Love, Freedom, and Resentment

Samuel H. Lundquist
Rochester, NY

Bachelor of Arts, Tufts University, 2014

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For my parents

Contemporary philosophers frequently connect consciousness with virtue, and although they constantly talk of freedom they rarely talk of love.

— Iris Murdoch, *The Sovereignty of the Good* (1970: 2)

It is certain that the practices of blame, and more generally the style of people's negative ethical reactions to others, will change.

— Bernard Williams, *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy* (1985: 215)

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Introduction

> Socrates: Then tell us, heir to the discussion, just what Simonides said about justice that you think is correct.
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> Polemarchus: He said it is just to give to each what is owed to him. And a fine saying it is, in my view.
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> — Plato, *Republic* (331e)

The view of interpersonal justice that Polemarchus attributes to the Ancient Greek poet Simonides has been greatly influential in the history of ethical thought. For Simonides, what justice demands is that we render others what we owe them.[1]

What we owe one another and why are fundamental ethical questions. According to many ethical views, we owe one another various acts and omissions, which are specifiable independently of the attitudes that our acts or omissions reflect. That is, we have *external obligations* toward one another, which specify *external standards of conduct*. But according to an influential view in contemporary ethics, we also owe one another certain interpersonal attitudes, or forms of regard. That is, we have what I will call *ethical obligations*, or *obligations of regard*, toward one another.[2]

Here is an outline of that view. In our interpersonal relations, the quality of our regard for one another matters greatly to us. There are certain forms of regard that we owe one another, including, for example, certain forms of respect. There are other forms of regard, such as certain forms of love, which we hope for from one another, or aspire to have for one another, which we are worthy of but are not owed. Our concern for the quality of regard that we have for one another also varies by our specific relations. For example, how our loved ones regard us usually matters much more to us than how mere acquaintances regard us. The forms of regard that we owe one another also vary by our specific relations and histories with one another. We might, for example, owe our friends certain forms of trust or esteem that we do not owe strangers.

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1 For discussion of Simonides' view of justice in Plato's *Republic*, see Terence Irwin (1995: 172-174).

2 Many ethical views are not fundamentally interpersonal or relational in this way, including certain consequentialist views, certain Kantian views, and certain virtue ethical or perfectionist views, as well as certain theological views. See R. Jay Wallace (2019, Ch. 2) for discussion of such views.

On this view, for us to be ethically responsible is for us to owe others certain forms of regard. It is for us to have the ethical responsibility of duly or properly regarding others. To properly regard others is to render them the forms of regard that we owe them. To wrong others is to disregard or deficiently regard them. It is to not give them what we owe them by way of regard. We can wrong others in myriad ways—by betraying, demeaning, or neglecting them, by distrusting, ignoring, or lying to them, and so on. In wronging others, it is not only that we have done wrong or acted wrongly. We have specifically wronged them. The wrong is essentially interpersonal. And when people whose quality of regard matters to us wrong us or wrong others, we are disposed to various reactive attitudes toward them. We are especially disposed to various blaming attitudes, and we are disposed to express or act on those attitudes in various ways. For us to be responsible for wronging others—in the sense of being blameworthy or culpable for wronging them—is for us to be the appropriate object of such reactive attitudes and actions. It is, for example, for us to be the appropriate object of blame, anger, confrontation, or sanction.

That is roughly, and in brief, P. F. Strawson's immensely influential view of interpersonal ethical life and responsibility, which he presents primarily in "Freedom and Resentment" (1962).[3] Strawson is not focused, however, on specifying precisely what we owe one another by way of regard or why. Nor is he focused on providing a thorough assessment of our various responses to wrongs. Those are further matters, beyond his "fixed polemical purposes."[4]

Strawson's impetus for offering that view is to reconcile certain views of free will. Traditional debates in Western philosophy regarding responsibility have long centered on the compatibility of free will and determinism.[5] But these debates, Strawson claims, ignore "what it is actually like" to regard

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[3] For a brief overview of Strawson's later writings on these issues, see Benjamin De Mesel (2022). See also the references to this dissertation for some of Strawson's later writings.

[4] Cf. Strawson's "Critical Notice of *Philosophical Investigations* by Ludwig Wittgenstein" (1954): "What Wittgenstein says on these difficult topics [of voluntary action and intention] is immensely suggestive and interesting—but elusive and incomplete. […] Evidently this topic—of doing and intending—could be pursued into refinements and elaborations which Wittgenstein, with his fixed polemical purpose, neglects. But rarely has a subject been treated so powerfully and suggestively in so few pages" (94). Rarely, I believe, has the subject of interpersonal ethical life and responsibility been treated so powerfully and suggestively in so few pages as in Strawson's "Freedom and Resentment." But what Strawson says is also elusive and incomplete.

[5] These debates have also long been centered on theological questions about the compatibility of free will with divine omnipotence, divine foreknowledge, divine justice, and divine providence. Strawson and contemporary Strawsonians largely put these questions aside. I will also largely put them aside. Understanding the history of these theological debates is nonetheless important for understanding how we have come to hold our various conceptions of freedom and responsibility.

one another as responsible in our ordinary lives. He exhorts us to keep in mind what it is actually like to be in "the many different kinds of relationship which we can have with other people—as sharers of a common interest; as members of the same family; as colleagues; as friends; as lovers; as chance parties to an enormous range of transactions and encounters" (§3). Strawson reminds us "how much we actually mind, how much it matters to us, whether the actions of other people—and particularly of *some* other people—reflect attitudes towards us of goodwill, affection, or esteem on the one hand or contempt, indifference, or malevolence on the other," and he reminds us of "the kinds of *reactive* attitudes and feelings to which we ourselves are prone" (§3). Strawson proposes that responsibility is fundamentally a matter of the appropriateness of our ordinary concerns, expectations, and demands for interpersonal regard, and the appropriateness of the reactive attitudes to which those concerns, expectations, and demands ordinarily dispose us.

Here Strawson is profoundly influenced by Wittgenstein.[6] Strawson calls his remarks about our ordinary attitudes and practices "commonplaces." These commonplaces are akin to Wittgenstein's "reminders" of our ordinary use of language.[7] To borrow from Wittgenstein (1953), Strawson aims to "to bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use" (§116). In "Freedom and Resentment," Strawson aims to bring "freedom" and "responsibility" back to their everyday use. Strawson has similar aims in "Social Morality and Individual Ideal" (1961). He argues against Elizabeth Anscombe's (1958) view that our concepts of duty and obligation reflect a religious metaphysics. Strawson (1961) objects to Anscombe: "There is nothing in the least mysterious or metaphysical in the fact that duties and obligations go with offices, positions, and relationships to others" (7-8). Strawson holds that to understand our concepts of freedom and responsibility, duty and obligation, we should focus on how we use these concepts in our ordinary lives. He claims that some of the "reflective accretions" that these concepts have acquired from philosophy and religion are confused.[8] Philosophers—and theologians—"over-intellectualize the facts."[9]

Strawson claims that our ordinary concerns about the quality of our regard for one another, our ordinary expectations and demands of one another for certain forms of regard, and our ordinary reactive attitudes—which reflect those concerns, expectations, and demands—can be appropriate independently of the metaphysical considerations involved in traditional debates about free will and

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6 See Strawson's "Intellectual Biography" (2011) for his reflections on Wittgenstein's influence on him.

7 Cf. Wittgenstein (1953): "The work of the philosopher consists in marshalling recollections for a particular purpose" (§127).

8 Strawson (1980: 265).

9 Strawson (1962, §6).

determinism. In this, Strawson is a compatibilist about ethical responsibility and the forms of agency and freedom that make us ethically responsible. Among Strawson's lasting influences has been to relegate questions of free will and determinism to the margins of many contemporary views of responsibility. I do not believe those questions should be so relegated, but I will put that aside for a moment.

Even if Strawson turns too far from traditional metaphysical questions of freedom and responsibility, his turn toward our ordinary attitudes and practices in thinking about responsibility is a moment of significant philosophical progress.[10] By bringing the importance of these attitudes and practices into view, Strawson sets an expansive agenda for contemporary philosophers. This agenda includes providing views of the forms of regard that we are worthy of and owe one another; the attitudes and actions that are appropriate in response to interpersonal wrongs and other ethically significant conduct; the forms of agency and freedom that make us ethically responsible; and the forms of agency and freedom that otherwise make our conduct ethically significant.

I should clarify that contemporary views of responsibility can be "Strawsonian" in various ways. Views that consider responsibility as a matter of the appropriateness of certain attitudes are Strawsonian in the broadest sense. Views that consider the appropriateness of those attitudes as a matter of our "quality of regard" for one another are Strawsonian in a narrower sense. And views that consider our quality of regard for one another in ways that relegate questions of free will and determinism to the margins are Strawsonian in an even narrower sense. But there is another way in which views of responsibility can be Strawsonian. Views that consider us as having obligations of regard to one another, and that consider our quality of regard for one another as a matter of whether we fulfill those obligations, are also Strawsonian in an important sense.

Providing a view of our obligations of regard, the forms of agency and freedom that make us ethically responsible, and the ways in which certain attitudes can be appropriate in light of our quality of regard for one another are all aspects of a broadly Strawsonian agenda. Among the prominent contemporary Strawsonians whose views I will consider in this dissertation are Stephen Darwall, Pamela Hieronymi, Michael McKenna, Paul Russell, T. M. Scanlon, David Shoemaker, Angela Smith, R. Jay Wallace, and Gary Watson. Although they focus on different aspects of the Strawsonian agenda and differ on how to complete that agenda, they agree on the agenda itself.

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[10] As in many moments of philosophical progress, Strawson is also recovering insights from the past. He is, for example, recovering insights of David Hume and Adam Smith on our "moral sentiments." Cf. Strawson (1962, §6). For discussion of Hume as a precedent for Strawson, see Paul Russell (1995).

As I noted, Strawson offers his view of responsibility for fixed polemical purposes. Among our interpersonal attitudes, he focuses on the appropriateness of certain blaming attitudes, the concerns and expectations for regard that those attitudes reflect, and the forms of agency and freedom that make those attitudes appropriate. But there are matters of great importance regarding ethical life and responsibility that Strawson does not bring into view. He does not, for example, consider the importance of our attitudes of understanding and concern for others in response to their wrongful conduct. He does not consider how our concern for their good, and our concern to understand the sources of their wrongful conduct, should ideally inform our responses to them, including our blaming responses. These matters are beyond his fixed polemical purposes. He is not offering a complete view of how we should ideally regard and respond to one another's wrongful conduct.[11]

Following Strawson, contemporary Strawsonians tend to focus on the appropriateness of our blaming attitudes toward wrongdoers, neglecting our attitudes of understanding and concern for them. That tendency coincides with another tendency, which is to take relations between adults—perhaps especially those who are mere acquaintances or strangers—as our paradigmatic relations of regard and responsibility. In other words, Strawsonians take these relations as their theoretical focus, as providing the explanatory models by which other relations can be understood. But by taking these relations as our paradigms—rather than our close relations with friends and family, including those with children and adolescents—we are, I believe, more liable to forget the place of attitudes of understanding and concern for one another in our lives, especially in our responses to one another's wrongful conduct.[12]

Consider how in our relations with our friends or children, we are commonly concerned not only that they properly regard others for the sake of those others. We are also concerned for them to properly regard others for their own sake—that is, for the sake of our friends or children themselves. This concern is part of our general concern for them and their own good—that is, our concern for them to live and fare well. We take their properly regarding others as not only owed to those others, and not only as good for those others, but also as good for them. We take their relating to others with

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[11] Strawson (1962) repeatedly notes the limitations of his discussion. For example: "I am aware that in presenting the argument as I have done, neglecting the ever-interesting varieties of case, I have presented nothing more than a schema, using sometimes a crude opposition of phrase where we have a great intricacy of phenomena" (§6). Cf. Strawson (1961): "The field of [moral and ethical] phenomena over which I have thus loosely ranged is, I think, very much more complex and many-sided than I have been able to suggest; but I have been concerned to suggest something of its complexity" (16).

[12] Cf. Strawson (1962): "The object of these commonplaces is to try to keep before our minds something it is easy to forget when we are engaged in philosophy, especially in our cool, contemporary style, viz. what it is actually like to be involved in ordinary inter-personal relationships, ranging from the most intimate to the most casual" (§3).

proper regard to be a common good, which is shared by them and those whom they properly regard. We are also concerned to understand how our friends or children have come to wrong us or others. We want to understand their intentions and motives, and we want to know the sources of their intentions and motives. We are concerned to understand the nature and limits of their ethical agency, and the sources of those limits, so that we can understand how to bring them to acknowledge their wrongs and how to otherwise foster their proper regard for others. Our ongoing dependency on one another for our ethical development and its integrity is also especially apparent to us in our close, loving relationships. Note that, in all this, I am appealing to what these relationships are commonly like and to commonplace ideals for what they should be. I acknowledge that these relationships are, unfortunately, often not as they should ideally be.

In light of what our loving relationships are commonly like, and in light of our commonplace ideals for such relationships, I do not believe that Strawsonians have yet provided a fully satisfying view of how our concern for others, our concern to understand the sources of their wrongful conduct, and our understanding of those sources should inform our responses to one another's wrongful conduct. I also do not believe Strawsonians have yet provided a fully satisfying view of the forms of regard that we owe one another and what makes us worthy of and owed these forms of regard.

In this dissertation, I aim to provide more satisfying views of those matters. I begin by proposing that we take our close, loving relationships as our paradigmatic relations of regard and responsibility. In proposing this, I do not suppose our relations with mere acquaintances or strangers, for example, can be adequately understood just by considering our relations with family or friends, or that we can understand our relations with adults just by considering our relations with children. All of these relations are importantly different from one another. But I suppose that by beginning with our close, loving relationships, including our relationships with children, we can bring more fully into view what matters most in our relations of regard and responsibility.

In developing and defending that proposal, I also aim to retrieve insights from older traditions of ethical thought, especially from Platonic, Stoic, and Christian traditions. These traditions—which give love and understanding a central place in our ethical relations, along with respect—have profoundly influenced the history of Western ethics. But these traditions are unduly neglected in much of contemporary moral philosophy. By joining the insights of these older traditions with the recent insights of Strawsonians, I believe we can articulate a more complete and compelling view of our ethical obligations and our ideals of ethical responsiveness to wrongdoers.

Understanding and assessing how we hold one another ethically responsible is important not only in theory but throughout our ordinary lives. Our conceptions of responsibility are crucial to how we regard and live with one another. Critiquing those conceptions is a perennial task for philosophy and our culture. That is the task I take on in this dissertation.

In Chapter One, I offer a view of our fundamental obligations of regard, which expands on the prevailing Strawsonian views. I argue that Strawsonians have not yet offered a fully satisfying view of these obligations because they have focused too narrowly on our obligations to respect one another. I propose that we also owe one another certain forms of concern, which essentially consist in an appreciation of one another's *individual good* and *individual worth*—that is, an appreciation of the significance of our living and having a good life, and a recognition of what such a life consists in, or could consist in, for us. In turn, I claim that there are at least two fundamental ethical attitudes that we can owe one another. The first is roughly what Stephen Darwall (1977; 2006) calls *recognition respect*, and the second is roughly what Darwall (2002) calls *sympathetic concern*. I also expand in Chapter One on the prevailing Strawsonian views by offering a more complete ideal of ethical community. Prominent Strawsonians offer a contractualist ideal of moral community that I will call *the Community of Respect*. The ideal of ethical community that I offer encompasses the Community of Respect. Borrowing from Josiah Royce and Martin Luther King, Jr., I will call this ideal *the Beloved Community*. In the Beloved Community, we regard one another with deepened forms of recognition respect and sympathetic concern, extending our ideals for how we should regard our loved ones toward all of our fellow human beings. By offering expanded views of our fundamental obligations of regard and our ideals of ethical community in Chapter One, I prepare my way in the following chapters to develop and defend various ideals for how we should regard and respond to one another's wrongful conduct.

In Chapter Two, I articulate what I call *the Platonic Claim*. In brief, the Platonic Claim holds that properly regarding others is in itself good for us and is an essential and supremely important part of living a good life, whereas wronging others is in itself bad for us. To regard one another in light of the Platonic Claim is to hold what I call *the Platonic Attitude*. The Platonic Attitude is a general stance or outlook, which properly disposes us to various specific attitudes, including various beliefs, desires, emotions, and forms of reasoning. The Platonic Attitude is prominent in various ethical traditions—not only in Platonic ethical traditions, but also, for example, in Stoic and Christian ethical traditions. As I noted, we also seem especially disposed to hold the Platonic Attitude toward our loved ones. Although some prominent Strawsonians affirm versions of the Platonic Claim, I argue that they have

not adequately considered the significance of this claim for how we should respond to wrongdoers. In Chapter Two, I develop and defend what I consider the most plausible version of the Platonic Claim. In the following chapters, I elaborate how the Platonic Attitude should ideally inform our responses to wrongdoers.

In Chapter Three, I offer a general framework for assessing the ethical quality of our attitudes toward wrongdoers. Among our blaming attitudes, Strawsonians focus most on assessing the ethical quality of certain forms of anger. For Strawsonians, our paradigmatically appropriate blaming attitude toward wrongdoers is what I will follow Shoemaker (2015) in calling *blaming anger*. Many Strawsonians have recently converged in affirming what I call *the Minimalist Conception* of blaming anger and its fittingness. On the Minimalist Conception, blaming anger essentially consists in a certain affective construal and a certain aim. In blaming anger, we construe those at whom we are angered as wronging us or others, and we aim to hold them to account—that is, we desire and are motivated to demand their acknowledgment of their wrongful conduct and their proper regard for those whom they have wronged. In turn, blaming anger is fitting for us to feel toward wrongdoers insofar as we, in our anger, correctly construe them as wronging us or others and insofar as we, in our anger, properly aim to hold them to account.

