving in a way that will be brought out below.

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<sup>14</sup> We take this idea on board for the sake of argument, but notice that it's not entirely clear that there is such a sacrosanct norm against making requests in the context of gifts. Remember the card from your aunt with \$20 and a note that said, "Please use it to buy yourself something nice." That's a request that seems entirely acceptable. She might have gone further and simply written "Buy yourself something nice!" That'd be a command and yet still seem perfectly fine. If we grant that even gifts can involve permissible and impermissible requests, then it becomes much less clear how merely *calling* our cases gifts provides any kind of satisfying explanation of the wrongness.

<sup>15</sup> And we can expect exchanges to involve distinct sets of norms (Baviera *et. al.* 2016).

Admittedly, we're not sure that what we have to say here will convince diehard proponents of the explanation from gifts. But we do have one final concern about the explanation from gifts that we do think should give these proponents pause. What we're primarily after in this paper is an explanation of why it's wrong for benefactors in interpersonal relationships to make requests. Merely pointing out that making a request after benefiting someone violates a norm of gift giving looks to us more like a *name* for the phenomenon to be explained, rather than an explanation of it. We intend to do more than name it, starting in the next section.

### 3 Toward an Explanation of the Wrongness of Requesting

Our focus has been on explaining why Stefan and Aoife's requests are wrong. We've argued against several explanations, starting from those that dismissed the idea that the requests are wrong as wrongheaded entirely (Feinberg and Driver). We then discussed explanations that shared our claim that Stefan's and Aoife's requests are wrong but that cashed out the wrongness in terms that we argued are deficient (Kant's imperfect duties, gifts). Now that we've explained why we don't accept several natural explanations of the wrongness of Stefan's and Aoife's requests, we're in a position to develop our own.

Though we have the intuition that Stefan's and Aoife's requests are not okay, which we think is best cashed out in terms of wrongness, we started by recognizing that we also had the intuition that there's at least something appropriate about the requests these agents make. Aoife did contribute a large amount towards the wedding, after all. And it at least makes sense to us when Stefan makes his request. In other words, Stefan's and Aoife's also request strike us, albeit to a lesser degree, as not wrong. We're going to explain why Stefan's and Aoife's requests are wrong, ultimately. But our first step toward doing so will involve identifying the source of the intuition that their requests are appropriate or not wrong.

#### 3.1 Gaining Standing

Consider a scenario involving a graduate advisor and advisee who have been working together for several years. On Tuesday, the two are set to meet at their usual time and place, but the advisee is detained by some other obligation. So, they email the advisor to reschedule the meeting. Emailing with this request seems appropriate; it is in line with the advisor's expectations of their actions as an advisor, and it is a natural action of the advisee given the situation. The advisor and advisee are in a particular relationship such that it's the advisee's business to ask about whether and how the meeting can be rescheduled.

Contrast this with a case in which a complete stranger who has been following the advisor and advisee because he's interested in their research. Suppose he realizes that the advisee is likely to be late to the meeting and so emails the advisor requesting that the meeting be rescheduled. That would be a very bizarre thing to do. When the advisor and advisee meet, and the contents of those meetings, is none of the stranger's business.

Our cases more closely resemble the requests made by the advisee than by the stranger. What Eva does (as far as buying rounds) is Stefan's business, even if he shouldn't be making requests about it. And it's Aoife's business what music will be played at her son's wedding that she has financed. Our agents are involved in the situation such that it's at least not bizarre for them to make their requests (much less bizarre than it would be for other agents to make the same requests) even if it's wrong for them to do so.