I agree with Strawsonians that the Minimalist Conception has an important role in assessing the ethical quality of blaming anger by providing a notion of what I call *minimal fittingness*. But I believe the Minimalist Conception does not provide a full conception of blaming anger and its fittingness. To extend the Minimalist Conception, I offer what I call *the Virtue Conception* of blaming anger and its fittingness. On the Virtue Conception, in feeling blaming anger toward others, certain sorts of considerations regarding their conduct are not only salient to us in certain characteristic ways but also appear worthy of salience for us—that is, worth attending to, focusing on, caring about, and being moved by in certain characteristic ways. On the Virtue Conception, what I call *the full fittingness* of our blaming anger depends on whether and to what extent those considerations are genuinely worthy of such salience for us—that is, on whether those considerations are significant in the ways that they appear to us to be in such anger. In other words, the full fittingness of our blaming anger toward wrongdoers depends on whether and to what extent we, in our anger, are properly responsive to what should matter to us in the course of responding to them. I propose that various attitudes of understanding and concern toward wrongdoers can, for example, be called for from us in the course of responding to them. And so the full fittingness of our blaming anger toward wrongdoers will

depend in part on whether and how such attitudes of understanding and concern should ideally inform, qualify, or even supersede our blaming anger in the course of responding to them.

In Chapters Four and Five, I argue that several specific attitudes of understanding and concern should ideally inform our blaming attitudes toward wrongdoers. I will call them *the Spinozan Attitude*, *the Socratic Attitude*, and *the Senecan Attitude*. As with the Platonic Attitude I elaborate in Chapter Two, these other attitudes are prominent in certain Platonic, Stoic, and Christian ethical traditions. The Socratic and Senecan Attitudes are also, I believe, common in our close, loving relationships.

In Chapter Four, I elaborate the Spinozan and Socratic Attitudes, which acknowledge certain ethically significant limitations on our agency and freedom. The Spinozan Attitude consists in regarding one another in light of what I call *the Spinozan Claim*, which is that we lack ultimate control over our character and conduct, and so are ultimately subject to luck in them. The Socratic Attitude consists in regarding one another in light of what I call *the Socratic Claim*, which is that our wrongful conduct reflects either a lack in our ethical understanding or a lack in the integrity of our agency, or both. I argue that the Spinozan and Socratic Attitudes are essential to fully understanding the nature and sources of wrongful conduct. As with the Platonic Attitude, the Spinozan and Socratic Attitudes are general stances or outlooks. Holding these attitudes should ideally dispose us to further attitudes of understanding and concern for wrongdoers. Contrary to certain traditional views of responsibility, I do not take the Spinozan and Socratic Attitudes to preclude the fittingness of blaming anger or the fittingness of various other blaming attitudes. Rather, I argue that our blaming anger should ideally be informed by the Spinozan and Socratic Attitudes, so that we respond to wrongdoers in a more truthful, just, and loving light—even if we are also responding with anger.

Finally, in Chapter Five, I elaborate the Senecan Attitude. The Senecan Attitude consists in regarding one another in light of what I call *the Senecan Claim*, which is that the good of wrongdoers is, in light of the Platonic Claim, among our proper concerns and ends in holding them to account. In other words, in holding wrongdoers to account with the Senecan Attitude, we hold them to account in part for their own sake, with a concern to foster their proper regard toward others, with a sense of how their properly regarding others is an essential and supremely important part of their living a good life. Such concern need not be affectionate, should not be sentimental, and may even be severe. Such concern is the form of "understanding goodwill" that Martin Luther King, Jr., for example, spoke of so eloquently and embodied in his own life.

In sum, I propose that we should ideally hold the Platonic, Spinozan, Socratic, and Senecan Attitudes toward one another, along with deepened forms of recognition respect and sympathetic

concern. These attitudes form the core of an ideal of ethical responsiveness to wrongdoers. Holding these attitudes toward one another does not preclude us from having various fitting blaming attitudes. But our blaming attitudes toward others should ideally be informed by them.

The overall view that I present in this dissertation is, to borrow from Strawson, also offered as "a move toward reconciliation" between Strawsonians and certain skeptics about responsibility. As Amélie Rorty (1988) remarks, "Apparently irreconcilable opponents are often interested in different issues, asking different questions, each assuming that the answer to one question determines the answer to others" (7-8). Strawsonians and skeptics tend to focus on different forms of responsibility, which correspond to different possible responses to wrongs. Strawsonians tend to focus on defending certain varieties of blame and anger as appropriate, whereas skeptics tend to focus on opposing other, harsher varieties of those attitudes, especially those which reflect the retributivist belief that wrongdoers deserve to be harmed, or made worse off, because their being harmed is good in itself.

To my mind, the best Strawsonian views and skeptical views converge. And there is increasing recognition of this convergence by some Strawsonians, including Pamela Hieronymi, Paul Russell, and Gary Watson, and by some skeptics, including Neil Levy, Derk Pereboom, and Bruce Waller. I believe this convergence constitutes significant philosophical progress, and I believe the conceptual and ethical framework that I offer in this dissertation further clarifies and deepens this convergence.

I would like to conclude this introduction with a few brief remarks on philosophical method. In this dissertation, I present an outlook on interpersonal ethical life and responsibility and certain ideals of ethical responsiveness that I find compelling, and I aim to make the appeal of this outlook and those ideals vivid with examples and exemplars. I believe that the best we can do by way of justifying an ethical outlook or ideal is to seriously reflect on such examples and exemplars with one another and to find ourselves moved to affirm those outlooks and ideals in light of them. That is all we can reasonably or even sensibly hope for in ethics.

The outlook and ideals I offer seem to me to reflect many of our most deeply held—if unarticulated—ethical convictions. Some aspects of this outlook, and some of these ideals, are not, however, as widely or firmly held. I hope to present them in such a way that they could, on reflection, be widely affirmed. But at the least, I hope to bring my readers to regard them in a new, more promising light.

Chapter One:
"Obligations of Regard and the Ethical Community"

In this chapter, I provide a Strawsonian view of our fundamental obligations of regard toward one another, which expands on the prevailing Strawsonian views. I also offer an ideal of ethical community, which expands on the contractualist ideal of moral community that many prominent Strawsonians affirm.

In Section One, I propose that we owe one another two fundamental ethical attitudes, which I will, following Stephen Darwall, call *recognition respect* and *sympathetic concern*. Many Strawsonians—including Darwall, T. M. Scanlon, and R. Jay Wallace—focus on our obligations of respect toward one another, especially our obligations to respect our claims against one another. These Strawsonians also hold, however, that our interests are what give us those claims, and so respecting others requires recognition of their interests. I argue that to appreciate the significance of one another's claims and the seriousness of respecting those claims, we also need a certain recognition of the nature and significance of what I will call one another's *individual good*. That is, we need a certain recognition not only of one another's interests. We also need a certain recognition of what I will call one another's *individual worth*. And I claim that in light of one another's individual worth, we owe one another a certain form of concern, which essentially consists in recognition of one another's individual worth. These claims seem to me implicit in some Strawsonian views, but I aim to make them explicit.

In Section Two, I outline an ideal of ethical community. Many prominent Strawsonians—including Darwall, Scanlon, and Wallace—affirm a contractualist ideal of moral community, which I will call *the Community of Respect*. I offer a more complete ideal of ethical community, which encompasses the Community of Respect. Borrowing from Josiah Royce and Martin Luther King, Jr., I will call this ideal *the Beloved Community*. This ideal affirms the central place that attitudes of concern and understanding should ideally have in all of our ethical relations, along with attitudes of respect. I conclude this chapter by briefly tracing the history of such an ideal in Western ethical thought.

Section One. Recognition Respect and Sympathetic Concern

In this section, I offer a view of our fundamental obligations of regard and their grounds. This view is, I believe, more complete than the views offered by Darwall, Scanlon, and Wallace. I propose there are at least two fundamental ethical attitudes that we owe one another as fellow human beings.[1] The first is roughly what Darwall (1977; 2006) calls *recognition respect*. The second is roughly what Darwall (2002) calls *sympathetic concern*. By according others sufficient recognition respect and sympathetic concern, we properly regard them. By failing to accord them sufficient forms of these attitudes, we wrong them and can be worthy of various blaming attitudes in response, including various forms of anger. In Chapter Three, I will return to consider how we can be blameworthy for wronging others in greater depth.

§1.1 Recognition Respect and Sympathetic Concern

I will begin with recognition respect. Recognition respect is distinct from other forms of respect, such as what Darwall (1977) calls "appraisal respect." To have appraisal respect for others is to admire, esteem, or honor them for their merits. To have recognition respect for others is to regard them as having interests that give them claims against us—claims that constrain how we can permissibly or justifiably conduct ourselves toward them.[2] Respecting others in this sense also involves regarding them as having the authority to make those claims on us and the authority to hold us to account for how we respond to those claims. To respect others in this way involves respecting their *dignity*—that is, their status as sources of claims on us. But recognition respect requires not only formal recognition of their having this status. It requires substantive recognition of their specific interests and claims.[3] It requires recognition, for example, that they have interests in conducting their own lives, which give them claims against us to not interfere with them in various ways. Recognition of their interests and claims also requires recognition of their abilities or capacities that give them those interests and claims.

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1 Although I focus in this dissertation on our relations with other human beings, I believe we can also owe forms of recognition respect and sympathetic concern to nonhuman animals, and perhaps to other beings of ethical worth as well.

2 Cf. Darwall (1977: 40; 2006: 300, 309-310); Scanlon (1998: 202; 2008: 141-142); Wallace (2019a: 137-139, 157, 163, 170).

3 Shoemaker (2015) makes a similar distinction between "formal" and "substantive" recognition (101).

To disrespect others—in the sense of failing to give them recognition respect—is to fail to acknowledge their claims against us, or fail to acknowledge their interests that give them those claims against us, or fail to acknowledge their abilities or capacities that give them those interests and claims. For example, our failing to acknowledge others' authority to hold us to account for our conduct can involve our failing to acknowledge their abilities or capacities to hold us to account, which also give them the authority to hold us to account.[4] Or we can fail to acknowledge their claims to non-interference by failing to acknowledge their abilities or capacities to conduct their own lives for themselves. We can also fail to acknowledge others' claims on us by failing to acknowledge their epistemic abilities or capacities, which give them those other abilities or capacities.[5]

By disrespecting others, we wrong them and can be blameworthy in certain ways. But what counts as *failing to acknowledge* others' claims against us, rather than merely *not acknowledging* them, depends on various conditions. For example, nonhuman animals cannot acknowledge our interests as giving us claims against them, and so they cannot *fail* to acknowledge our interests either. Our failing to acknowledge the claims of others seems to imply that we can acknowledge them and are responsible for acknowledging them. But articulating the conditions in which we are responsible for acknowledging them—and blameworthy for not acknowledging them—is difficult. I will put this issue largely aside until Chapter Four.

I propose that substantive recognition of others' interests and claims also requires substantive recognition of what their *individual good*—that is, their living and faring well, or their living and having a good life—consists in, or could consist in. Such recognition is necessary to identify their interests and claims and to appreciate the significance of their interests and claims, as well as to appreciate the seriousness of respecting them. In other words, to appreciate the importance of respecting others, we need to appreciate, to some extent, how others matter in themselves. We need to appreciate, to some extent, their *individual worth*—that is, the significance of their individual good.[6]

The attitude that constitutes such appreciation is what I will call *sympathetic concern*. Sympathetic concern constitutes a recognition of the individual worth of our fellow human beings and the significance of their living and having good lives for their own sakes. And this recognition properly disposes us to certain forms of concern for their individual good.

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4 See Vanessa Carbonell (2017) on what she calls "claimant injustice."
5 See Miranda Fricker (2007) on what she calls "epistemic injustice." Cf. Carla Bagnoli (2022: 102, n. 27).
6 On this point, I am indebted especially to Raimond Gaita (2004) and Talbot Brewer (2018).

I am proposing that sympathetic concern is necessary for recognition respect—not merely psychologically necessary, but conceptually necessary—and that recognition respect is required by sympathetic concern. In other words, recognition of the nature and significance of one another's individual good demands that we respect one another's interests and claims against one another.

To clarify, the ways in which recognition respect and sympathetic concern dispose us to respond to one another, however, are distinct.[7] Recognition respect is responsive to others' claims against us, and to their interests insofar as these give them those claims. Such respect for others moves us to constrain our conduct in light of those claims, so that we conduct ourselves in ways that are justifiable to them. Our recognition respect for others can also be reflected in what I will call *attitudes of recognition respect*. These attitudes reflect our sense of others as being worthy of and owed recognition respect. For example, our resentment toward those who wrong us, our indignation toward those who wrong others, and our guilt for wronging others reflect our recognition respect for those who have been wronged. As I will discuss in Chapter Three, such attitudes move us to demand recognition respect from those who have disrespected us or others and move us to render such respect to those whom we have disrespected. Attitudes of recognition respect also include the recognition of the appropriateness of such attitudes toward others in light of their dignity. In this, not all attitudes of recognition respect are emotions.

Sympathetic concern, on the other hand, is responsive to others' interests and their individual good as mattering for their own sake. Such concern disposes us to benevolent concern for them, which moves us to conduct ourselves for their good, for their own sake. Sympathetic concern for others can also be reflected in what I will call *attitudes of sympathetic concern*. Such attitudes include gladness or joy for them, or disappointment or pity for them. These attitudes reflect our recognition of their good as mattering for their own sake, and, in turn, our hoping or desiring that they live and fare well for their own sake. Attitudes of sympathetic concern also include recognition of the appropriateness of such attitudes toward others in light of their individual good and individual worth. In this, not all attitudes of sympathetic concern are emotions. Sympathetic concern also need not involve affection toward others, or liking them. And resentment, indignation, and guilt can also reflect our sympathetic concern for others—and not only our recognition respect for them—in that such attitudes can reflect our sense of the individual worth of those who have been wronged.

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[7] See Nomy Arpaly (2018) for discussion of the irreducibility of "benevolence" and "respect" as virtues, as well as the irreducibility of "well-being" and "rational agency" as the values to which those virtues respond.

Because recognition respect and sympathetic concern dispose us to respond to others in distinct ways, we can act from, or be moved by, various combinations of recognition respect and sympathetic concern, along with other attitudes. Consider the following ways in which we might, for example, return a book that we have borrowed from someone:

1. We can act from respect and from benevolence. That is, we can return the book to them because we owe them its return and because of its benefit to them.
2. We can act from respect without benevolence but with attitudes of sympathetic concern. That is, we can return them the book because we owe them its return, but we take its return to be harmful to them, and so we are disposed to attitudes of sympathetic concern for them, such as feelings of worry, in light of that harm.
3. We can act from respect without either benevolence or attitudes of sympathetic concern: That is, we can return them the book because we owe them its return, even though we take its return to be harmful to them, but we are not disposed to attitudes of sympathetic concern for them in light of that harm.
4. We can act from benevolence and as demanded by respect, but without acting from respect: That is, we can return the book because its return will benefit them, without being moved by the consideration that we owe them its return, but we would have acknowledged and been moved by that consideration if we had not been moved by benevolence.
5. We can act from benevolence without respect: That is, we can return the book because its return will benefit them without acknowledging that we owe them its return.
6. We can act without respect or benevolence. That is, we can return the book for other reasons, with other motives. For example, we might return the book just to benefit ourselves, to establish our reputation as a trustworthy borrower.

Many of our ethical encounters with one another are mundane in the ways that borrowing and returning books from and to one another is usually mundane. But even in such mundane encounters, the quality of our regard for one another can matter greatly to us. And if we express or manifest a lack of sufficient recognition respect or sympathetic concern in these encounters, such as by neglecting to take appropriate care of one another's books, we can be blameworthy. In this dissertation, I will consider both mundane and serious wrongs. I thereby hope to keep in view the full range of possible wrongs and the full range of our possible responses to them. Focusing only on serious wrongs and our responses to them can, I believe, mislead us in how we think about mundane wrongs and our

responses to them.[8] We might, for example, become liable to forget about the place of attitudes of concern and understanding toward wrongdoers in responding to their wrongful conduct.

So far I have described recognition respect and sympathetic concern as attitudes we can have toward others, and I will continue to focus on our having these attitudes toward others. But I should note that we can, of course, also have or fail to have proper respect or concern for ourselves. Having proper self-regard is immensely important, just as having proper other-regard is immensely important. Without proper self-regard, we might not treat our own interests and claims as they deserve to be treated, and we might not appreciate or be properly moved to respond to wrongs against ourselves. Having proper self-regard is also immensely important for having proper other-regard. To properly identify and appreciate the significance of the claims and interests of others, we commonly need to properly identify and appreciate the significance of our own claims and interests, and vice versa.

§1.2 Obligations of Recognition Respect and Sympathetic Concern

Some prominent Strawsonians seem to hold that sympathetic concern is not owed to others just in virtue of their having interests, whereas recognition respect is owed to others just in virtue of their having claims against us based on those interests. Darwall (2006), for example, claims that such concern is not owed to others, and cannot be claimed from them (128). I believe Darwall is mistaken. We can owe others sympathetic concern.

I have proposed that sympathetic concern for others is required to identify and appreciate the significance of their claims against us and the seriousness of respecting them. This is because, if we lack sufficient recognition of what their individual good consists in, or could consist in, and what their individual worth is, we cannot properly respect them. That is, we cannot properly appreciate why their interests give them claims against us that constrain our conduct, and we cannot properly appreciate why they are worthy of and owed such constraint. Without sufficient sympathetic concern, we might conduct ourselves in ways that are in accord with their claims, and we might appreciate that we should conduct ourselves in such ways. But unless we appreciate that we owe others such constraint in light of their individual worth—that is, in light of the significance of their individual good—we are not respecting them, but only their claims and interests. Such recognition respect is incomplete.

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[8] Cf. Glen Pettigrove (2012a: xvi).

We are not always concerned about whether others render us complete recognition respect. Often we only care that others respect our claims and interests in an external sense. We only care that they do not harm us, for example, and we do not care about whether their conduct reflects respect for us. But often we are not only concerned that others respect our claims and interests in an external sense. We also care that they respect us. And for them to respect us requires some recognition by them of our individual worth—that is, the significance of our living and faring well for our own sake.