Recently, some have connected this idea of whether or not something is your business with the issue of whether or not you have the *standing* to act a certain way in a situation. See, for example, this case of someone who lacks moral standing from Patrick Todd:

Suppose, for instance, that Ian displays an objectionable tendency to interrupt his partner, Ira. (We gather that Ian is, alas, a bit of a chauvinist.) We might grant that what Ian is doing is wrong, and his actions criticisable, while still feeling that it is not our place to say anything to Ian – especially, perhaps, in the presence of Ira. We may feel like this isn't our place, while it would be someone else's place – someone in Ian's immediate family, say. If we said something critical to Ian, he may be within his rights to tell us to mind our own business – but this is not, presumably, a reply he can just as easily make to a member of his own family. (2019:349)

It is clearly appropriate for a family member of Ian to criticize his behavior in a way that it is not appropriate for us to so criticize him. We lack the standing to blame him (or, at least to express blaming attitudes towards him).

This notion of standing has gained a lot of traction in the past few years, and we submit that understanding how our agents have and abuse standing by making their requests is the key to understanding the unique kind of wrong that they commit. One issue with making good on this idea, however, is that this is a fairly novel context in which to discuss standing. As in the Todd article and many others, the notion of standing is often discussed in the context of the standing to blame or to hold others responsible. There, we are primarily concerned with who gets to criticize whom. Similarly, one also sees standing appealed to recently in the literature on hypocrisy, where the concern there is with under what conditions standing is *lost* (Wallace 2010; McKiernan 2016; Rossi 2018; Fritz & Miller 2018; Dover 2019; King forthcoming). It is thought that if I have done X repeatedly, it is hypocritical for me to blame you for doing X, and that I would be a hypocrite for so doing in some way undermines my standing for expressing this blame. Finally, one also sees something like standing appealed to in the context of authority, where the issue is who has the power to make various commands over others, and why (e.g., Enoch 2014).

Our cases cannot be assimilated to any of these contexts. Quite explicitly, we have written the cases to *not* be cases of exertions of authority. Stefan and Aoife make requests, not commands, and, as such, Eva and Bill do not *have* to comply.<sup>16</sup> And the requests at issue are not over moral matters.<sup>17</sup> They may be about what the requestee has an obligation to do, but they don't involve blaming or holding to account.

Finally, and perhaps most significantly, our cases are not about standing lost. If anything, they are about standing *gained*. Stefan and Aoife both give something to Eva and Bill, respectively. In Aoife's case, what is given is quite significant. In this way, Stefan and Aoife are both *benefactors* of a kind, giving to someone in a way that benefits them. Though they may have standing even

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<sup>16</sup> If Bill and Aoife did issue commands, then this would even more obviously be wrong. That they can still have standing to make requests while lacking the standing to make commands is interesting, and generally less powerful forms of standing are underexplored.

<sup>17</sup> Todd himself is concerned with what he calls 'moral standing,' which for him involves standing in these moral contexts and having a certain commitment to morality.

absent these gestures, we think there is something interesting in them that grants them further standing, further legitimizing the requests they ought not make. But why would this be?

To demonstrate that Stefan and Aoife indeed have standing, we need some conception of what standing *is* and why their being generous in these cases might plausibly be taken as granting it to them. This can be a tall order, however, in part because discussions of what standing is apart from its relation to blame and responsibility are rare,<sup>18</sup> and in part because scholars typically focus on lacking standing. As a result, we might attempt to put what it is to gain standing in relief, by contrasting it with how theorists construe standing lost.

In a recent article even titled “Understanding Standing”, for instance, Ori Herstein fully characterizes standing in terms of precisely what individuals given directives by others *without* standing are able to do. Namely, they are able to *deflect* the reasons offered by the directive. A child who is scolded by a stranger for being bad, for instance, may deflect this criticism on the grounds that it is none of the stranger’s business, even if the stranger is right. We might think that a recipient of a directive from someone without standing is able to treat the directive as invalid, or as having no weight, or as freely weighed against the recipient’s other reasons. However, Herstein concludes that what the recipient is free to do, what they are permitted to do, is to exclude the reason offered from consideration.