Sympathetic concern is not, I propose, only owed to others derivatively. That is, such concern is not only necessary to properly respect them.[9] Sympathetic concern can itself be owed to others. This can be appreciated by considering how we can be blameworthy for merely expressing a lack of sympathetic concern for others. In other words, we can be blameworthy for merely expressing a lack of recognition of what their individual good consists in, or could consist in, or a lack of recognition of what their individual worth is. What is blameworthy in such expressions is not merely that we thereby fail to acknowledge others' claims against us, or fail to acknowledge their interests as giving them claims against us. What is also blameworthy is that we fail to acknowledge how others matter in themselves, and how their living and faring well matters for their own sake.

Darwall—seemingly without meaning to—provides an excellent illustration of that. Darwall (2006) discusses the real-life case of Laura Blumenfeld and how she holds Omar Khatib to account for nearly killing her father, David Blumenfeld (85-86).[10] Here is how Darwall describes the case:

> David had visited Jerusalem in 1986 during a period in which Omar and other members of a rebel faction of the PLO made several attacks on tourists in the Old City. David was such a tourist, and he narrowly escaped death when Omar's bullet only grazed his scalp. In her journey, Laura spends several years in Israel trying to get close to Omar, who is still in jail. Presenting herself to Omar's family as a journalist, she gets to know them and begins to correspond with Omar in letters the family smuggles to him in jail. Through these letters, Laura and Omar strike up a relationship without Omar or his family knowing Laura's true identity. Omar remains unrepentant throughout, seeing what he has done not as an attack against another person, but as an impersonal political action. Likewise, Omar's family sees the shooting as "nothing personal," a form of "public relations, a way to get people to look at us."

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9 Robin Dillon (1992) proposes a notion of "care respect" that is similar to my notion of sympathetic concern. Insofar as any attitude that we can owe one another counts as an attitude of "respect," sympathetic concern could also be considered an attitude of respect. But, for clarity, I will put that wider notion of respect aside.

10 Laura Blumenfeld recounts the case in *Revenge: A Story of Hope* (2002).

> Blumenfeld finally hits upon a strategy for accountability and the circumstances to pursue it. A psychologist at Hebrew University, Hanoch Yerushalmi, convinces her that "the only substitute for revenge is acknowledgment." "Acknowledgment," he says, "is … accepting responsibility. It's when you 'own your own guilt'" (Blumenfeld 2002: 292).
>
> Laura sees her chance the first time she and Omar lay eyes on each other at a legal proceeding to hear Omar's request to be released from prison because of deteriorating health. At a crucial point in the proceedings, Laura stands up and demands to speak. When the perplexed Israeli judges ask why, she begins by saying she has gotten to know the Khatib family and that she believes that Omar is sorry for what he has done. She says also that she has spoken to David Blumenfeld and that he agrees that Omar's request should be granted. When the justices challenge her right to speak, she replies to the hushed courtroom that she indeed has a right because she is David Blumenfeld's daughter. Shocked by this development, Omar and his family begin to weep. Blumenfeld writes: "Omar's mother, who did not understand my Hebrew, looked around the room, bewildered and said, 'Why are my children in tears?'" Asked by a judge why she has made this intervention, Laura says that she wanted Omar to know that "we're people. Not 'targets.' We're people with families. You can't just kill us." Afterward, Omar writes to Laura, apologizing for being "the cause of your and your kind mother's pain." (Laura's mother had also been at the proceeding.) For the first time, he acknowledges the personality of his victim, calling him "David." He also writes to David, expressing his "deep pain and sorrow for what I caused you" (Blumenfeld 2002: 265-267).

For Darwall, Laura exemplifies a respectful, even admirable, way of holding Omar to account for his conduct, in which her aim is to bring Omar to acknowledge its wrongfulness. What Darwall takes David to be worthy of and owed by Omar is recognition respect. Darwall asks rhetorically whether, when Omar feels and expresses remorse for attacking David, calling him "David" for the first time, we must interpret Omar as having "a powerful feeling that there was reason for him not to do what he did that derives from David's dignity?" (298).

To my mind, what Omar seems to acknowledge in his remorse are not only David's claims against him and David's dignity, but also, more fundamentally, what gives David those claims and what makes respecting those claims such a serious matter. Omar comes to regard David in light of his relations to his family, especially in relation to his daughter Laura. I suppose Omar comes to "look at" David and Laura in a similar way to how his own family hoped his attacks would "get people to look at us"—as people with families and lives that matter, who are worthy of and owed sympathetic

concern and recognition respect. What makes Omar come to regard David as worthy of and owed such respect is not only his recognition of David's dignity. Omar also comes to appreciate David's individual worth—that is, the significance of David's individual good, or the significance of David's living and faring well for David's own sake. Without sufficient sympathetic concern for David, Omar could not regard him as worthy of recognition respect, and so Omar could not render him such respect. In other words, recognition of David's individual worth was necessary—not only psychologically necessary, but conceptually necessary—for Omar's recognition of David's dignity.

In *Welfare and Rational Care* (2002), Darwall discusses sympathetic concern in depth without discussing its relation to recognition respect in any depth, whereas in *The Second-Personal Standpoint* (2006), Darwall discusses recognition respect in depth without discussing sympathetic concern in any depth. In discussing recognition respect, Darwall (2006) takes our relations with mere acquaintances or strangers as his paradigm. But in discussing sympathetic concern, Darwall (2002) takes our close relations, especially parent-child relations, as his paradigm.

Darwall (2002) claims that it is our being "worthy of concern" that makes considerations of our good into reasons for others to benefit us for our own sake (5).[11] Darwall claims that good parents, for example, are properly responsive to such reasons to benefit their children, because good parents are properly responsive to the worth of their children. Good parents regard the good of their children as mattering because they regard their children as mattering.[12] This recognition of their children as mattering makes good parents concerned for the good of their children for their children's own sake.[13]

But Darwall (2006) makes no appeal to such recognition of our being worthy of concern as required for respecting the claims of our fellow human beings. I suppose Darwall would affirm that such recognition is required. But in his more recent writings, he does not clarify that such recognition is required for recognition respect and does not clarify that such recognition is among the attitudes we can owe one another.[14]

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[11] For Darwall (2002), "being worthy of care and being worthy of (recognition) respect are different forms of worth" (79, n. 8).

[12] Cf. Darwall (2002): "a person has reason to care about his own good because he has reason to care for *himself*. And he has reason to care for himself because he, like any person, has *worth*—he matters" (83).

[13] Cf. Darwall (2002): "It is not unusual for parents, for example, to say that raising their children has provided them with experiences that are among the most deeply satisfying of their lives. Part of the reason for this, I believe, is that these experiences include a profound appreciation of the worth of their individual children and, consequently, the value and significance that caring for them has" (19).

[14] See, for example, Darwall (2016; 2017; 2019).

The forms of sympathetic concern that I propose we can owe one another are, I believe, implicit in, or at least presupposed by, Darwall's conception of the forms of respect that we owe one another. I believe that these forms of sympathetic concern are also implicit in, or presupposed by, the attitudes that Scanlon and Wallace propose we can owe one another. But, as I mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, I aim to make our obligations of concern explicit.

Scanlon (2008) writes of "the kind of concern we owe one another" (124), "the concern for the welfare of others that is part of what we all owe to each other" (147), and "a blameworthy lack of concern for the other's interests" (180). But Scanlon seems to put our obligations of concern toward others, and our blameworthy lack of concern for others, in terms of our concern for respecting the claims of others. For Scanlon, a person is blameworthy for their conduct "when a person governs him- or herself in a way that shows a lack of concern with the justifiability of his or her actions, or an indifference to considerations that justifiable standards of conduct require one to attend to" (141). In this, our obligations of concern are not explicitly responsive to the individual worth or individual good of others, but rather to their interests insofar as these give them claims against us and others.[15]

Scanlon (2012) clarifies that, on his view, we should not only have recognition respect for others. We should also, for example, generally be "pleased if things go well for [them] and regretful (and certainly not pleased) when things go badly for [them]" (87). Scanlon claims that "it is normally a moral fault not to be disposed to hope that things go well for a person, not to take pleasure in their going well, or to take pleasure in their going badly. But if a person has behaved very badly toward oneself or others, it is not a moral fault to fail to take pleasure in that person's successes or not to be distressed at things going badly for him or her" (90). In these passages, Scanlon seems to imply that we can owe others certain forms of sympathetic concern and be blameworthy for failing to accord them such concern. But Scanlon does not clarify how our attitudes of respect and concern and their grounds are related to one another. He also does not explicitly put the "moral fault" of failing to have certain attitudes of sympathetic concern in terms of failing to fulfill any obligations of concern.

Wallace also tends to describe interpersonal wrongs as matters of disrespect, rather than as matters of insufficient sympathetic concern. For Wallace (2019a), moral wrongs consist in "a failure to acknowledge the significance of the other parties' claims against one in one's deliberations about what to do" (94), or in "a recognitional failure to acknowledge either the significance of their claims or their standing as individuals who are bearers of claims" (153). Here Wallace acknowledges that

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[15] Scanlon (2015) makes similar, inexplicit remarks about the forms of concern that we owe others (94).

regarding the interests of others as mattering is necessary to properly respect them. And Wallace (2021) claims that both disregard for others' claims and disregard for their interests can constitute wrongs, or failures of regard (6-7). He does not put this in terms of our recognition of their individual worth, or the significance of their individual good. But Wallace, like Scanlon, comes close to articulating the nature and grounds of our obligations of respect and concern in the ways that I have proposed.

Another Strawsonian who offers a view similar to my own is David Shoemaker. He also proposes that there are two forms of regard that we fundamentally owe one another. According to Shoemaker (2015), we are obligated to "take one another seriously" (97). And he proposes that taking one another seriously requires that we give one another what he calls "evaluative regard" and "emotional regard." In having proper evaluative regard for others, we take their ethical perspective on what matters seriously. In this, we are concerned, for example, to conduct ourselves toward them in ways that would be justifiable to them—that is, in ways that they could reasonably accept or not reasonably reject (100). In having proper emotional regard for others, we care for them and their emotional cares, and we manifest our care through our emotions and other attitudes (101).

What Shoemaker takes to constitute proper evaluative regard for others is roughly what I take to constitute recognition respect for them, whereas what he takes to constitute proper emotional regard for others is roughly what I take to constitute sympathetic concern for them. But Shoemaker seems to place much more emphasis on our taking one another's subjective evaluative views and emotional cares seriously than on what evaluative views or emotional cares of others we should take seriously. To my mind, Shoemaker does not place enough emphasis on our respecting the genuine claims of others, and on our caring for their genuine interests, independently of how they view their claims and interests.

I believe Shoemaker would agree, however, that our properly respecting others includes more than our taking their subjective evaluative views seriously, and that our being properly concerned for others includes more than our taking their emotional cares seriously, given that we can all be mistaken in our evaluations and about what is worthy of our care. We can, for example, be seriously mistaken about whether our life is worth continuing to live. And I believe we should have attitudes of sympathetic concern for those who are mistaken in this way precisely because of their lack of proper care for themselves. Further, I believe that our benevolent concern for those who are mistaken in this way should commonly move us to act in ways that are contrary to what they believe their individual good and claims against us consist in. Of course, not all of our mistakes about what our individual

good or claims against others consist in justifies paternalism toward us. We have important interests in and claims against others regarding our autonomy. But our interests in and claims to autonomy have limits—our autonomy has limits. Similarly, we can be mistaken about our claims against others by failing to have proper self-respect. And I believe we owe others recognition respect for their claims, even if they do not believe that they have those claims.

Shoemaker—like Darwall, Scanlon, and Wallace—comes close to articulating what I regard as our fundamental obligations of regard. But I should note another way in which Shoemaker's view of these obligations seems to differ from mine. Shoemaker remarks that failures of emotional regard are uncommon except in close relations in which we expect others to care about us and share in our own cares. But he affirms that strangers can emotionally disregard us, providing the following example:

> Suppose that as I am crossing an icy street, I slip and fall hard to the pavement, banging my head and breaking my arm. While several people immediately come to my aid, a group of men standing on the other side laugh hysterically at what happened. I got more than enough help, so it is not their failure to aid that slights me; it is, quite simply, their *amusement* at my plight. Nevertheless, I am not in any sort of interpersonal relationship with them. What I think this sort of case indicates is that, while we do not expect strangers to care about many of the particular things we do (as we expect of our friends and loved ones), we typically do expect a *minimal* level of shared cares with strangers, cares for the basics we all tend to have as humans, for example, cares about avoiding pain, meeting basic nutritional needs, and so on. There is a kind of emotional attunement we expect when the fortunes of these shared cares take a hit, and failures of fellow feeling in such cases can easily be viewed as slights. (102-103)

I agree with Shoemaker that we expect, and consider ourselves to be owed, a minimal level of care from others regarding our emotional cares. But I believe that failures of emotional regard are much more common in our relations with acquaintances or strangers than Shoemaker seems to imply. This is because I suppose that many instances of improper evaluative regard are also instances of improper emotional regard. For example, if those who were amused by Shoemaker's plight failed to aid him when he needed their help, and when they could easily have provided such help, they would manifest not only improper evaluative regard for him but also improper emotional regard for him. They would both evaluatively and emotionally disregard him.

Consider, for example, strangers who express racist or sexist or other discriminatory attitudes in conversation. What can properly matter to us and be blameworthy in such instances is not only that

they fail to properly respect the claims of people of a certain race or sex or gender but also that they do not regard people of that race or sex or gender as having the sort of individual worth that makes their interests as significant as the interests of people of other races or sexes or genders. Their lack of sufficient recognition respect thereby reflects insufficient sympathetic concern. Recall Darwall's example of Omar, David, and Laura. Omar's attack on David not only manifested a lack of respect for David's claims against him but also a lack of sympathetic concern for David, such that Omar could not identify and appreciate the significance of David's claims against him. Lack of concern for the emotional cares of others is, I believe, often what makes us lack respect for their evaluative views.

That we owe one another sufficient sympathetic concern, and that a lack of such concern can be blameworthy, is also apparent, I believe, from reflection on cruel or sadistic conduct in general. Being indifferent to, or even enjoying the humiliation or suffering of others, can wrong them, not merely because such indifference or joy reflects a failure to acknowledge their claims. Such indifference or joy reflects a failure to acknowledge others as mattering in themselves and as worthy of our concern. Such failure, I propose, constitutes an interpersonal wrong and can be blameworthy.

To clarify, I am not proposing that attitudes of recognition respect and sympathetic concern are the only attitudes we can owe one another. But I am inclined to think that other attitudes we can owe one another are plausibly owed because, and insofar as, these attitudes are called for by recognition respect and sympathetic concern.

We might, for example, owe one another what I will call *attitudes of appreciation*.[16] Consider how we can appreciate, or fail to appreciate, the athletic, artistic, intellectual, or musical abilities or achievements of others. I suppose that we can owe others certain forms of appreciation for their abilities or achievements. At the least, our lack of appreciation for others' merits can reflect our lack of proper recognition respect or sympathetic concern for them, and our lack of appreciation for their merits can thereby be blameworthy. For example, if we do not esteem or admire certain athletes or artists for their abilities or achievements, this could reflect our having prejudiced attitudes that are contrary to proper recognition respect and sympathetic concern for them. Our lack of appreciation might thereby make us blameworthy.

[16] Cf. Darwall (2002) and Thomas E. Hill, Jr. (2021).

§1.3 Deepening Our Recognition Respect and Sympathetic Concern

To clarify further, I am proposing that we owe one another *sufficient* recognition respect and sympathetic concern, or certain minimal forms of these attitudes. I am not claiming that we owe one another these attitudes in their deepest or fullest forms, or that we are blameworthy for lacking them in those forms.

In the remainder of this section, I focus on clarifying the forms of sympathetic concern that we can owe one another and ways in which our sympathetic concern for one another can deepen. In the Section Two of this chapter, and in the following chapters, I will consider how ideally responding to one another's wrongful conduct can call for us to have deepened sympathetic concern for wrongdoers.

Recognition respect and sympathetic concern are what I will call *perfectible attitudes*, in that we can improve or deepen such attitudes beyond the minimal forms of these attitudes that we owe others. In this section, I have proposed that we can perfect our recognition respect for others by coming to more fully appreciate their individual worth and what their individual good consists in, or could consist in. That is, I have proposed that we can deepen our recognition respect for others by deepening our sympathetic concern for them. I have also proposed that without some minimal form of sympathetic concern for others, we cannot regard them as worthy of recognition respect. This is because we cannot regard others as worthy of recognition respect unless we regard them as having the sort of individual good that gives them those claims against us and makes them worthy of our respect. But how can we perfect our sympathetic concern for others? How can we improve or deepen our recognition of their individual worth and the nature of their good?

In *The Sovereignty of the Good* (1970), Iris Murdoch claims that "the central concept of morality is 'the individual' thought of as knowable by love, thought of in light of the command 'Be ye therefore perfect'" (29). For Murdoch, it is in coming to understand individual human beings, and in aspiring and striving to understand them more perfectly—that is, more lovingly and justly—that we come to understand morality, or what we owe one another.

I agree with Murdoch—as well as with Raimond Gaita (2004) and Talbot Brewer (2018)—that it is especially through our experience of loving relationships that we come to understand the worth of our fellow human beings, and not only the worth of those whom we love. It is through our experience of such relationships that the worth of our fellow human beings becomes most vivid to us. And it is not only our experience of loving others ourselves, but also our experience of witnessing

the love of others for others, and our experience of being loved by others, that brings us to most fully understand the worth of our fellow human beings. To clarify, this sort of understanding is essentially ethical. Such understanding implies proper sympathetic concern for their individual worth, or at least a recognition that such concern is appropriate and called for from us, and that our lack of concern is inappropriate. We cannot understand in the relevant sense how others matter in themselves without our being concerned in any way for them or their good, or without regarding our lack of concern for them as inappropriate. Again, such impossibility is not merely psychological, but rather conceptual.

On my view, ideal forms of sympathetic concern for others consist in deepened appreciation of their individual worth, which involves recognition of their individual worth as unearned and unconditional, as equal to that of others, and as singular, or irreplaceable, and as profound. Our experiences in loving relationships can bring these aspects of others' individual worth into view. Through such experiences, we deepen our sense of what is at stake for each of us in living and faring well for our own sake. We deepen our sense of how the goods and bads in the lives of others matter by deepening our sense of how they and their lives matter.[17] But we also deepen our sense of how they and their lives matter by deepening our sense of the profound worth of living a good human life, and our sense of the profound goods that are possible in such a life. That is, our sense of the profound worth of our loved ones is informed by our sense of the profound worth of living a good human life, and our sense of the profound worth of our loved ones also informs our sense of the significance of the possible goods and bads in their lives.

Many philosophers—including Aristotle and Kant—have held that our profound worth is grounded in our rational and moral abilities or capacities. There is, I believe, an important but incomplete truth in this. Without a sense of the goods that such abilities and capacities can make possible for us, not only at a time but over the course of a life, we cannot understand the worth of a life with such abilities or capacities, or the worth of a being with such a life. Consider our gladness at the existence of our loved ones, our grief at their death, and our distress or regret for how their lives are going or have gone badly. These attitudes are informed by a sense of the profound worth of living a good human life, which, in turn, informs our sense of the profound worth of our loved ones.

Our sense of the profound worth of our fellow human beings and their lives is also informed, I believe, by our sense of the profound goods that are internal to our interpersonal relationships with

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[17] Cf. Brewer (2018): "A proper grasp of the value of any such thing [namely, the badness of suffering] must be limned by awareness of the kind of value possessed by the life it conditions" (27).

one another, especially the profound goods that are internal to our close, loving relationships, but not only those. Our sense of the profound worth of others is also informed by our sense of the goods of our other common or shared activities and projects, including the goods of culture, literature, art, music, nature, beauty, humor, pursuits of knowledge and various other endeavors—adventure, athletics, crafts, cuisines, and so on.

I believe that we often have an especially vivid sense of the profound worth of our loved ones. But to my mind, our love for our loved ones ideally involves a recognition not only of their profound worth but also a recognition that they are the kind of being that has such worth. In other words, love of an individual human being ideally involves a recognition of our common humanity. Such love involves the recognition that other human beings have the possibility of living the kind of lives that we and our loves ones can live, that they can have lives with the same sorts of depth and meaning in their lives as we can have in our own, or at least a recognition that such possibility has been lost to them, and that such loss is a misfortune, if not a tragedy.[18] In other words, to regard others as our fellow human beings—in a certain essentially ethical sense—is to regard them as born to the same sorts of possibilities, and potentialities, for faring well or badly that we are born to, and whose individual good is of profound worth, equal to our own, whose loves, hopes, joys, disappointments, fears, and sufferings can be serious and deep, as our own, and those of our loved ones, can be.[19]

To clarify, on my view, the worth of an individual human being and the significance of their good are not dependent on their living or having a good or excellent life. Their individual worth is not dependent, in other words, on their *flourishing*.[20] Even those who are severely afflicted—who can no longer, or never could, flourish—are fully our fellow human beings, whose lack of flourishing is precisely a lack, and whose afflictions are precisely afflictions.[21] Those who have certain profound disabilities, for example, which preclude them from flourishing, have equal worth to those without those profound disabilities. I suppose though that we might only be able to fully appreciate the profound and singular worth of those with such profound disabilities, especially those born with such

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[18] See Martha Nussbaum (1986), who notes that for Aristotle, compassion for others requires a certain sense of shared possibility, specifically a sense that what another suffers is what I or my loved ones might suffer (315-317).

[19] See Gaita (2000; 2004) on the importance of appreciating how things can "go deep" for others. See also Brewer (2009: 27).

[20] Gaita (2004) rejects Aristotelian ethical views because the Aristotelian concept of flourishing seems to exclude severely afflicted human beings from being "fully among us" or "fully our equals" (87-91). This might be so for some Aristotelian ethical views, but this is not so for the view that I am proposing.

[21] Among Strawsonians, Wallace (2019a), for example, makes this Aristotelian point that we need to consider the "species kind" of a being in order to assess how well or badly they are living and faring (152).

disabilities, in light of our appreciation of the profound worth of living and having a flourishing human life.[22] That is, our sense of the profound worth of a flourishing human life might be essential to our sense of the profound worth of all human lives, or rather the profound worth of all human beings, including all of those who are not flourishing.

We can also bring into view or remind ourselves of the individual worth of a stranger by reminding ourselves of the individual worth of our loved ones. We can do this, for example, by regarding that stranger as someone who is or could be someone's friend, child, grandchild, parent, grandparent, sibling, spouse, and so on. In such ways, we can come closer to regarding them in their full humanity, as a fellow human being whose good is of profound worth, which calls for our sympathetic concern and recognition respect.

Consider how the desperate, pleading cries of those under mortal threat—their cries for their mothers, or their cries that they have children—can devastatingly and hauntingly reveal their singular and profound worth in light of their most loving relations with others. Their cries for their mothers reveal them not only from their perspective as children whose good is mortally threatened but also reveal them from the perspective of their mothers. And their cries that they have children reveal them not only as having children whose good is profoundly vulnerable to the death of their parent but also reveal them as parents for whom the loss of their children would be the most profound loss to them in dying themselves.

The profound worth of others is often only briefly illuminated by such experiences. But in light of such experiences, we can extend our sense of the importance of the good of our friends and family to those of acquaintances and strangers. To borrow from Christopher Hamilton (2001), such experiences "call us back to the possibility that every human being can be seen in the light of the kind of love and pity of which we have an ethical ideal in the love of a mother" (21). By bringing our experience of loving others to bear on our sense of the worth of those whom we do not love, we can, I believe, deepen our awareness of what is at stake in their living and faring well.[23]

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[22] See Jeremy Waldron (2017, Ch. 6) for a similar view.

[23] This way of illuminating the individual worth of human beings is ancient. Jonathan Shay (1994) points to how in Homer, especially in the *Iliad*, human beings die by name, as individuals, and the significance of their death is rendered in the light of their closest relationships (130). Among the first deaths in the *Iliad*, for example, is that of Simoisius: "And Telamonian Ajax struck Anthemion's son, / the hardy stripling Simoisius, still unwed … / His mother had borne him along the Simois banks / when she trailed her parents down the slopes of Ida / to tend their flocks, and so they called him Simoisius. / But never would he repay his loving parents now / for the gift of rearing—his life cut short so soon, / brought down by the spear of lionhearted Ajax" (4: 546-554, translated by Robert Fagles). In the following section, I consider how Western philosophers have historically appealed to this way of illuminating the individual worth of others.

§1.4 Our Individual Good

Throughout this chapter, I have appealed to a notion of our *individual good*. And in §1.3, I noted some of the goods that I suppose are especially important in good, or at least the best, human lives. Such goods include, for example, goods internal to various interpersonal relationships. I should, however, further clarify the notion of our individual good that I have in mind and elaborate what I suppose our individual good consists in, or could consist in, and what makes the sorts of goods that I mentioned in §1.3 good *for us*.

The notion of our individual good that I have in mind is, roughly, what Darwall (2002) calls "our good," or "our welfare." Our individual good is a matter of what those who care about us can reasonably, or should reasonably, desire for us, for our own sake.[24] That is, our individual good is a matter of what is worthy of desire for us, for our own sake. This formal notion of our individual good is consistent with different substantive views about what others can reasonably, or should reasonably, desire for us, for our own sake. In other words, this formal notion is consistent with different substantive views about what is, or can be, good or bad for us.

To my mind, the four most prominent substantive views of our individual good are what I will call *experientialism*, *subjectivism*, *perfectionism*, and *objectivism*. The view that I find most compelling is objectivism. I cannot argue for objectivism at great length here. But I will briefly discuss each view, and I will offer what I regard as the most compelling considerations in support of objectivism.[25]

Although the overall view of our fundamental ethical obligations that I propose in this chapter could be consistent with experientialism, subjectivism, or perfectionism, objectivism is the only view that is consistent with what I will—in Chapter Two—call *the Platonic Claim*. The Platonic Claim has three parts: (1) properly regarding others is in itself good for us; (2) wronging others is in itself bad for us; and (3) properly regarding others, and not wronging them, is an essential and supremely important part of our good. I believe that examples supporting the Platonic Claim also provide the most compelling support for objectivism. And so I will defend objectivism further in Chapter Two, when I return to develop and defend the Platonic Claim at length. But enough by way of anticipation.

Experientialism is the view that only our experiences, or lack of experiences, can be good or bad for us. The most prominent form of experientialism is *hedonism*, which is the view that only pleasure

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[24] Cf. Darwall (2002: 4-9).

[25] I should note that both Darwall (2002, Ch. 4) and Scanlon (1998: 123-124) affirm objectivism as well.

is in itself good for us and only pain is in itself bad for us. According to experientialism, whether our desires are fulfilled or not, or our beliefs are true or false, or whether the consequences of our conduct are good or bad, for example, do not in themselves matter for how well or badly our lives go for us. They can only be good or bad for us insofar as they affect our experiences. And according to hedonism, they can only be good or bad for us insofar as they affect the pleasures or pains that we experience or not.

Non-experientialism denies that how well or badly our lives go for us is determined only by our experiences, or lack of experiences. There are various forms of non-experientialism, including what I call *subjectivism*, *perfectionism*, and *objectivism*. In brief, *subjectivism* is the view that our individual good is a matter of our desires, or preferences, and their satisfaction, or fulfillment. According to subjectivism, if our desires are fulfilled, this can be good for us even if we are unaware of their fulfillment, and if our desires are not fulfilled, this can be bad for us even if we are unaware of their non-fulfillment. Perfectionism and objectivism are both forms of *non-subjectivism*: both views deny that our individual good is only a matter of our desires and their fulfillment. *Perfectionism* is the view that our individual good consists in perfecting our nature—that is, in fulfilling our natural function, or functions, or our natural capacities or potentials. For example, what makes fulfilling certain desires good for us, or at least not bad for us, is that fulfilling these desires perfects our nature, or at least is not contrary to such perfection. And according to perfectionism, what our nature consists in, and what perfects our nature, is not itself irreducibly normative or evaluative. Lastly, *objectivism* is the view that our lives can go better or worse for us in ways that are not merely subjectivist or perfectionist. What makes fulfilling certain desires good for us, for example, is not merely that fulfilling these desires perfects our nature—unless what our nature consists in, and what perfects our nature, is irreducibly normative or evaluative. According to objectivism, there are certain *basic goods* and *basic bads* for us, whose goodness and badness are not grounded merely in our desires or in our nature. Certain desires are worth fulfilling, and others are not worth fulfilling, in virtue of irreducibly normative or evaluative considerations.

To support non-experientialism, philosophers offer examples that are supposed to suggest that we can be subject to what David Boonin (2019) calls "unfelt harm." In these examples, people are supposedly made better or worse off by aspects of their lives that do not make any difference to what they experience. Thomas Nagel (1979), for example, offers the example of someone who has been betrayed by their friends but who is unaware of being betrayed (5). Nagel suggests that being betrayed by our friends harms us even if we are unaware of being betrayed. And Nagel suggests that

the unfelt harm of being betrayed explains why becoming aware of being betrayed causes us suffering: being betrayed is bad for us, and becoming aware of what is bad for us causes us suffering.

Shelly Kagan (1994) elaborates Nagel's example as follows:

> Imagine a man who dies contented, thinking he has achieved everything he wanted in life: his wife and family love him, he is a respected member of the community, and he has founded a successful business. Or so he thinks. In reality, however, he has been completely deceived: his wife cheated on him, his daughter and son were only nice to him so that they would be able to borrow the car, the other members of the community only pretended to respect him for the sake of the charitable contributions he sometimes made, and his business partner has been embezzling funds from the company which will soon go bankrupt. (311)

To many philosophers, such examples suggest that we can be subject to unfelt harms.[26] For example, Boonin (2019) claims that, in response to such examples, "most people are inclined to believe that there is more to how well a person is doing than how well that person is feeling" (21). And Boonin claims that "it is difficult to resist the thought that these people's lives are not going as well for them as they think they are going" (17).

Robert Nozick's (1974) "Experience Machine" is the most famous example that philosophers have offered in support of non-experientialism (42-45). Suppose there were a machine that allows you to have any experiences you desire. Nozick proposes that our experiences in the Experience Machine would, at least in certain respects, be less good for us than the same—subjectively indistinguishable—experiences would be for us were we not in the machine. According to Nozick, this is because whether we are in "contact with reality" or not can affect our good.

In offering these supposed examples of unfelt harms in support of non-experientialism, the philosophers I have mentioned make the following important methodological points. The first point is that they are appealing to our intuitions about what makes our lives go better or worse for us, for our own sake. The second point is that our sense of pity informs, and is in part constituted by, those

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[26] Many philosophers also take these examples to suggest that we can be subject to "posthumous harms." Following Nagel, George Pitcher (1984), for example, argues that we can be subject to posthumous harms. As Pitcher (1984) notes, Aristotle is perhaps the earliest philosopher to affirm the possibility of posthumous harms. In discussing that possibility, Aristotle concludes: "it appears that the dead are affected to some extent by the good fortunes of those whom they love, and similarly by their misfortunes" (*NE* 1.11). Following Nagel and Pitcher, David Boonin (2019) also argues that we can be subject to posthumous harms. As I will discuss later in this section, Kagan does not, however, seem to affirm the possibility of such harms.

intuitions. These philosophers suggest that our sense of pity for certain people in light of certain non-experiential aspects of their lives, and the intuitions to which this sense of pity disposes us, support non-experientialism. The third point is that our intuitions, and our sense of pity, most strongly support non-experientialism in light of how we respond to examples involving our loved ones.

Nozick (1989), for example, appeals to our intuitions regarding the lives that we would wish, or would not wish, upon our children:

> Few of us really think that only a person's experiences matter. We would not wish for our children a life of great satisfactions that all depended upon deceptions they would never detect: although they take pride in artistic accomplishments, the critics and their friends too are just pretending to admire their work yet snicker behind their backs; the apparently faithful mate carries on secret love affairs; their apparently loving children really detest them; and so on. Few of us upon hearing this description would exclaim, "What a wonderful life! It feels so happy and pleasurable from the inside." That person is living in a dream world, taking pleasure in things that aren't so. What he wants, though, is not merely to take pleasure in them; he wants *them to be so*. He values their being that way, and he takes pleasure in them because he thinks they *are* that way. He doesn't take pleasure merely in *thinking* they are. (105-106)[27]

Although I find such examples of unfelt harm compelling in support of non-experientialism, I am even more compelled to affirm non-experientialism in light of issues that arise between subjectivism, perfectionism, and objectivism. I will therefore turn to discuss those views.

Again, subjectivism is the view that our individual good is a matter of our desires and their fulfillment, and not merely a matter of our experiences, or our lack of experiences. If our desires are fulfilled, this can be good for us even if we are unaware of their fulfillment, and if our desires are not fulfilled, this can be bad for us even if we are unaware of their non-fulfillment.

Non-subjectivism denies that our individual good is only a matter of our desires and their fulfillment. As I noted, Nozick (1974) argues for non-experientialism. And many philosophers regard Nozick's "Experience Machine" as supporting subjectivism. But Nozick (1989) clarifies that he holds a non-subjectivist view. Nozick proposes that we not only desire contact with reality, we also desire contact with reality because contact with reality matters for how well our lives go: "I am saying that the connection to actuality is important whether or not we desire it—that is *why* we desire it—and the

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[27] Cf. Boonin (2019: 17).

experience machine is inadequate because it doesn't give us *that*" (107).[28] To support this, Nozick appeals to our intuitions about what is good or bad for us, or about what matters for us to live well or badly. In this, he appeals to what we regard ourselves as having reason to desire, or what we regard as desirable for us, and not merely to what we desire. He appeals to our sense of pity for those who lack contact with reality, or at least certain aspects of reality. And he appeals especially to our intuitions about, and sense of pity in regard to, our loved ones.

I find examples regarding real contact with loved ones, and real love—compared to merely apparent contact with loved ones, and merely apparent love—among the most compelling examples in support of non-experientialism. As I will discuss in Chapter Two, I also find examples regarding our fulfilling, or not fulfilling, our ethical obligations toward one another especially compelling. But such examples, I believe, also strongly support non-subjectivism. That is, these examples support the view that not only our experiences, and not only the fulfillment or non-fulfillment of our desires, matter for our individual good. What also matters is whether our desires are worth fulfilling or not. And whether our desires are worth fulfilling or not is not only a matter of the experiences that we would have in supposing ourselves to have fulfilled them.[29]

Again, the two most prominent non-subjectivist views of our individual good are what I call perfectionism and objectivism. These views differ regarding what makes our desires worth fulfilling or not. That is, these views differ regarding what makes our fulfilling or not fulfilling our desires good or bad for us. Perfectionism is the view that our individual good consists in perfecting our nature—that is, in fulfilling our natural function, or functions, or our natural capacities or potentials. And according to perfectionism, what our nature consists in, and what perfects our nature, is not itself irreducibly normative or evaluative.[30]

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[28] Ben Bramble (2016: 143) puts Nozick's point this way: even if "not *everyone* has an intrinsic desire for contact with reality (or for such things as real accomplishment, real friendship, etc.), […] those who lack such desires would *still* be missing out on something by plugging in" to the Experience Machine (143).

[29] Darwall (2002) also appeals to the sorts of lives that he would wish upon his children as supporting non-subjectivism, and specifically objectivism (19, 103).

[30] Although Aristotle and Aquinas are commonly regarded as affirming perfectionism, I believe their views are best interpreted as forms of objectivism. For Aristotle, the good for a being consists in fulfilling its natural function. The natural function of a human being is to reason excellently in both theoretical and practical matters, which consists in reasoning in accord with, and conducting ourselves in accord with, theoretical and practical truths. Our good is therefore not as simple as that of other beings. Our good is not grounded only in our nature, independently of theoretical and practical truths. Our nature is not the ultimate ground of our reasons, but rather enables us to respond to them. (How Aristotle's apparent affirmation of the possibility of posthumous harms fits with that view is not obvious.) For further discussion of Aristotle, see Darwall (2002, Ch. 4). See also David Brink (2019), who distinguishes between perfectionist views, such as Thomas Hurka's (1993) view, and "normative perfectionism," such as the views of Aristotle and Aquinas.