If Herstein is right in his particular proposal—that failing to have standing means that directives you give are permissibly excluded from consideration—then *succeeding* at having standing might be characterized in relief: directives that you give *cannot* morally be excluded from consideration by the recipient. In other words, if you have standing relative to someone else, then they have to consider the reasons you offer them. Even if we do not want to commit ourselves to Herstein’s specific proposal, this characterization of having standing can likely be shared between him and his opponents. Standing involves the ability to communicate reasons that morally cannot be excluded from one’s deliberations.<sup>19</sup> By the same token, gaining standing relative to someone involves doing something such that they will have to consider the reasons you offer them in light of what you have done.

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<sup>18</sup> See Edwards (2019) for a very recent example of an author who does attempt to focus purely on what standing *is*, though the focus again is really what it is to have standing to hold someone responsible. It could be that Edward’s view could be adapted to provide a view of what it means to have the standing to make a request, though it is not entirely obvious to us that his view can be expanded in this way.

<sup>19</sup> This also fits nicely with certain ways of thinking about authority. For instance, Enoch (*op. cit.*) characterizes the kind of power had by those with authority in terms of an ability to communicate *exclusionary* reasons, where these are reasons to do a particular thing and to not do something incompatible with it. It should be noted that Enoch is committed to a view on which authorities *give* reasons for action, as opposed to merely playing an epistemic role of helping agents find their own reasons. And we argue for a view of requests as playing this purely epistemic role below. Since we are only discussing requests, we won’t take an official stand on the larger issue in political philosophy concerning whether commands from authority in fact give reasons in ways that we would deny in the case of issuing requests. But we do think that the epistemic view of requests that we develop below, on which requests are evidence of existing reasons, can be extended naturally to commands. That is, requests are evidence of existing *pro tanto* reasons, and commands are evidence of existing *conclusive* reasons.

We will have more to say about this ability below, but this loose characterization of standing is sufficient for now to ask whether and why the agents from our cases really have standing so understood. To answer this, it will be helpful to think about the aims of the agents involved.

### 3.2 Why Stefan and Aoife Have Standing to Request

In *Wedding*, we can assume that Bill wants to have a wedding where everyone has a great time. Well, Aoife wants that too. When we say that the money is not simply money to make Bill happy, but is rather for the wedding, then we can recognize that Bill and Aoife share this desire for a successful wedding. Something similar seems to be going on in *Bar*. Eva wants to have a fun night out with Stefan. Stefan wants to have a fun night out with Eva. His buying the first round is meant to facilitate this mutual desire for the shared end that they have.

We maintain that the having of these shared ends, and the fact that the beneficiaries in our cases are in a position to know that the ends are shared, is critical to the standing of the benefactors. To see why, notice further that the agents in these cases do not merely happen to have the same ends privately. They are explicitly committed to these ends, and the beneficiary knows that the benefactor is committed to these ends (their ends) in virtue of their benefaction. Put another way, these benefactors have contributed something towards these ends, and this signals a commitment to them.

Of course, the signal could be made insincerely, perhaps for nefarious reasons.<sup>20</sup> Assuming the commitment is sincere, though, the contribution of the benefactor expresses their commitment to ends shared with the beneficiary. If the beneficiary receives this signal and judges the commitment to be sincere, then they can come to know<sup>21</sup> that the benefactor shares these ends.

Bill knows that Aoife is committed to his having a wedding where everyone has a great time. He told his mother that this is what he wants, and she has donated a large sum of money towards his achieving it. And Eva knows that Stefan is committed to their having a fun night out. He bought the first round, so we know there will likely be more. Through the large check, Aoife has clearly delivered a much more costly signal of her commitment to sharing the end with Bill than Stefan has through his buying one extra pint. Still, where the chances of deception are low and the right conventions are in place, it seems that both Bill and Eva can know that their respective benefactors have their ends in mind.

This point has been somewhat belabored because we think it is the central element in the standing had by Aoife and Stefan. The thought is just that if you are able to know that someone is committed to your ends (because they have expressed a commitment to sharing your ends), and if you can assume that they are rational, then you can trust them to advise you. Loosely, they want what you want, and they may be in an epistemic position in ways superior to you. At least, they may have access to information you lack or more clearly see how that information bears on the actions that should be taken. If I am situated differently than you are epistemically, then I may know something that could be important for how you deliberate about your own actions. If you

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<sup>20</sup> There is a whole range of interesting and abominable variations on these cases that one might imagine, for example if Aoife did not have the end of everyone having a great time and had only contributed to the wedding fund to put pressure on her son to play what *she* wanted to hear.