Objectivism is the view that our lives can go better or worse for us in ways that are not merely experientialist, subjectivist, or perfectionist. There are certain basic goods and basic bads for us, whose goodness and badness are not grounded merely in the pleasantness or painfulness or other aspects of our experiences, or in the fulfillment or non-fulfillment of our desires, or in our nature. For example, our engaging in certain objectively good activities is good for us. And that goodness for us is not derived merely from those activities bringing us pleasure or fulfilling our desires. The goodness of the pleasure or desire fulfillment that those activities bring us depends on the objective goodness of those activities, or at least on their not being objectively bad. Certain of our desires are worth fulfilling and good for us to fulfill, and others are not worth fulfilling and bad for us, or at least not good for us, to fulfill, in virtue of irreducibly normative or evaluative considerations regarding the goodness or badness of the objects of our desire.[31]

Consider, for example, people who are thoroughly sadistic, whose lives are replete with sadistic pleasures, desires, and activities. Objectivists would regard such pleasures, desires, and activities as intrinsically and non-instrumentally bad for us—or at least as not intrinsically or non-instrumentally good for us. To claim that sadistic people would be better off by not being sadistic, experientialists and subjectivists would need to appeal to how those people would experience more pleasures, or better pleasures, or fulfill more desires, or better desires, if they were not sadistic.

But such appeals face various difficulties. Nothing seems to ensure that sadistic people would experience more pleasures, or better pleasures, or fulfill more desires, or better desires, if they were not sadistic. I am also unsure on what grounds experientialists or subjectivists would determine whether certain pleasures or desires are better for us than others. The intensity or duration of pleasures, or the strength of desires, would not seem to ensure that sadistic pleasures and desires are worse for us than non-sadistic pleasures and desires. Such appeals seem *ad hoc*.

Perfectionists could claim that sadistic pleasures, desires, and activities are non-instrumentally bad for us because they are contrary to perfecting our human nature. But I am unsure how perfectionists could conclude that sadism is contrary to our nature without appealing to its intrinsic badness. This is because I am unsure how perfectionists could, in general, determine what is or is not

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[31] Derek Parfit (1984, App. I), for example, offers an objectivist view of our individual good. According to Parfit, what is good for us, or at least what is best for us, is to engage in activities that are objectively good and to take pleasure in and desire to be engaged in those activities, with an appreciation of their objective goodness (502). Parfit also offers a tentative list of basic bads, which includes "being betrayed, manipulated, slandered, deceived, being deprived of liberty or dignity, and enjoying either sadistic pleasure, or aesthetic pleasure in what is in fact ugly" (499). Darwall (2002) and Susan Wolf (2010) offer similar views.

an aspect of our nature—or determine what is an aspect of our nature that is to be perfected or not—unless they appeal to what is objectively good or not.

Kagan (1994) offers a distinction between "our well-being" and "how well our life is going," which he suggests could reconcile experientialists and non-experientialists. Kagan suggests that our well-being is only a matter of our experiences, such as our experiences of pleasure and pain, whereas how well our life is going, or "the quality of our life," seems to not only be a matter of our well-being, even though our well-being is relevant to our quality of our life. The distinction Kagan makes might be put as the distinction between "how well our life is going *for us"* and "how well our life is going *simpliciter* (or *without qualification*)." According to Kagan, this distinction could reconcile experientialism and non-experientialism, with experientialism being about our well-being, or how well our life is going for us, and with non-experientialism being about how well our life is going *simpliciter*. This distinction might also reconcile subjectivists and non-subjectivists, with subjectivism being about our well-being, and with non-subjectivism being about how well our life is going *simpliciter*.[32]

Returning to the example of thoroughly sadistic people, we might conclude, in light of Kagan's proposed distinction, that such people could be "well-off" but that "their lives are not going well." That is, their lives could be going well for them but their lives would not be going well *simpliciter*.

I agree with Kagan that we can distinguish between how well our life is going for us and how well our life is going *simpliciter*. I believe we do, for example, have a notion of how well our life is going for us that is experientialist. But I believe we also have a notion of how well our life is going for us that is non-experientialist.

The notion of our *individual good* that I have, following Darwall (2002), proposed in this chapter is about what we and others can reasonably, and should reasonably, desire for us, *for our own sake*. And something that I believe we and others can reasonably, and should reasonably, desire for one another, for one another's own sakes, is for one another to live and have good lives *simpliciter*. This seems especially evident to me from the concern that we seem to commonly have for our loved ones to live and have good lives *simpliciter*, for their own sakes. We are concerned for them to live and have lives that are good not only in experientialist or subjectivist terms, but also in objectivist terms, and we are

[32] For further discussion of Kagan (1994), see Boonin (2019, Ch. 2).

concerned for our loved ones to live such lives for their own sake. When their lives are not going well *simpliciter*, we feel bad *for them*. We do not feel bad *for their life*.[33]

To clarify, I suppose that at least one important notion of our lives going well or badly *for us* is about what we and others can reasonably, and should reasonably, desire for us, for our own sake. We want our lives to go well *simpliciter*, and we want our lives to go well *simpliciter* for our own sake, as well as for the sake of others. That we want our lives to go well *simpliciter* for our own sake seems to imply that when our lives are not going well *simpliciter*, then they are not going well for us, or at least not as well as they could. And it is not only because we *want* our lives to go well *simpliciter* that makes our lives not going well *simpliciter* bad for us. It is also because our lives going well *simpliciter* is worthy of our desire, and worthy of desire for our own sake.

Those are among the most important considerations I can offer in support of objectivism about our individual good. I find those considerations compelling. But I cannot pursue this debate further here. Nor can I elaborate a more comprehensive view of what is basically good or basically bad for us. But I will return to discuss these issues further in Chapter Two.

Again, the notion of our individual good that I have proposed is about what we and others can reasonably, and should reasonably, desire for us, for our own sake. This is the notion that specifies the object of our sympathetic concern for one another. Now I will return to clarify the limits of our obligations of sympathetic concern toward one another.

§1.5 The Limits of Our Obligations of Sympathetic Concern

The forms of sympathetic concern that I propose we can owe acquaintances and strangers are not the deepened forms of love that we ideally have for our friends and family. We cannot love anyone and everyone in those ways in which we can love those with whom we are close.[34] If we could love acquaintances and strangers in those ways—to the extent that such love would be intelligible—such love would be improper. There are limits on how we can properly attend to and be concerned for

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[33] Boonin's (2019) response to Kagan is similar. Boonin notes that one way in which our lives can seemingly go worse for us is that our lives go worse *simpliciter* (52). He also notes that we do not pity *a life* for not going well. Rather, we pity *the person* whose life is not going well (52).

[34] Robert Adams (1999) claims that universal love, understood as a love for each human being for their own sake, can only be "very thin," given our capacities as human beings (174). Many philosophers have made such claims. For example, Kant claims in *The Metaphysics of Morals* (1797) that "the benevolence present in [practical] love for all men is indeed the greatest in its *extent* but smallest in its *degree*" (6:451). And T. H. Green, following Kant, claims in *The Prolegomena to Ethics* (1883) that our concern for our fellow human beings should be "universal in scope" but can "vary in weight." On Green, see David Brink (2003).

acquaintances and strangers.[35] But we do not need to love acquaintances and strangers in the same ways that we love our friends and family in order to understand them as worthy of such love from their own friends and family. We also do not need to love acquaintances and strangers in order to understand them as worthy of and owed recognition respect and sympathetic concern from us.[36]

The forms of sympathetic concern that I propose we can owe one another, including acquaintances and strangers, can, however, involve recognition of one another's unconditional, equal, singular, and profound worth. If we regard some human beings as having only conditional worth, or if we regard some human beings as mattering more than others, or as more worthy of a good life than others, or as having some worth but not profound worth, or as being replaceable, and not mattering for their own sake, then we fail to properly appreciate the significance of their interests and their claims against us. We need to have at least some minimal sense of the individual worth of our fellow human beings as having these qualities in order to render them proper recognition respect. And if we otherwise express or manifest an insufficient sense of their worth in our conduct, we wrong them and can be blameworthy.

To clarify, the sense in which I suppose that each human being is of *equal worth* is not that each human being should matter equally to us. Those whom we love in our close relationships matter more to us than those whom we do not love in such relationships, and that is not only appropriate but criterial of such love. The equal worth of each human beings allows for appropriate forms of partiality and special concern. The sense in which each human being is of equal worth is rather the sense in which we can and should acknowledge, for example, that whether our friends or children live and fare well is just as important as whether the friends or children of others live and fare well. We can and should acknowledge that although certain people matter more to us than others, that each of our fellow human beings could be appropriately regarded with such special concern by us or by others, and that each of us is worthy of such special concern.[37]

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35 Cf. Dillon (1992: 130-131).

36 Cf. Brewer (2018): "To be clear, I am not suggesting that we *must actually love everyone* in order to sustain the idea of ourselves as having weighty duties to all human beings. Rather, I am suggesting that love reveals to us a dimension of the value of human beings that would be unknown to us without it and that it is most clearly seen in its light, and further, that we could not understand the urgency of our duties if this dimension of value were unknown to us" (22-23).

37 Darwall, Scanlon, and Wallace all affirm that the "basic moral equality" of human beings is consistent with certain forms of partiality and special concern. See, for example, Scanlon (2018: 4, 23) and Wallace (2019a: 117, 142). As Waldron (2017) suggests, what is affirmed in affirming "basic moral equality" can perhaps be best conveyed by way of considering what is denied in historically pervasive denials of such equality, including racist and sexist denials of such equality (15).

I have proposed that we can owe one another certain minimal forms of sympathetic concern, and that not having such concern for others can be blameworthy. I will now consider some examples to illustrate the minimal forms of sympathetic concern that I have in mind and some of the conditions on our owing these forms of concern. I suppose there are some forms of sympathetic concern that we owe one another unconditionally, which are extremely minimal, but other minimal forms of sympathetic concern that we can owe one another are owed conditionally.

Depending on our specific relations and histories with others, we can owe one another various forms of recognition of one another's individual good and worth, including attitudes of sympathetic concern and benevolent concern. We can at least owe one another recognition that we are worthy of such attitudes and that these attitudes are called for from us. For example, we can owe our friends recognition of the significance of certain goods and bads in their lives, and our lack of recognition of their significance for them can be blameworthy. We might, for example, be worthy of certain forms of anger, or we might be appropriately confronted by them, for lacking such recognition. I suppose that we owe mere acquaintances or strangers certain minimal forms of such recognition as well. This is at least primarily by way of our not being indifferent to their good and by way of our not regarding them as unworthy of certain attitudes of sympathetic concern in light of how they live and fare.

There are many hard cases, however, in which I am not sure how to specify the minimal forms of sympathetic concern we would owe one another, if any. In cases of being seriously abused, oppressed, or bullied, for example, I believe the forms of sympathetic concern that we would owe those who have abused, oppressed, or bullied us would be extremely minimal.

Our attitudes toward the individual worth and good of those who have seriously, or egregiously, wronged us can vary greatly. We might sustain sympathetic concern for them, especially if they are among our loved ones. But our concern for them—even if they are among our loved ones, and sometimes especially if they are among our loved ones—could also turn to complete indifference or hatred, as well as to various retributive attitudes. We might desire serious harm to come to them, even death, or worse. We might let these harms come to them, or we might seriously harm them ourselves. There might be cases in which those who have such attitudes are not obligated to have greater sympathetic concern for those who have wronged them. This could be because those who have wronged them are not worthy of their sympathetic concern. Or we might suppose that they are worthy of such concern but are not owed such concern, given the hurt or trauma they have caused, or the difficulty for those whom they have wronged to have such concern. Others, who have not suffered such hurt or trauma, might, however, owe those wrongdoers sympathetic concern. But if

those who have been wronged owe those who have wronged them recognition respect, I suppose that to regard them with such respect, those who have been wronged need to regard the wrongdoers as mattering in a way that makes those wrongdoers worthy of that respect. In this way, being owed recognition respect seems to me to imply being owed at least a minimal form of sympathetic concern as well.

In Chapter Three, I will discuss ways in which our blaming attitudes, including our retributive attitudes, can be more or less appropriate or inappropriate, or specifically more or less *fitting* or *unfitting*. Here I should note that even if our blaming attitudes are inappropriate or unfitting in certain ways, they need not be blameworthy. For example, those who have been seriously wronged might have blaming attitudes toward those who have wronged them that are not fitting, or not fully fitting, which are not thereby blameworthy. Their having such blaming attitudes might not only be psychologically better for them than their having more fitting attitudes, their having those blaming attitudes might even be admirable, reflecting their deep self-respect and courage. By making such distinctions between the appropriateness or fittingness of an attitude and its being blameworthy—or its being admirable—we can make quite nuanced assessments of hard cases.

§1.6 Ideal Attitudes

Throughout this dissertation, I propose certain attitudes as constituting ideals of ethical responsiveness to wrongdoers. Among these attitudes are deepened forms of recognition respect and sympathetic concern. By proposing certain attitudes as ideals, I mean that these attitudes are virtuous or excellent and admirable for us to have, and that these attitudes can be worth striving to cultivate in ourselves and encourage in others. I am not claiming that these are the only virtuous or excellent or admirable attitudes that we could have in response to wrongdoers. Nor am I claiming that we must unconditionally strive to cultivate these attitudes in ourselves or encourage them in others. I am also not claiming that these attitudes are always the best attitudes for us to strive to cultivate in ourselves or encourage in others.

Human beings have limited psychological and ethical capacities, and circumstances matter. We cannot fulfill or even strive to fulfill all ethical ideals. Given our specific capacities and circumstances, achieving certain ideals might be incompatible with achieving others. Certain ideals might also be

incompatible with one another in general. There could be a plurality of ethical ideals.[38] Some ideals might also be appropriate for us to pursue or to hold, without their being the best ideals for us given our capacities and circumstances.

Cultivating deepened sympathetic concern for those who have wronged us or others, especially those who have wronged us or others in serious ways, can be an ideal worth striving to cultivate in ourselves and encourage in others. Although I do not believe we owe one another these attitudes in their fullest or deepest forms, I believe every human being is worthy of them, and our striving to hold these attitudes in the fullest and deepest forms that we can is admirable. But given our specific capacities and circumstances, sympathetic concern for those who have wronged us might not be worth cultivating. Other matters can demand or be more worthy of our attention. Other ideals and attitudes can be more important for us to cultivate.

Affirming an ethical ideal is also distinct from advocating for that ideal to specific others in specific circumstances. There are many ways in which such advocacy could be misunderstood. And any ethical ideal can be misused or abused. As Glen Pettigrove (2012a) notes:

> Virtually any ideal can be used to generate crippling guilt and self-loathing, to distract attention away from more important norms, to reinforce a dysfunctional *status quo*, to advantage some and disadvantage others, etc. Think, for example, about some of the ways in which ideals of respect or love of family have been used by the powerful to bully and control those under them, keeping the powerless from protesting or resisting. […] But the possibility of such misuse does not give us a reason to reject either the ideal itself or other, better uses of it. (156)[39]

Appealing to certain ideals in certain ways, in certain circumstances, and with certain aims or motives can be inappropriate, wrongful, vicious, and have bad consequences. That is not, however, a reason to reject those ideals. Clarifying what the ideal is, and the conditions of its appropriate pursuit or advocacy, is important. Given the complexity of ethical life, I cannot fully articulate those conditions for the ideals I propose. But I will consider some of the conditions that seem to me most important.

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[38] See Strawson (1961) and Pettigrove (2012b: 370).

[39] Pettigrove (2012a: 153-159; 2012b: 355) also points to how ideals of forgiveness and courage have been misused or abused.

Section Two. The Community of Respect and the Beloved Community

In Section One, I outlined our fundamental obligations of regard toward one another. In this section, I introduce an ideal of ethical community that expands on the contractualist ideal of moral community that prominent Strawsonians—including Darwall, Scanlon, and Wallace—have offered.

To clarify, *contractualism* is primarily a view about the moral permissibility of our actions. Contractualists hold that our actions are morally permissible if and only if they are justifiable to others. Scanlon (1998), for example, puts this in terms of whether we could perform those actions in accord with principles that no one could "reasonably reject." But contractualism can also be understood as a view of our external obligations toward one another, which we owe one another as a matter of respect. Contractualism thereby offers a certain ideal of moral community. As Wallace (2019) notes, Scanlon is "sometimes diffident" in presenting his view of "what we owe to each other" in relational terms (19, n. 27). But as Wallace also notes, Scanlon's contractualism fits well with the notion of what I have called *external obligation* and with our concerns, expectations, and demands for recognition respect.[40]

§2.1 The Community of Respect and the Beloved Community

The Strawsonian-contractualist ideal of moral community is what I call *the Community of Respect*. Members of the Community of Respect render one another proper recognition respect and hold one another to account for failing to render such respect with the aims of enforcing external standards of conduct and exacting debts of respect owed to those who have been disrespected.[41]

The Community of Respect is not, however, a complete ideal of ethical community. And neither Darwall, Scanlon, nor Wallace regard the Community of Respect as such an ideal. They claim that their focus is limited to what they call "morality," or "interpersonal morality," which, they acknowledge, is not the whole of interpersonal ethical life.[42] The Community of Respect is primarily about what we owe one another just as fellow human beings, rather than the forms of regard that we are worthy of but not owed, or that we are owed only in certain special relationships. This ideal of moral community takes our relations with mere acquaintances and strangers as our paradigmatic relations of regard and responsibility, rather than our close relations with loved ones.

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40 Darwall (2006, Ch. 12) also interprets and elaborates Scanlon's contractualism in relational terms.

41 Cf. Darwall (2006: 306-307). I will return to discuss these and other ways of holding one another to account in Chapters Three and Five.

42 See Darwall (2006, Ch. 1); Scanlon (1998, Introduction); Wallace (2019a, Introduction).

I propose that by taking our close relations with loved ones as our paradigmatic relations of regard and responsibility, we can provide a more complete and compelling ideal of ethical community, which I will—borrowing from Josiah Royce and Martin Luther King, Jr.—call *the Beloved Community*.[43]

As I noted in Section One, in our close relations with friends and family, we tend to most fully appreciate the individual worth of our fellow human beings, and so we also tend to most fully appreciate the seriousness of respecting them. In the Beloved Community, I propose we would ideally regard one another not only with a deepened form of recognition respect but also with a deepened form of sympathetic concern, informed by our sense of the unconditional, equal, singular, and profound worth of each of us. Such concern would also be informed by a perfected sense of what our individual good and our common good with one another consist in, or could consist in.

As I noted in the Introduction to this dissertation, we are also commonly concerned for our loved ones to properly regard others, not only for the sake of those others, but also for their own sake. In this, we are, I believe, especially disposed to affirm what I call *the Platonic Claim*. As I noted in §1.4, the Platonic Claim has three parts: (1) properly regarding others is in itself good for us; (2) wronging others is in itself bad for us; and (3) properly regarding others, and not wronging them, is an essential and supremely important part of our good. As I also noted in §1.4, I will return to develop and defend the Platonic Claim at length in Chapter Two.

In the Beloved Community, I propose that we would ideally regard all of our fellow human beings in light of the Platonic Claim. And just as we commonly hold our loved ones to account for their wrongful conduct in part for their own sake, with a concern for their good, I propose that we would ideally hold any of our fellow human beings to account with such concern. In holding them to account, our aims would not only be to enforce external standards of conduct against them or to exact debts of respect from them.

As I also noted in the Introduction, we tend to better understand, and are especially concerned to understand, the sources of the wrongful conduct of our loved ones. Our understanding of their wrongful conduct is commonly informed by a recognition of the imperfect, ongoing, and dependent nature of their ethical development, and a recognition that their wrongful conduct reflects a lack in their ethical understanding or a lack of integrity in their agency. In the Beloved Community, I propose that we would ideally respond to any of our fellow human beings with such understanding.

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[43] Royce coined the term "the Beloved Community." For discussion of Royce and his influence on King, see Gary Herstein (2009).

In brief, in the Beloved Community, we would extend our ideals for how we should ideally regard and respond to the wrongful conduct of our loved ones to how we should ideally regard and respond to the wrongful conduct of anyone. This is not to claim that we should regard or respond to mere acquaintances or strangers in exactly the same way that as we regard or respond to our loved ones. Rather, I claim that we should regard and respond to mere acquaintances or strangers in ways that are significantly closer to the ways in which we commonly regard or respond to our loved ones than the ways in which we ordinarily regard and respond to mere acquaintances or strangers.

In the following chapters, I will continue to develop and defend these ideals of the Beloved Community. In Chapter Three, I will focus on how we should assess the ethical quality of our blaming attitudes in light of such ideals. In Chapter Four, I will focus on how we should understand our responsibility in light of the sources of our wrongful conduct and the limits of our agency and freedom. And in Chapter Five, I will focus on how we should ideally hold one another to account for wrongs.

I should note that few contemporary philosophers appeal to the Beloved Community as an ideal of ethical community. I suspect that its neglect has various sources, including Kant's influence on contemporary moral philosophy. As I discussed in Section One, some philosophers seem to hold that recognition respect is all that we can owe one another by way of regard. In this section, I will discuss how Kant's view of our ideal ethical community might, however, be closer to an ideal of the Beloved Community than standard interpretations of his view suggest. A related source of the neglect of this ideal is the decline—at least in contemporary moral philosophy—of Christian ethical views and other virtue ethical views that make love for our fellow human beings central to our ethical lives. Kant's influence is also a source of the decline of those views. But I will discuss in this section how Kant's views might, again, be closer to such views than standard interpretations of him suggest.

In this section, I propose that reconsidering traditional virtue ethical views can help us articulate a more complete and compelling ideal of ethical community than the Community of Respect. In Chapter Two, when I return to develop and defend the Platonic Claim, I will propose that reconsidering traditional virtue ethical views can help us better understand our individual good as well.

§2.2 A Brief History of the Beloved Community

In the remainder of this section, I will consider some important sources of the Beloved Community as an ideal in the history of Western ethics, focusing on some lines of influence that trace from Aristotle and the Stoics to Aquinas, Kant, and King. Although there are significant differences

among their views—and serious limitations in how they applied their views to their fellow human beings—these philosophers provide foundations for a compelling vision of a Beloved Community.

For Aristotle, friendship is among the greatest goods of human life, and friendship consists importantly in concern for the good of our friends for their own sake (*Nicomachean Ethics*, 1155b, 1166a). Aristotle extends the ideal form of concern constitutive of close friendships to an ideal of political or civic friendship, in which we regard the good of our fellow citizens as worthy of concern for their own sake (*NE* 1159b; *Politics* 1280b-1281a). Those who are in political community with one another should, Aristotle claims, ideally have such concern for one another. Aristotle notes the possibility of having concern for our fellow human beings in general, beyond those in our political community. The virtue of *philanthropia* is, for Aristotle, a certain friendliness, or neighborliness, toward other human beings as such, including strangers and foreigners (*NE* 1126b-1127a, 1155a). But as Nancy Sherman (1997) notes, Aristotle does not discuss the virtue of *philanthropia* in any depth, and he does not seem to propose universal concern for our fellow human beings as an ideal (217-224).[44]

The Stoics, however, provide an ideal of universal, or cosmopolitan, friendship, which involves concern for the good of our fellow human beings as such. For the Stoics, our common humanity, and our belonging to the human community with one another, is what make us worthy of such concern. As Cicero puts the point in *On Ends*, we should regard all human beings as akin to us (3.62-8). Marcus Aurelius, in his *Meditations*, also affirms that claim. He proposes we should keep our common humanity in mind, especially in responding to wrongdoers (2.1, 7.22).

For Aristotle, parents most readily regard the good of their children as among their proper concerns because they most readily regard their children as *their own* (*NE* 1161b). Those whom we regard as "belonging to us," or as "one of us," or as "in community with us," are those whom we regard with a concern for their own sake. For the Stoics, we should strive to regard all of our fellow human beings in that way—as in community with us, and as one of us, and as belonging to us, or as being our own.

Hierocles famously presents that point with the image of *circles of concern*. Hierocles claims that we should strive to expand our circles of concern, or rather to bring more distant circles closer to ourselves, who are at their center. We should strive to treat our close family as we would treat ourselves, to treat our friends and remote family as we would our close family, to treat our neighbors

[44] Cf. Julia Annas (1993: 253).

as we would our friends, to treat our fellow citizens as we would our neighbors, and to treat foreigners as we would our fellow citizens. Hierocles proposes that, in general, we should strive to regard others as we would our siblings, cousins, nephews, nieces, aunts, uncles, parents, or grandparents, depending on their age and our own, and to address them as such. The Stoics called this activity of expanding our circles of concern, or bringing those in more distinct circles closer to us, *oikeiōsis*, which means "appropriation" or "affiliation." In other words, *oikeiōsis* is the activity of coming to regard others and their good as among our own proper concerns. *Oikeiōsis* is the activity of extending our *philoikeion*—or our love of our own—to all of our fellow human beings, in recognition that they are our own.[45]

Aristotle and the Stoics strongly influenced the development of Christian ethical traditions. The Stoics were an especially strong influence on early Christianity. As A. A. Long (2003) claims, "Early Christianity appropriated a great deal of Stoic ethics without acknowledgment" (367). Central among the ideas that early Christianity appropriated from Stoicism were its ideas of human equality and ethical cosmopolitanism.[46]

For the Stoics, our rational, moral capacities are what ground our equal individual worth and our universal concern for one another. For Aristotle also, our rational, moral capacities are what ground our individual worth and our concern for one another. But for Aristotle, not all human beings are equals in terms of these capacities, and so Aristotle denied universal human equality. And neither Aristotle nor the Stoics provide an adequate conception of the profound and singular worth of each human being. Even though Aristotle and the Stoics appeal to our close relations with family and friends as paradigms of the sort of concern we should strive to hold toward others, the way in which our rational, moral capacities ground our worthiness for such regard is unclear.

For Aquinas, as for other Christian philosophers, the ideal ethical community consists in a community of universal friendship and love, a community in which each of us lives and has a good life, which consists, in essential and supremely important part, precisely in the common goods of friendship and love. As John Finnis (1998) notes, for Aquinas, "One owes to everyone, including one's enemies, the duty to desire their eternal well-being, to pray for it, and to work for it as befits one's

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45 Hierocles' discussion is preserved in fragments in Stobaeus's *Anthology* under the title *On Appropriate Acts*. For a recent translation of these fragments, see Ilaria Ramelli (2009).

46 Nussbaum (2006) places emphasis on how Stoicism, especially Roman Stoicism, influenced Christianity, rather than vice versa (29). According to Nussbaum, the influence of the Roman Stoic Seneca on Christianity begins especially with his influence on Clement of Alexandria and Augustine (29, n. 71). I return to discuss Seneca, Clement of Alexandria, and Augustine in Chapter Five.

situation" (329).[47] For Aquinas, the eternal nature of our good is part of what makes our good have such profound significance. But for Aquinas, our equal and profound worth is grounded in the relation that each of us has to God. We are created in the "image of God" and we are "children of God." The love of God for us as children is the sort of regard in light of which we should strive to love our fellow human beings. In this, Aquinas is not denying, however, that our rational, moral capacities are grounds for our individual worth. For Aquinas, human beings are in the image of God specifically in regard to our rational, moral nature (*Summa Theologiae* I, Q93, A6).

To my mind, the force of appeals to God's love for us and imagining our relation to God and our relations to one another in familial terms depends, however, precisely on our sense of the love of parents for their children and our sense of other forms of love that we can have for one another. That is, the appeal to God's love only has its force in light of our sense of the love that human beings can have for one another. The appeal to God's love is a way to move us to extend our sense of how those whom we love are worthy of love to those whom we are not as close, in such a way that we can come to regard them as also worthy of love. In this, I agree with Gaita (2020), for whom the resonance in the idea that we are "children of God" is less from "God" than from "children":

> To those who would say that such ways of speaking [of the sacred worth of human beings] depend on religion, I would reply that even if they came to us through a religious tradition, they might take root elsewhere if our ear for their expression is not impaired by the assumption that they must depend on religious assumptions. More strongly, I would say they could play that role in religion only because people had a sense that every life is precious independently of religious ideas and that, indeed, at its deepest the religious affirmation that every life is sacred could take hold in people's ethical sensibility only because that was so.[48]

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[47] Cf. Aquinas (*ST* II, II, Q31, A2): "beneficence is an effect of love in so far as love moves the superior to watch over the inferior. Now degrees among men are not unchangeable as among angels, because men are subject to many failings, so that he who is superior in one respect, is or may be inferior in another. Therefore, since the love of charity extends to all, beneficence also should extend to all, but according as time and place require: because all acts of virtue must be modified with a view to their due circumstance"; "Absolutely speaking it is impossible to do good to every single one: yet it is true of each individual that one may be bound to do good to him in some particular case. Hence charity binds us, though not actually doing good to someone, to be prepared in mind to do good to anyone if we have time to spare. There is however a good that we can do to all, if not to each individual, at least to all in general, as when we pray for all, for unbelievers as well as for the faithful."

[48] See also Gaita (2004, Second Preface) on the "language of love" as informing our sense of human worth.

Aquinas and other Christian philosophers follow in an ethical tradition as old as any, which holds that we should strive to regard our fellow human beings in light of the sort of love that we have toward those with whom we are closest—our family and friends. The ideal of regarding our neighbors, as well as mere acquaintances or strangers, as friends, siblings, cousins, parents, grandparents, children, or grandchildren, for example, is not unique to Stoic or Christian ethical traditions. Similar ideals are, for example, found in Buddhism, Confucianism, Judaism, and Islam.

Compared to Aristotle, the Stoics, and Aquinas, Kant has had a stronger influence on the Strawsonian-contractualist ideal of the Community of Respect. For Kant, the ideal ethical community, which he calls "the Community of Ends," consists in part in respecting one another's dignity as human beings, or specifically as beings with rational, moral agency.[49] But for Kant, the ideal ethical community is not only the Community of Respect. The ideal ethical community is also a community of love, specifically what Kant calls "practical love," which arises in the will, not from feeling.[50] For Kant, universal practical love is an ethical duty of ours. That is, it is our duty to make the happiness of others our end and to promote their happiness insofar as we can, in accord with respect for them.[51] But I should note that for Kant, respect for one another is what seems to demand our practical love for one another. In this, respect is conceptually, and ethically, prior to practical love.

For Kant, we also have a duty to morally perfect ourselves. To morally perfect ourselves consists in part in our willing those ends that we have an ethical duty to will, such as the happiness of others. Our moral perfection also consists in following the moral law from love, as well as from respect. That is, moral perfection consists in following the moral law *gladly*. Such perfection is what Kant calls "holiness." But although attaining a holy will—and not merely a good will—is impossible for human beings, at least in this life, according to Kant, we have the duty to strive to become holy insofar as we can.[52]

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[49] I follow Terence Irwin (2009) in calling Kant's ideal ethical community "the Community of Ends," rather than "the Realm of Ends," or "Kingdom of Ends," which are more literal and standard translations of "Reich der Zwecke." In German, "Reich" can also mean "commonwealth." Calling Kant's ideal ethical community "the Community of Ends," or "the Commonwealth of Ends," therefore seems to me to best reflect his ideal.

[50] Cf. Kant (1797: 6:448-450).

[51] Cf. Kant (1797): "The duty of love for one's neighbor can […] be expressed as the duty to make others' *ends* my own (provided only that these are not immoral)" (6:450).

[52] Cf. Kant (1785: 4:446; 1788: 5:83-84; *Lectures on Ethics*, 27:720).

As Derek Parfit (2011, I) interprets Kant, Kant also holds that among our aims in being moral is to bring about what Kant calls "the greatest good" (245). The greatest good consists in our each attaining what Kant calls "our highest good," which is for each us to be both happy and worthy of that happiness by being virtuous. According to what Parfit calls Kant's "Formula of the Greatest Good," "Everyone ought always to strive to promote a world of universal virtue and deserved happiness" (245). Although Parfit's interpretation of Kant is contrary to standard interpretations, Kant at least seems to make the claims Parfit attributes to him.[53] But interpreting how the greatest good is supposed to be an end for us, according to Kant, is not my focus. At the least, I believe we can plausibly interpret Kant as holding that the greatest good is among those goods that God will achieve for us, whether or not this is among our aims in being moral.[54] Kant even seems to imply that this "practical postulate" is necessary for us to respect the moral law.[55]

Although Kant makes universal practical love part of our individual moral perfection and the ideal ethical community, Kant lacks a compelling conception of what grounds the profound worth of each human being, which makes each of us worthy of such practical love. For Kant, our special worth is grounded in our rational, moral agency, specifically in our capacity for autonomy and a good will (1785: 4:436; 1797: 6:434-435). As I discussed in §1.3, those grounds are too limited.

Kant also offers a conception of our individual good as a matter of our happiness, understood only in hedonistic or subjectivist terms. And as I discussed in §1.4, such a conception is too limited. But Kant also offers a conception of our highest good, which provides a more complete conception of our individual good. Our happiness, according to Kant, is only conditionally good, and what makes our happiness good is the unconditional goodness of virtue.

As I proposed in Section One, what makes us worthy of sympathetic concern is our profound worth—that is, the profound significance of our living and faring well for our own sake, and our living and faring well consists in more than our hedonistic or subjectivist happiness. Kant omits that point.

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53 Consider the following passages from Kant's *Critique of Judgment* (1790): "The moral law […] determines for us […] a final purpose, and makes it obligatory for us to strive toward [achieving] it; and that purpose is *the highest good in the world* that we can achieve through our freedom" (5:450); "Reason determines us a priori to strive to the utmost to further the highest good in the world. This highest good consists in the combination of universal happiness, i.e. the greatest welfare of the rational beings in the world, with the supreme condition of their being good, namely, that they be moral in maximal conformity with the [moral] law" (5:453). See also several passages in Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788: 5:110-130) and the footnote in the Preface to the First Edition of Kant's *Religion Within the Limits of Bare Reason* (1793).

54 Cf. Kant's *Lectures on Ethics* (27:717).

55 Cf. Kant (1790: 5:452-453).

And to my knowledge, Kant never claims that wrongdoers are mistaken about what their highest good consists in. I remain puzzled by these omissions.

Another limitation of Kant's ideal ethical community, which I will return to in Chapter Five, is that, according to him, we lack a duty to morally perfect others.[56] Although we cannot directly bring about the moral perfection of others, just as we cannot directly bring about our own moral perfection, we can, I propose, foster the moral perfection of others in various ways, just as we can foster our own moral perfection in various ways. For Kant, because we lack a duty to morally perfect others, we also lack a duty of concern for their highest good. We only have a duty of concern for their happiness, which is only part of their highest good. On my view, our concern for the good of others ideally includes concern not only for their happiness but also a concern for their good as a whole. And that, I will argue in Chapter Two, includes their ethical goodness.

A final limitation of Kant's ideal, which he shares with Aristotle and Aquinas, is that he fails to regard all human beings as having equal individual worth, because he fails to regard those of different races and sexes as having equal rational, moral capacities.[57]

I turn now to briefly consider King's appeals to the ideal of the Beloved Community. In articulating the Beloved Community, King appeals to Kant's conception of respect as a form of regard that we owe all of our fellow human beings. King also appeals to the form of universal practical love—*agape* or *caritas*—that philosophers in the Christian ethical tradition, including Aquinas, have long focused on. As I noted, Kant also affirms such love as our ethical duty, and he even appeals to the commandment to "love your neighbor as yourself" as "the ethical law of perfection" (1797: 6:450). In this, both Kant and King propose an ideal ethical community of universal practical love and respect. But King (1968) articulates the nature and grounds of universal practical love differently from Kant:

> Deeply rooted in our religious heritage is the conviction that every man is an heir to a legacy of dignity and worth. Our Judeo-Christian tradition refers to this inherent dignity of man in

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[56] Kant denies that we have this duty in *The Metaphysics of Morals* (1797). But in notes by his student Vigilantius, collected in Kant's *Lectures on Ethics*, which were probably written after *The Metaphysics of Morals* was published, Kant reportedly claimed the following: "it is quite certain that duties of right to oneself are distinguished from duties of love, and that the latter are called duties of virtue when their aim is to promote moral goodness in other men, and thereby to extend the underlying duty of right" (27:607). Duties to promote the moral goodness in others seem to be duties to promote their moral perfection.