<sup>21</sup> We will put the claim in terms of knowledge for ease of explanation. In reality, though, it is likely sufficient for the beneficiary to have a sufficiently high credence in the sincerity of the benefactor for the benefactor to still successfully play the role discussed below.

further have reason to trust what I say concerning your actions (say, because I share your ends), then I can become a reliable source of information to be used in determining how you should act. I am in a position to advise you, thereby expanding your deliberative capacities.

Spelling out this process as carefully as possible, it seems that what I'm doing here in advising you would be to communicate reasons for *you* that bear on *your* conduct given *your* ends. So put, and given our previous discussion of the nature of standing, it becomes clear that this is a case in which I have standing. I can facilitate your practical reasoning by communicating reasons that bear on your conduct, because you can trust that I have your ends in heart and might see things you can't.<sup>22</sup>

In our cases, Aoife and Stefan have standing relative to Bill and Eva, because they are in the same position. They share ends with Bill and Eva, and Bill and Eva know this. So, what they say (including their requests) can be taken as possibly communicating reasons that bear on how Bill and Eva should act. In other words, these benefactors have standing relative to their beneficiaries.

We can further appreciate how they have this standing at least in part because of their benefaction. It may of course be that many kinds of relationships themselves bring standing of various degrees along with them. Friends are licensed to make requests, for instance, without any particular instance of benefaction.<sup>23</sup> (See Loeschke [2015] for a discussion of authority/standing to make demands in the context of such relationships.) Still, our claim is that benefaction in these cases serves to deepen the trust between the agents in the context of their preexisting relationships, and it only clarifies the thought that these agents in fact do have standing to make their requests.

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<sup>22</sup> We will continue to talk as if the critical element here is the sharing of ends. And it may be. However, now that we see that what matters is that the beneficiary sees that you are committed to what they are trying to do, a position might open up to say that you could have standing towards someone even without sharing their ends, as long as you had as end that they achieve their ends. If having as an end 'you achieving your ends' means that I share your ends, then there is no difference. But, if you have as an end achieving world peace, then there might be a difference between my having the achievement of world peace as an end and my having *your achievement* of world peace as an end. Whether or not there is space for this difference should make no difference to the kind of wrong committed in the cases though.

<sup>23</sup> It may be that benefaction itself is capable of engendering some degree of standing. If I gave ten million dollars to a small charity because I appreciate the cause of the charity, and I myself have worked in the charity space for decades, then I arguably have standing to make requests regarding the efficacy of the charity as it pursues that cause. What matters is that the charity has strong reason to trust the advice of the requestor. This seems right to us, though nothing hangs on the claim that benefaction alone can ground standing. If we are desperate to have only one story, we could always say that what matters is the closeness and trust within the relationship, and benefaction matters to the degree that it can deepen the relationships that ground standing.

So, we have a story for roughly what standing consists in and the sense in which the agents in our cases have standing thus understood. These are all of the primary ingredients necessary to show why these agents in fact are obligated not to exercise this standing (as they do).<sup>24</sup>

### 3.3 But Why It's Wrong to Act on Such Standing

Stefan and Aiofe have standing to make their requests in *Bar* and *Wedding*. This is obvious, in *Bar* for instance, if we consider the panoply of requests and comments that seem licenced by Stefan's standing: "Let's go to this new bar up the street. I hear it has great cocktails and I know you love cocktails." "You pick songs on the jukebox. There's one right over there and you have better taste in music." "You've got to tell me what happened on that date last Friday; I'm begging you." "I would love to hear about your new turtle." These comments (some requests, and others mere promptings or pleas) seem perfectly fine. They succeed at advancing the agenda of the night, the end of a fun night out that Stefan and Eva both share, and they do this by facilitating Eva's thinking about what to do during the evening, given their shared ends. But Stefan's explicit request that Eva buy the next round does not seem fine. In fact, he seems obligated not to exercise his standing in this way, even though that request too is meant to advance the agenda of the night by facilitating Eva's thinking. And the same could be said for Aioife's request. What makes for the difference? What makes it wrong to issue these requests?