[57] In the *Politics*, Aristotle excludes slaves and women from those with equal worth (II 4-7, 12-13). See also Aquinas (*Summa Theologiae* I, Q92, A1). For further discussion, see Charles Mills (1997).

> the Biblical term "the image of God." "The image of God" is universally shared in equal portions by all men. There is no graded scale of essential worth. […] Every man must be respected because God loves him. […] Human worth lies in relatedness to God. An individual has value because he has value to God. Whenever this is recognized, "whiteness" and "blackness" pass away as determinants in a relationship and "son" and "brother" are substituted. Immanuel Kant said that "all men must be treated as *ends* and never as mere *means*." (102-103)

Although I do not hold King's specifically Christian ethical views—including his view that the worth of each human being is grounded in our being created in the "image of God" or our being "children of God"—I agree with King that we should aspire to regard all of our fellow human beings with a form of concern similar to agapic love. Following Kant, King claims that such love is practical rather than affectionate. Such love consists in our willing their good for their own sake with a sense of their profound worth and our common good with one another. I return to discuss King, who exemplifies many of the ethical ideals that I propose in this dissertation, in Chapter Five.

As I discussed in Section One, I am not proposing that we owe others the deepest or fullest forms of sympathetic concern. Nor am I proposing that we strive to have the same sort of loving concern for everyone that we have for our friends and family. Given our limited human capacities, striving to have such concern for all others could make us treat our friends and family like strangers rather than treat strangers like friends and family. This might have been the way that Gandhi, for example, treated his children, or at least some of them. The Beloved Community is not a community in which we regard and treat everyone with the same sort of loving concern. In this community, the ways in which we ideally regard and treat strangers like friends and family remain limited.

Although the philosophers I have discussed in this section lack fully compelling views of our individual worth, their appeals to our concern for our loved ones and to our common humanity with others are compelling. These are the sorts of considerations that bring the individual worth of others most fully into view and inform our sense of the seriousness of respecting them. In the Beloved Community, we would have deepened recognition respect and sympathetic concern for one another. We would be more responsive to one another's individual worth and dignity. The Beloved Community provides a more complete ideal of ethical community than the Community of Respect.

In this chapter, I introduced a general view of interpersonal ethical life and responsibility, which expands on the prevailing Strawsonian views of our fundamental obligations of regard and our ideals of moral community. By introducing this general view, I have prepared my way in the following chapters to further elaborate the nature of ethical obligations and wrongs, provide a framework for assessing our responses to wrongdoers, and articulate ideals of ethical responsiveness to wrongdoers.

Chapter Two:
"Justice and the Good Life"

Polus: Surely the one who's put to death unjustly is the one who's both to be pitied and miserable.

Socrates: Less so than the one putting him to death, Polus, and less than the one who's justly put to death.

Polus: How can that be, Socrates?

Socrates: It's because doing what's unjust is actually the worst thing there is.

Polus: Really? Is *that* the worst? Isn't suffering what's unjust still worse?

Socrates: No, not in the least.

Polus: So you'd rather suffer what's unjust than do it?[1]

Socrates: For my part, I wouldn't want either, but if it had to be one or the other, I would choose suffering over doing what's unjust.

— Plato, *Gorgias* (469b-c)

Socrates: Do we still hold, or do we not, that we should attach highest value not to living, but to living well? […] And that to live well is the same as to live honorably and justly: do we hold that too, or not? […] since the argument thus compels us the only thing we should consider is […] whether we would be acting justly […] or, in truth, unjustly […]. And if it should become evident that this action is unjust, then the fact that by staying here I would die or suffer anything else whatever should be given no countervailing weight when the alternative is to act unjustly. […] we should not return wrong for wrong nor do evil to a single man, no matter what he may have done to us. And watch out, Crito, lest in agreeing with this you go against your own belief. For I know that few believe or will believe this. And between those who do believe and those who don't there can be no common counsel: of necessity they must despise each other when they view each other's deliberations.

— Plato, *Crito* (48b-49d)

In Chapter One, I proposed that our sense of the seriousness of respecting others depends on our appreciation of their individual worth. And I proposed that by deepening our appreciation of their individual worth, we also deepen our sense of the seriousness of respecting them.

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[1] For clarity, I have omitted "want to" from Donald J. Zeyl's translation: "So you'd rather [want to] suffer what's unjust than do it?"

T. M. Scanlon and R. Jay Wallace are among those Strawsonians who propose another way of illuminating what is at stake in respecting the claims of others. In respecting others, we conduct ourselves in ways that are justifiable to them. Scanlon and Wallace claim that conducting ourselves in this way is in itself good for us.[2] But neither of them considers how we should ideally respond to wrongdoers in light of that goodness.

In this chapter, I propose that by illuminating how properly regarding others is good for us, and how wronging others is bad for us, we can better understand what is at stake in properly regarding one another, and so also what is at stake in responding to wrongdoers. I will elaborate and defend what I will call *the Platonic Claim*, which has three parts:

(1) Properly regarding others is in itself good for us.[3]

(2) Wronging others is in itself bad for us.[4]

(3) Properly regarding others, and not wronging them, is an essential and supremely important part of our good.

As I noted, Scanlon and Wallace explicitly affirm (1). And both seem to implicitly affirm (2). I believe both would also affirm some form of (3).[5] But my focus in this chapter is not on specifying the forms of (1) through (3) that Scanlon or Wallace would affirm. My focus is on specifying the forms of (1) through (3) that are most worthy of our affirmation. I should also note at the outset that although I am inclined to affirm Socrates' claims in the epigraphs to this chapter, I will not defend all of them, at least not in their strongest forms. This is because I agree with Aristotle, for example, that although acting unjustly is in itself worse for us than suffering injustice is for us, suffering injustice can be worse for us in light of its consequences (*Eudemian Ethics*, 1138a-b).

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[2] Cf. Scanlon (1998): "Standing in this relation to others is appealing in itself—worth seeking for its own sake. A moral person will refrain from lying to others, cheating, harming, or exploiting them, 'because these things are wrong.' But for such a person these requirements are not just formal imperatives; they are aspects of the positive value of a way of living with others" (162); Wallace (2019a): "it seems to me highly plausible to suppose that our own lives go better to the extent that we satisfy the condition of interpersonal recognition" (143, cf. 142-144). See also Wallace (2013: 259-260; 2021: 9-10).

[3] In other words, justice is its own reward; being just in itself benefits the just; justice is intrinsically, or non-instrumentally, and unconditionally good for the just.

[4] In other words, injustice is its own punishment; being unjust in itself harms the unjust; injustice is intrinsically, or non-instrumentally, and unconditionally bad for the unjust.

[5] Stephen Darwall (2002, Ch. 4) also seems to affirm the Platonic Claim as part of what he calls "the Aristotelian Thesis." In brief, the Aristotelian Thesis is that "the most beneficial human life consists of activities involving the appreciation of worth and merit" (50). But as with Scanlon and Wallace, Darwall (2006) neglects the Platonic Claim in presenting his view of responsibility.

In Section One of this chapter, I provide a brief history of the Platonic and anti-Platonic traditions, which affirm or deny the Platonic Claim. In Section Two, I articulate the first and second parts of the Platonic Claim and consider objections to those parts. In Section Three, I elaborate the third part of the Platonic Claim, and I reflect on possible conflicts between our own good and our obligations of regard.

We should, I propose, ideally regard one another in light of the Platonic Claim, especially in response to one another's wrongful conduct. That is, we should ideally regard one another with what I will call *the Platonic Attitude*. Holding the Platonic Attitude toward one another constitutes a recognition of what is at stake for us in properly regarding one another and in acknowledging our wrongful conduct. The Platonic Attitude also consists in dispositions to respond to one another in various ways in light of that recognition. In this way, the Platonic Attitude constitutes a general stance or outlook.

In the following chapters, I will elaborate how the Platonic Attitude should ideally dispose us to certain attitudes of sympathetic concern for wrongdoers. Those attitudes of sympathetic concern include benevolent concern to foster their proper regard for others, not only for the sake of those others but also in part for the sake of wrongdoers themselves. Those attitudes also include sympathetic understanding of the harm that their wrongful conduct constitutes for them. In this chapter, I will focus on articulating and defending the Platonic Claim itself.

Section One. The Platonic and Anti-Platonic Traditions

In Western philosophy, Plato—if not Socrates—might have been the earliest philosopher to pose the question of whether being just is in itself good for those who are just, and whether being unjust is in itself bad for those who are unjust.[6] In Plato's *Gorgias*, Callicles demands from Socrates an account of how being just is in itself good for those who are just, and in the *Republic*, Glaucon and Adeimantus demand such an account from Socrates. Glaucon and Adeimantus also demand an account from Socrates of how being unjust is in itself bad for us and how being just is better for us than being unjust.

Plato presents the Platonic Claim through Socrates in the *Apology*, *Crito*, *Gorgias*, *Meno*, *Republic*, and *Theaetetus*, and through the Athenian Stranger in the *Laws*. That Plato himself affirmed the claim is immensely plausible, which is why I have named the claim after him. Although the historical Socrates also seems to have affirmed the claim, I will reserve "the Socratic Claim" to name another important ethical claim, which I will articulate in Chapter Four.

There is a prominent tradition in Western ethics that affirms the Platonic Claim. Along with Plato and Socrates, prominent philosophers in this tradition include Aristotle, various Peripatetics, Neoplatonists, and Stoics, as well as many later philosophers influenced by them, including Augustine, Aquinas, and Spinoza. Later in this chapter, I will discuss how Kant can also plausibly be interpreted as affirming the Platonic Claim. As I noted in Chapter One, for Kant, our highest good is for us to be happy and worthy of happiness, and what makes us worthy of happiness is our being virtuous.[7]

There is also a prominent tradition in Western ethics that denies the Platonic Claim. And this anti-Platonic tradition is also represented by characters in Plato's dialogues: Callicles denies the Platonic Claim in *Gorgias*, and Thrasymachus denies the Platonic Claim in the *Republic*, whereas Glaucon and Adeimantus argue against the Platonic Claim in the *Republic* in the hope that Socrates can refute them. Epicurus later denies the Platonic Claim by holding that being just is only instrumentally good for us—as a means to the most pleasant life. Many rational egoists and hedonists, including Hobbes, have followed Epicurus.

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[6] See Terence Irwin (2007, §50).

[7] I should note that in the German tradition both Fichte and Hegel, for example, affirm the Platonic Claim. On Fichte, see Allen Wood (2017); on Hegel, see Wood (1990).

Modern and contemporary philosophers who deny the Platonic Claim do not tend to follow Callicles and Thrasymachus in denying morality. Nor do they tend to follow Epicurus and Hobbes in affirming rational egoism and hedonism. Rather, these philosophers tend to affirm a form of what Sidgwick (1907) calls "the dualism of practical reason." For philosophers who affirm such a dualism, our being just can conflict with our own good, and our being just is not in itself good for us, nor is our being unjust in itself bad for us. As I will discuss later in this chapter, Kant can also plausibly be interpreted as representative of the anti-Platonic tradition. But I do not believe this is the best way to interpret him.

To understand what truth there is in the Platonic and anti-Platonic traditions, I need to further elaborate the Platonic Claim. I will begin with its less contentious first and second parts before turning to its more contentious third part.

Section Two. The First and Second Parts of the Platonic Claim

Philosophers have proposed various ways of elaborating how properly regarding others, or being just, is in itself good for us. An initial way is merely to elaborate what being just consists in and affirming that as in itself good for us. For example, we might claim that to be just is to give others what we owe them, or what they deserve from us, and it is in itself good for us to give others what we owe them, or what they deserve from us. This elaborates what it means to be just, but it does not elaborate why giving others what we owe them, or what they deserve from us, is in itself good for us. That goodness is only affirmed.

Among prominent Strawsonians, Scanlon and Wallace offer such an elaboration of what it means to properly regard others, or to be just. For them, being just consists in living in ways that are justifiable to others—that is, in ways that others can reasonably accept or not reasonably reject. And both Scanlon and Wallace claim that living in this way is in itself good for us. Scanlon (1998) calls this way of relating to others "mutual recognition" (162), whereas Wallace (2019a) calls this way of relating to others "interpersonal recognition" in order to clarify that living in ways that are justifiable to others is good in itself for us even if this way of living is not reciprocated (62, n. 64; 145).

Wallace (2019a) notes that appeals to such intrinsic, or non-instrumental, goodness do not "admit of proof or demonstration" (142).[8] We "cannot," Wallace claims, "establish the goodness of the attitude of interpersonal recognition by deriving it from premises that are independently more compelling" (142). "The best we can do," Wallace (2021) later suggests, "is to try to isolate significant features of the phenomenon whose value is in question and to invite others to reflect for themselves about whether they find the features to be admirable or worthy of cultivation and pursuit" (10).

I agree with Wallace that such appeals do not admit of proof or demonstration—at least not the sort of proof or demonstration of which certain other appeals can admit—but that there are also ways of reflecting on the phenomena that can allow us to appreciate their goodness and badness. For example, I believe we can come to appreciate the intrinsic goodness of properly regarding others, and the intrinsic badness of wronging them, by coming to appreciate others as worthy of and owed certain forms of regard, especially sympathetic concern and recognition respect. As I proposed in Chapter One, what properly regarding others calls for, and the seriousness of properly regarding them, can be illuminated by illuminating their individual worth. I believe the intrinsic goodness of properly

[8] Cf. Mill's discussion in *Utilitarianism* regarding how "ultimate ends do not admit of proof" (Chapter IV).

regarding others, and intrinsic badness of wronging them, can also be illuminated in that way.[9] But illuminating the individual worth of others cannot by itself bring us to appreciate how properly regarding them is in itself good for us, and how wronging them is in itself bad way for us. We need some independent sense of these ways of living as good or bad for us. We cannot prove or demonstrate such goodness or badness to those who have no sense of them. We can, however, articulate these values in ways that can enable one another to appreciate and acknowledge them. That—not proof or demonstration independent of sensibility—is what matters.

§2.1 The Platonic Attitude in Our Ordinary Lives

What sorts of appeals might best enable us to appreciate and acknowledge the Platonic Claim? As I discussed in Chapter One, I suppose that our deepest convictions about how human lives can go well or badly for those who live them are usually reflected in the lives we would, or would not, wish upon our loved ones.[10] And as I noted in Chapter One, conviction in the Platonic Claim seems alive and well in our loving relationships with friends and family.[11] I suppose that most of us hope for our loved ones to properly regard us and others at least in part for their own sake—and not only for our own sake or for the sake of others. I believe that our hoping for them to properly regard others in this way reflects our sense that their wrongful conduct is in itself bad for them. And I suppose that many of our responses to the wrongful conduct of our loved ones reflects our sense of that too.

Consider, for example, the profound pity and grief that parents or friends can feel for their children or friends who become vicious or evil. Such pity and grief seem to reflect their sense of the profound harm or loss that being vicious or evil constitutes for their children or friends.[12] Such pity and grief are commonly even more profound if their children or friends fail to properly understand and acknowledge what they have done or what they have become. Such profound pity or grief can reflect a sense that their children or friends are "lost" to vice or evil.

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[9] Wallace (2019a) similarly suggests that appreciating one another's equal worth can illuminate how properly regarding others is good in itself for us (142).

[10] As I noted in Chapter One, Darwall (2002) also seems to hold this view (19, 103). Thomas Reid (1788, III.iii.iii) seems to make a similar proposal as well. On Reid, see Roger Crisp (2019: 135-136).

[11] Robert Adams (1999: 97-101), Rosalind Hursthouse (1999, Introduction), Talbot Brewer (2009: 222), and Michelle Mason (2017: 736) also appeal to our attitudes toward our loved ones, especially toward our children, as reflecting our desire for them to be virtuous for its own sake and for their own sake.

[12] Cf. Raimond Gaita (2000: 24, 63). See also Christopher Hamilton (2001: 20-22) and Brewer (2018: 27).

Our ethically serious responses to our own wrongful conduct, especially our wrongful conduct toward our loved ones, also seem to reflect a conviction in the Platonic Claim. For example, lucid recognition of our own vicious or evil conduct seems to properly occasion not only our remorse for wronging or harming others but also certain forms of misery, which reflect a sense of our having harmed ourselves by such conduct. Such misery, I believe, constitutes an appreciation of how we have marred our lives with vicious or evil conduct. In extreme cases, we might come to view our lives as terrible lives to have lived. And in the most extreme cases, we might even wish—for our own sake, as well as for the sake of others—that we had never been born.

I cannot prove or demonstrate the truth of the Platonic Claim just by appealing to such responses. By appealing to them, I am only registering my conviction in the Platonic Claim and my sense that I am not alone in this conviction. But I believe reflection on our responses regarding our loved ones is especially likely to our elicit our recognition of, what I believe is, the truth of the Platonic Claim. In this chapter, I am inviting such reflection and hoping for others to affirm its truth as well.

§2.2 The Goodness of Properly Regarding Others and the Badness of Wronging Them

Besides appealing to how we seem to respond to our loved ones, how else might the intrinsic goodness of properly regarding others, and the intrinsic badness of wronging others, be elaborated, so as to enable us to appreciate such goodness and badness? Philosophers have offered various answers to that question. Here I will comment on the answers that seem to me the most important.

(A) *Properly regarding others is a perfection of human nature, and wronging others is an imperfection.* Insofar as our good consists in perfecting our nature, and insofar as living justly is a perfection of our nature, living justly is part of our good, whereas insofar as wronging others is an imperfection in our nature, wronging others is bad for us.

How living justly is good for us is not illuminated, I believe, by appealing to its being a perfection of our nature. Rather, that goodness needs to be illuminated in order to illuminate how living justly is a perfection of our nature.[13]

(B) *Properly regarding others constitutes our responding well to certain values or reasons.* Insofar as our good consists in our responding well to values or reasons, and insofar as living justly is a way of responding well to certain values or reasons, living justly is part of our good,

[13] See my critique in Chapter One, §1.4, of what I call *perfectionism* about our individual good.

whereas insofar as living unjustly is a way of responding badly to values or reasons, living unjustly is bad for us.