To get a feel for why that might be, recall an idea that we gave voice all the way back in the introduction. Focusing on *Bar*, when Stefan makes his request that Eva purchase the next round, he does so against the background that the two of them would trade rounds as they usually do. Again, *of course* Eva was going to get the next round - there was never any doubt. Yes, Stefan has standing to make requests that advise Eva about her reasons.<sup>25</sup> But doing so when Eva knows that she has decisive reasons to buy the next round, and Eva also knows that Stefan knows that she knows, reeks of a lack of *trust*. It amounts to Stefan not trusting that Eva will be responsive to the balance of known reasons.<sup>26</sup> We claim that such disrespect is a *decisive reason against* Stefan making the request, despite the fact that he has standing to make it. We also claim that because agents act

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<sup>24</sup> Given the foregoing, it is now easy to see how our cases differ from cases of gifts: Our cases involve sharing ends, whereas presumably one can and often does give gifts without sharing the ends of the gift's recipient. When giving a gift, we may want the receiver to be happy in virtue of the gift, and perhaps they also want to be happy generally, but we are not thereby committing ourselves to some kind of shared end. In *Birthday*, Stacy may have no idea what kind of music Ryan would prefer or what ends he pursues through his music-listening. (E.g., Is he trying to distract himself as he runs? Does he want music that is good for dancing? Or for helping him feel his emotions?) So, she gives a gift, certainly, but she is in no position to facilitate Ryan's reasoning about how to use the money, and Ryan wouldn't trust her attempting to do so. Of course, in giving her gift Stacy might share Ryan's end (and gift givers generally might share ends with the recipient). Crucially, though, the gift is not taken as expressing a commitment to those ends. So, giving the gift alone will not grant standing.

<sup>25</sup> In case we didn't make it sufficiently clear already, the sense of 'reason' we're using is *normative* reason. We drop these clauses for the sake of exposition from here on.

<sup>26</sup> We will talk of our agents failing to trust other agents *to be adequately responsive to their own reasons*. However, we remain agnostic on the debate concerning whether the relation of trust itself is a two-place relation (e.g., Stefan trusts Eva) or a three-place relation (e.g., Stefan trusts Eva to adequately respond to her own reasons), or whether one relation is more fundamental than another. (See Faulkner [2015] for some discussion on this topic.)

wrongly when they do what they have decisive reason not to do, Stefan's request is wrong. That's the explanation that we've been seeking.

We think the same kind of story can be told for *Wedding*. Aoife shares Bill's and Cara's end of arranging a wedding that will make them happy. All parties know it, and know that one another know it. Because Bill and Cara care about Aoife, part of what makes the couple happy is making Aoife happy. But in requesting that trad music is played, despite knowing that they're not fans of it, and despite knowing that Bill and Cara want to make Aoife happy, Aoife indicates a lack of trust in Bill and Cara to arrange their wedding such that Aoife is happy.

Of course, the case is set up such that trad music won't make everyone happy. But unless a wedding arrangement in which trad music figures is the *only* arrangement that will make Aoife happy, Bill and Cara will be capable of finding a trad-less wedding arrangement that will make themselves and Aoife happy. Trusting in Bill and Cara thus requires that Aoife trust that they will either decide to play trad music of their own volition or else would find an adequate substitute. Because Aoife indicates a lack of such trust in making her request, Aoife disrespects Bill and Cara. In disrespecting them, Aoife does what she has decisive reason not to do, and hence what it's wrong to do.

Since our argument crucially relies on a claim involving disrespect, one might reasonably expect us to defend further views about why indications of lack of trust are wrong. We don't defend such views, in part because we're attracted to several explanations. In particular, we think an appeal to Strawsonian explanations involving improper regard could be slotted in, along with Kantian explanations involving respect for humanity. It's not obvious to us which is the better way to go.

However, we are willing to take stands on various "first-order" claims involving expressions of lack of trust and disrespect. We don't think all indications of lack of trust are disrespectful. It's certainly not disrespectful for someone at a bar to not trust a stranger offering to buy them a round. Our claim is restricted to indications of trust among friends and family, i.e. in contexts of interpersonal relationships where trust has been established.

It's also worth noting that we're not offering a theory of why there is decisive reason against indicating a lack of trust in certain interpersonal contexts; nor are we offering a view of why acting against one's decisive reasons is wrong. The latter is a substantive but plausible assumption about the conceptual connection between reason and wrongness that we lack the space to defend. And the former would require us to take a stand on the nature of disrespect and the magnitude of the reason given not to express it. We don't have such a view, but there are several things we can say.

First, while we take the reason to not be disrespectful in our cases as decisive, it is not a conclusive reason. That is, *ceteris paribus*, one ought not to be disrespectful in these ways, and that a request is disrespectful in this way is sufficient reason not to make it. Still, there can be countervailing reasons that would justify being disrespectful or making these requests. If the stakes on your friend's reasoning are extremely high, then your advice may be warranted even if it isn't needed and even if you ought to think that your friend doesn't need it. If other relatives are likely to become violent should trad music not be paid, then Aoife's request may be justified.<sup>27</sup>

Second, as what is at issue here is a lack of trust, we can adopt ways of talking about what goes wrong when agents trust insufficiently. It is often remarked that trust involves vulnerability. Trusting agents lay themselves bare to the choices of others in ways that provide many benefits

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<sup>27</sup> Though, even here, it is not clear that Aoife is justified in offering this as a request as opposed to simply giving Bill this information that will strongly weigh in his reasoning.

(Nguyen forthcoming) but that also opens them up to exploitation (Dormandy 2020). Given this, trusting insufficiently can be viewed as a failure to be sufficiently vulnerable given the nature of your relationship. In our cases, Stefan and Aoife both clearly aren't willing to leave these matters, truly critical matters like who buys the pints and what music gets played, to the whim of their close friend or child. This betrays an insulting lack of willingness to allow for the full expression of autonomy that Eva and Bill deserve.

Finally, we can also say something about the particular infringement attempted on Eva and Bill's autonomy. As trusted advisors, Stefan and Aoife both are in a position to guide Eva and Bill epistemically. Most of the time, we may take this to even be an acceptable form of epistemic paternalism, when these agents play this role in ways that respects autonomy (Ahlstrom-Vij 2013). However, in these cases, our agents are abusing this role to be paternalistic in ways that are unnecessary, only expressing their lack of trust.

#### 4 A Clarifying Objection from Requests

We've explained why Stefan's and Aoife's requests are wrong. But we acknowledge that there are a number of places where one might disagree. There's little doubt in our minds that counterexamples to our claim that indications of lack of trust in interpersonal relationships are disrespectful lurk around the corner. Contra our optimism, maybe off-the-shelf views of disrespect aren't compatible with our package of claims. Perhaps the connection between decisive reasons and wrongness is merely epistemic or nomological rather than conceptual, or not there at all. You name it. Among all of the objections to our explanation of why it's wrong for Stefan and Aoife to make requests that we can cook up, however, we'd like to single out one. Answering it will clarify some of the commitments of our view.

Using *Bar* as illustration, it's part of our argument that Stefan's request indicates a lack of trust in Eva to respond to her decisive known reasons to buy the next round. But this seems to presuppose that the balance of reasons are *already, prior* to Stefan's request, such that Eva has decisive reasons to buy the next round. In particular, it presupposes that the request itself doesn't alter the balance of reasons, because the request itself is *not a reason*. Unfortunately for us, orthodoxy with respect to the normativity of requests has it that *requests create reasons*.<sup>28</sup> Because Stefan can't indicate a lack of trust in Eva to respond to her existing decisive known reasons that don't already exist, Stefan's request isn't a disrespectful and hence wrongful indication of a lack of trust.

##### 4.1 Responding to the Objection

It's very natural to maintain that requests create reasons, both for theoretical and intuitive reasons.<sup>29</sup> The intuitive case is often made with, well, cases, like a case in which Gabriella could really use some feedback from one of her many capable friends on a new draft of her paper. Many would find it intuitive to say that Gabriella's situation provides some reason for her friend Esmeralda to help, but that the normative situation changes when Gabriella requests help from Esmeralda. It changes

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<sup>28</sup> See, *inter alia*, Enoch (2011, *op. cit.*), Owens (2012), and Lewis (2018).

<sup>29</sup> One theoretical advantage for which defenders of the view argue is that it can capture the sense in which requests create "discretionary" reasons, in the sense that one can without committing any kind of normative error, dismiss them. See especially Lewis (2018).

in that the request provides Esmeralda with an additional reason - one that perhaps tips the balance such that it would be wrong for Esmeralda not to help. The view that requests create reasons seems to capture these intuitions easily.

We agree that the explanation we offer of why Stefan's and Aiofe's requests are wrong seems to presuppose the contrasting view that requests don't create reasons. We don't think that's a problem, however. Yes, the view that requests create reasons is dominant. But we think it shouldn't be, in part because the alternative view that requests don't create reasons is not obviously false and the little that has been said against it in print is unpersuasive. Indeed, on one version of such a view to which we're partial, requests don't create reasons because *requests are evidence of reasons*. When you make a request by uttering words, you're performing the illocutionary act of requesting. Such utterances express the belief that there are reasons for the requestee. Such expressions constitute evidence of existing reasons, they don't constitute or create new reasons. In part because we see this *epistemic* view of the nature of requests as coherent, we don't think our presupposing it undermines our explanation of why Stefan's request is wrong.

Indeed, not only do we think such a view is coherent, we think it stands up to scrutiny. The *one* explicit objection to the view that requests don't create reasons of which we're aware is based on the following case:

“Consider two friends, Sioned and Ffion. Sioned is mounting an election campaign and she wants Ffion to help as her campaign manager. Committing to the campaign would constitute a substantial sacrifice for Ffion as it will be stressful, and for the course of the campaign it will take a lot of time away from her own work, her family and her other engagements. Suppose that Ffion *knows* perfectly well that Sioned wants her help: indeed, everybody *knows* it. But because of the extent of the sacrifice that it would entail, Ffion has not voluntarily offered her help to her friend. For some time, Ffion *knows* that Sioned desires her help and Sioned knows that Ffion *knows* this too, but, somehow, she cannot bring herself to ask for help: partly out of pride, partly out of reluctance to burden her friend, partly in the hope that an offer will be forthcoming from Ffion anyway. But it is not, so the time comes and Sioned confronts the awkwardness that has arisen between them with a request: she explicitly asks Ffion whether she would commit to helping Sioned's election bid in the role of her campaign manager. This, I suggest, is a request which presents a non-obligatory [“discretionary”] reason for action. But moreover, the request itself has altered the normative situation. I suggest that it has done so by creating a reason that was not present before.”  
(Lewis 2018: 5, emphasis ours)

It's not at all obvious to us that the request alters the normative situation above by creating a reason that wasn't present before. Lewis sets up the case such that, prior to the request, the balance of reasons are such that Ffion has strong and perhaps decisive reason not to help. Why not think that the balance of reasons are the same post request? Lewis says:

“Since in the example it is stipulated that prior to the request being made, Ffion already *knows full well* of Sioned's desire for her help, it seems that the normative difference that the speech act of the



request makes cannot be an *epistemic matter*.” (Lewis 2018: 6, emphasis ours)

We don’t see how the fact that Ffion has knowledge of Sioned desire for help tells against our claim that requests serve a merely evidentiary function. Suppose that we know that Bob Seger isn’t touring anymore because we ran into him on the street and he told us as much. Suppose, too, we read that he isn’t touring anymore from his website. The information on his website is evidence that Seger isn’t touring anymore, even though we already know that he isn’t touring. That one knows *p* doesn’t preclude receiving new evidence for *p*, generally. So, we claim, in particular, that Ffion is receiving new evidence in the form of Sioned request of something Ffion already knows.<sup>30</sup>

## 5 Conclusion

In this paper, we’ve defended a view of why it’s wrong to make requests in a range of novel cases represented by *Bar* and *Wedding*. There’s two parts to the defense. In the first, we argued against rival views of the normative profile of these cases. We argued that the requesters in *Bar* and *Wedding*, respectively, Stefan and Aiofe, aren’t best thought of as merely performing actions that they ought not to do (Feinberg) or actions that are merely bad to do (Driver). We then argued against the Kantian view that cashed out the wrongness of these requests in terms of violations of imperfect duties. We also argued against thinking of the wrongness in terms of violating the norms of gift giving.

In the second half of the paper, we defended our view that Stefan’s and Aiofe’s requests are wrong by dwelling on our initial reaction to their cases, namely, that their requests are appropriate or not wrong to make. It’s tempting to think that the requests are not wrong to make, on our diagnosis, because of the conditions under which agents gain *moral standing* to request generally. They do so, we claimed, when requesters are in a moral position to communicate reasons that can’t

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<sup>30</sup> Cupit (1994) and Gläser (2019) are the only two other moral philosophers of which we’re aware that defend the view that requests don’t create reasons. Of these two, Gläser’s comes closest to the version that we’ll float. Gläser offers a compelling defense of the view that requests don’t create reasons to which we can’t do justice in the short amount of space remaining. Indeed, we don’t even have the space to discuss all the moving parts of Gläser’s positive view of the nature of requests and their associated normativity.

Nevertheless, consider the following aspects of Gläser’s view, on which requests don’t create reasons in the same way that testimony doesn’t create evidence. Which way is that? Following Moran (2005), Gläser claims that testifiers provide addressee’s with a “form of rationally believing” the proposition to which has been testified - a new form previously unavailable to the addressee. Which form is that? Gläser claims that the addressee is now in a position to “believe the testifier that *p*”, which is a “relational” form of believing, rather than “believing that *p*”, which is a “monadic” form of believing. Requests work similarly, according to Gläser. Translating the thought from testimony to requests isn’t straightforward, but presumably the idea is that when a request is made, a requestee can then act because so-and-so asked, which was not previously possible.

We find talk of “believing relationally” obscure in the testimony case, because we don’t think there’s any such attitude of *believing so-and-so* in addition to *belief*. Like Gläser, we want to hold onto the view that requests don’t create reasons. Like Gläser, too, we’re even open to the analogy between requests and testimony. But we don’t think the analogy is as tight as Gläser suggests.

morally be excluded from deliberation. And in our particular cases, we claimed that Stefan and Aiofe are in a moral position to communicate such reasons in the form of requests to Eva and Bill and Cara, respectively, because their acts of benefaction demonstrate their commitment to ends that Eva and Bill and Cara share.

We then argued, however, that not every case of standing to request implies permission to request. In some cases, it's wrong to exercise such standing. In *Bar* and *Wedding*, Stefan's and Aiofe's requests indicate a lack of trust of those with whom they are in close interpersonal relationships, Eva and Bill and Cara, to respond to their reasons. Because there's decisive reason against acting disrespectfully in such a way, and because doing what you have decisive reason against doing is wrong, Stefan's and Aiofe's requests are wrong.

Finally, we answered an intriguing objection from the idea that requests don't create reasons. We argued that the objection too hastily assumes the falsity of the view that requests don't create reasons, and in particular the view that requests are evidence of existing reasons.

In short, to quote Darth Vader, we find Stefan's and Aiofe's lack of faith disturbing.

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