As with (A), how properly regarding others is good for us is not, I believe, illuminated in this way. Rather, how responding well to values or reasons in general is good for us is only illuminated by appeal to how responding well to specific values or reasons is good for us, such as how responding well to the specific values or reasons involved in properly regarding others is good for us.

(C) *Properly regarding others can constitute our living in alignment with our practical identity and ideals.* Insofar as living in alignment with our practical identity and ideals is part of our good, and insofar as living justly is part of our practical identity and ideals, our living justly is part of our good, whereas our living unjustly, which is contrary to our practical identity and ideals, is bad for us.

As with (A) and (B), our sense of the goodness of living in alignment with our practical identity and ideals in regard to our conduct toward the worth and dignity of others, and our sense of the badness of living contrary to our practical identity and ideals in regard to them, depends in part on our having an independent sense of the goodness of properly regarding others and the badness of wronging them. Nonetheless, I suppose that our living in alignment with our practical identity and ideals can be a further good for us, and that not living in alignment with them can be a further bad for us.

(D) *Properly regarding others can constitute our living with integrity in our agency.* Living in alignment with our practical identity and ideals is a form of living with integrity in our agency. Insofar as our good consists in living with integrity, then living justly, insofar as this constitutes our living with integrity, is good for us. Insofar as living unjustly reflects a lack of integrity in our agency, and insofar as living in such a way is bad, living unjustly is bad for us.

(D) is closely related to (C). The goodness of living with integrity in our agency and the badness of living with a lack of such integrity is interdependent with the goodness of living in alignment with our practical identity and ideals and the badness of not living in alignment with them. As with (A), (B), and (C), our sense of the goodness of living with integrity in properly regarding others depends in part on our having an independent sense of the goodness of properly regarding them and the badness of wronging them. Nonetheless, I suppose that our living with integrity in our agency can be a further good for us, whereas not living with such integrity can be a further bad for us.

(E) *Properly regarding others is necessary for properly understanding how we ourselves are worthy of and owed respect and other forms of regard.* Insofar as the good life for human beings calls for us to have proper self-understanding, self-respect, and self-concern, and insofar as properly regarding others is necessary for properly understanding and regarding ourselves, properly regarding others contributes to our good. To properly regard ourselves requires a proper understanding of how we are worthy of respect and concern from others, and such an understanding consists in part in understanding how others are also worthy of such respect and concern.[14]

That properly regarding others is in itself good for us can, I believe, be illuminated by appreciating how properly regarding ourselves is in itself good for us. But I believe an independent sense of the goodness of properly regarding others is also needed. Without such a sense, we could, I believe, appreciate how properly regarding others is good for those others, just as we can appreciate how our being properly regarded by others is good for us. That is, we could appreciate that our being properly regarded by others is good for us without also appreciating that our properly regarding others is good for us. We need an independent sense of how our properly regarding others, and not only our being properly regarded by others, is good for us.

(F) *Properly regarding others makes us worthy of various goods, whereas wronging others makes us worthy of various bads.* Insofar as the good life for human beings consists in living in ways that make us worthy of happiness, admiration, esteem, or love, for example, and insofar and properly regarding others makes us worthy of such goods, properly regarding others contributes to our good. We desire to be worthy of those goods, and we take being worthy of them to be good for us. And insofar as wronging others makes us unworthy of such goods or makes of worthy of certain bads, such as being worthy of blame, guilt, remorse, shame, or regret, wronging others is bad for us.[15]

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[14] See Paul Bloomfield (2014), who combines (B) and (E) by proposing that our good requires us to correctly value what matters, correctly valuing ourselves requires self-respect, and self-respect requires respecting others. See also Wallace (2021), who combines (B) and (E) by appealing to consistency between our attitudes toward ourselves and our attitudes toward others as supporting the intrinsic goodness of properly regarding them (10-11).

[15] Consider, for example, Adam Smith's famous remark in *A Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759):

> Man naturally desires, not only to be loved, but to be lovely; or to be that thing which is the natural and proper object of love. He naturally dreads, not only to be hated, but to be hateful; or to be that thing which is the natural and proper object of hatred. He desires, not only praise, but praise-worthiness; or to be that thing which, though it should be praised by nobody, is, however, the natural and proper object of praise. He dreads, not only blame, but blame-worthiness; or to be that thing which, though it should be blamed by nobody, is, however, the natural and proper object of blame (III.2.1)

Similar to (E), I suppose that appealing to the good of properly regarding others as making us worthy of happiness, admiration, esteem, or love can illuminate why properly regarding others is good for us. But we nonetheless need an independent sense of the goodness of properly regarding others to illuminate why properly regarding others makes us worthy of happiness, admiration, esteem, or love. We also need an independent sense of the badness of wronging others to illuminate why wronging them makes us worthy of blame, guilt, remorse, shame, or regret. But illuminating how wronging others makes us worthy of such attitudes can, I believe, illuminate how wronging others is bad for us.

Our properly regarding others can, I believe, also be good for us by making our lives worthy of affirmation, and correctly regarding our lives as worthy of affirmation can be good for us as well. By properly regarding others, we live in a way that is not worthy of blame, guilt, remorse, shame, or regret.[16] We live in a way that is "beyond reproach." Living in such a way is a way of living well and is good for us. By wronging others, we live in a way that is worthy of blame, guilt, remorse, shame, and regret. And living in such a way is a way of living badly and is bad for us. Our lives go better insofar as we live in ways that are not worthy of such attitudes, and our lives go worse insofar as we live in ways that are worthy of such attitudes. But to correctly regard our lives as worthy, or not worthy, of such attitudes, requires an independent sense of the goodness of properly regarding others and the badness of wronging them. I am not sure how to articulate that sense further.

Following Darwall (2002), I proposed in Chapter One that our *individual good* is a matter of what we and others can reasonably, or should reasonably, desire for us, for our own sake. That is, our individual good is a matter of what is worthy of desire for us, for our own sake. In Chapter One and in this chapter, I have proposed that we commonly desire for our loved ones to properly regard others, and not wrong others, for their own sake. In light of that, and in light of the elaborations I have offered of the intrinsic goodness of properly regarding others, and the intrinsic badness of wronging them, I propose that we can reasonably, and should reasonably, desire that we properly regard others and not wrong others, not only for their sake, but also for our own.

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[16] Cf. Wallace (2013): An "important ambition for our lives concerns their moral quality. Not only do we hope that our lives will contain genuine bases for retrospective affirmation, we also hope that they will not provide others with a basis for reproach and moral complaint. It matters to us that we should interact with people on terms that are acceptable to them, and this too is something that we have control over as we make our way through life" (259); "most of us take the value of relating to other people on moral terms to be extremely important, and major lapses from this standard are occasions for some of our most profound retrospective regrets" (260). See also Wallace (2019a: 143).

§2.3 Objections to the First and Second Parts of the Platonic Claim

I turn now to consider some recurrent objections to the Platonic Claim. The first objection is that the Platonic Claim provides the wrong sorts of reasons for being ethical. This first objection rests, however, on a misinterpretation of the Platonic Claim. The second set of objections reflect genuine disagreement with the Platonic Claim.

§2.3.1 "The Wrong Sorts of Reasons" Objection

Some philosophers might object to the Platonic Claim as providing "the wrong sorts of reasons" for properly regarding others and not wronging them. For example, Darwall (2006) claims that Scanlon (1998) provides the wrong sort of reason for respecting others in proposing that respecting others is in itself good for us. There are two related ways in which the goodness of respecting others is the wrong sort of reason. First, the goodness of respecting others is independent of our obligations of respect toward them. That is, even if respecting others was not in itself good for us, we would owe them respect. Second, we cannot respect others for our own sake. That is, we cannot hold the attitude of respect toward others in light of a concern for our own good. Respect for others requires our recognition of their dignity, which is independent of our concern for our own good.

I doubt that Scanlon (1998) is proposing that the goodness for us of respecting others is our reason for respecting them.[17] But putting that aside, we can affirm that properly regarding others is in itself good for us without affirming that this goodness is what makes them worthy of or owed our respect. As Wallace (2021) proposes, our sense of the significance of respecting others is deepened by our appreciation of how respecting them is in itself good for us, even though this is not our reason for respecting them (9-10). Rather, their being worthy of and owed our respect is our reason for respecting them. And Darwall (2007) agrees.[18]

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[17] Cf. Scanlon (1998): "this possible contribution to our well-being is not the only thing, or the most basic thing, that gives us reason to be concerned with what we owe to each other" (142).

[18] Cf. Darwall (2007): "I agree entirely that living accountably with one another is not just something we can demand, but also something we can desire and hope for since it enhances the value of our lives" (69). Darwall (2002, Ch. 4) also provides such a view.

In thinking about the Platonic Claim, we should distinguish two closely related questions. The first is what I call *the Ethical Question:* "Why should we properly regard others and not wrong them?" The second is what I call *the Eudaimonic Question*: "(How) is properly regarding others good for us, and (how) is wronging them bad for us?" The Eudaimonic Question asks how properly regarding others matters for our individual good, or what the Ancient Greeks called *eudaimonia*.

To my mind, the Platonic Claim is not a direct answer to the Ethical Question of why we should properly regard others and not wrong them. We should properly regard others and not wrong them because they are worthy of and deserve certain forms of regard from us, which we owe them. But understanding how properly regarding others is good for us, and how wronging them is bad for us, can correct misunderstandings about what our own good consists in, or could consist in, and can thereby undermine prominent sources of moral skepticism. Misunderstanding what our own good consists in, or could consist in, can move us to improperly regard others.[19] The Platonic Claim supports the direct answer to the Ethical Question by correcting such misunderstanding.

§2.3.2 Anti-Platonic Objections

I now turn to discuss views that deny the first and second parts of the Platonic Claim. Among the most familiar anti-Platonic views is hedonism. As I discussed in Chapter One, hedonism is the most prominent form of what I call *experientialism* about our individual good. Experientialism is the view that only our experiences, or lack of experiences, can be intrinsically good or bad for us.

For hedonists, such as Epicurus and Hobbes, our own good consists only in our experiencing pleasure and not experiencing pain. Pleasure is the only intrinsic, or non-instrumental, good for us, whereas pain is the only intrinsic, or non-instrumental, bad for us. In this, hedonism is a non-moralistic view of our individual good, which excludes the moral quality of our conduct from among what is intrinsically, or non-instrumentally, good or bad for us. For hedonists, our properly regarding others can only be good for us by bringing us more pleasure, or less pain, whereas wronging others can only be bad for us by bringing us more pain, or less pleasure.

Epicurus and Hobbes are also rational egoists. According to them, our practical reasons are grounded only in our own good and not in the good of others. Rational egoism is a form of what I will call *monism about practical reason*. Rational egoism is not the only form of such monism. There are,

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[19] Irwin (2007, §339) interprets Aquinas as making similar points. Irwin also interprets Kant as making such points (2009, §976). Cf. Wallace (2021) on the place of "eudaimonic reflection" in thinking about morality.

for example, purely moralistic views of practical reason, such as utilitarianism, according to which our practical reasons are grounded only in the overall good, such that there is no practically relevant distinction between our own good and the good of others.

I will put rational egoism aside. This is because Strawsonians—and most other modern and contemporary moral philosophers—affirm some form of what I will call *pluralism about practical reason*. On this view, our practical reasons can be grounded in our own good, but our own good is not the only ground of practical reasons for us. Kant is prominent among such philosophers. For Kant, we have practical reasons that are prudential, which are grounded in our own good, but we also have practical reasons that are moral, which are not grounded in our own good.

Although Kant is not a rational egoist, he seems to follow Epicurus and Hobbes in holding a hedonistic conception of our own good. In turn, Kant affirms what Sidgwick (1907) calls "a dualism of practical reason": there are two sources of practical reasons for us, and these reasons can conflict, such that our moral obligations can be contrary to our own good. Kant's dualism of practical reason is moralistic, in that conflicts between our moral obligations and our own good are resolvable in favor of morality.[20] Sidgwick, on the other hand, affirms a dualism of practical reason that is not moralistic. For Sidgwick, there can be a conflict between our practical reasons that are grounded in our own good and those that are grounded in the overall good, which includes our own good and the good of others. And for Sidgwick, such a conflict is not rationally resolvable.

The conflict between our moral obligations and what is good for us is also more profound for Sidgwick than for Kant because Sidgwick has no non-hedonistic conception of our individual good. As I discussed in Chapter One, Kant, however, also offers a conception of what he calls "our highest good." For Kant, our highest good as consists in our being both happy and virtuous, such that we are both happy and worthy of our happiness.[21] In this, our virtue is unconditionally good, but our happiness is only conditionally good. Its goodness is conditional on our virtue. Kant thereby seems to affirm a form of the Platonic Claim.

Various *non-experientialist* views about our individual good also deny the first and second parts of the Platonic Claim. As I discussed in Chapter One, non-experientialism is the view that our individual good is not only a matter of our experiences, or our lack of experiences. According to subjectivist views, for example, our own good is a matter of our satisfying, or fulfilling, our desires, and not just the satisfaction that such fulfillment brings us when we are aware of that fulfillment.

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[20] In this, Kant follows Joseph Butler (1729).

[21] Cf. Kant (1788: 5:110-111).

Whether our properly regarding others is good for us depends on whether we desire to properly regard others and on whether the consequences of properly regarding others satisfy our desires or not. In this, subjectivist views are non-moralistic. Our properly regarding others is not in itself good for us, nor is our wronging others in itself bad for us. If and only if our properly regarding others satisfies our desires, and if and only if our wronging others fails to satisfy our desires, can our properly regarding others be good for us and wronging others bad for us.

In light of the considerations I offered in Chapter One, and those which I have offered in this section, I believe experientialist and subjectivist conceptions of our individual good are incomplete. Although pleasure and the satisfaction of our desires are essential and important parts of our good, our good also depends on our living in ways that are genuinely worth desiring and taking pleasure in. I have proposed that living with proper regard for others is genuinely worth desiring and taking pleasure in, whereas living without such regard is not. Properly regarding others is, I believe, a *basic good* for us, whereas wronging others is a *basic bad* for us. In support of this, I can only appeal once more to the sorts of considerations that I have offered, and invite others to affirm such objective aspects of our individual good. I will therefore put further objections to the first and second parts of the Platonic Claim aside.

Section Three. The Third Part of the Platonic Claim

I now turn to elaborate the third part of the Platonic Claim: (3) properly regarding others, and not wronging them, is an essential and supremely important part of our good. In this, I am outlining a certain form of *eudaimonism*.

To begin, I should clarify a common misinterpretation of eudaimonism. Many philosophers interpret eudaimonism as a form of rational egoism. But eudaimonism—or at least the traditional eudaimonism of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Aquinas—is not a form of rational egoism.

Traditional eudaimonists are pluralists about practical reasons, and they do not provide the wrong sort of reason for living justly.[22] For traditional eudaimonists, people who are *eudaimon*—that is, who live and fare well—are concerned not only for their own good but also for the good of others. And our proper concern for our own good is not fundamentally a concern to live and fare well for our own sake, but to live and fare well *simpliciter*. We can and should be concerned to live and fare well for the sake of others, as well as for our own sake. Our proper concern in living justly is also not fundamentally a concern to live well for our own sake, but to live well *simpliciter*. We should live justly because we owe this to others, and because this is a good way to live *simpliciter*. Living justly is only good for us because it is a good way to live *simpliciter*. But we can and should be concerned to live justly for our own sake, as well as for the sake of others.[23]

With that in mind, I propose that the third part of the Platonic Claim itself has four parts:

(3.1) *The Priority Claim*. Properly regarding others is a condition on which other goods are genuinely or fully available to us.

(3.2) *The Necessity Claim*: Properly regarding others is necessary for *eudaimonia*.

(3.3) *The Non-Sufficiency Claim*: Properly regarding others is not sufficient for *eudaimonia*.

(3.4) *The Supremacy Claim*: Properly regarding others is a supreme, or immensely important, good for us.

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[22] Consider the epigraphs to this section and the following remarks by Socrates in the *Apology*: "you don't speak well, if you believe that a man worth anything at all would give countervailing weight to danger of life or death, or give consideration to anything but this when he acts: whether his action is just or unjust, the action of a good or of an evil man" (28b). Consider also, for example, Aristotle's remarks on the *kalon* (see especially *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1120a; *Eudemian Ethics*, 1230a; and *Rhetoric*, 1366a-1367a).

[23] Although I am confident in my interpretations of traditional eudaimonism, the truth or falsity of the Platonic Claim is not dependent on them. I will not, therefore, provide as much support for these interpretations as I would if my aims were primarily historical. For further historical consideration of traditional eudaimonism, see, for example, Julia Annas (1993; 2007; 2017) and David McPherson (2020, Ch. 3).

I should note that all the traditional eudaimonists I have mentioned—Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Aquinas—seem to affirm each of these four claims, with the possible exception of Socrates, who might not have affirmed the Non-Sufficiency Claim.[24] I should also note that all of these eudaimonists seem to affirm objectivism about our individual good. As I noted in Chapter One, although Aristotle and Aquinas are commonly interpreted as affirming perfectionism, their notion of *our nature* seems irreducibly normative or evaluative, such that what our nature consists in, and what perfecting our nature consists in, depends on what is objectively good or bad, and so also on what is basically good or bad for us.

§3.1 The Priority Claim

Following traditional eudaimonists, I propose that our properly regarding others is a condition on which goods are genuinely or fully available to us. Our obligations of regard are *prior* to various possible goods for us, in that their goodness for us is diminished or precluded by our failing to fulfill our obligations of regard on our way to those possible goods. In other words, those possible goods are only conditionally good for us, whereas properly regarding others is unconditionally good for us.[25] If we wrong others in our pursuit of pleasure, for example, the good that such pleasure would have constituted for us had we not wronged others is unavailable to us, or at least less available to us. We need to properly regard others in our pursuit of pleasure for such pleasure to be good for us, or at least fully good for us.[26]

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[24] See Gregory Vlastos (1991, Ch. 8), who attributes what he calls "the Sufficiency Claim" to Socrates. According to Vlastos, Socrates held that being virtuous is sufficient for *eudaimonia* even if there are ways in which our lives can go better for us beyond whether we are virtuous. In this, Socrates would be closer to the Stoics, who also affirm the Sufficiency Claim. But even the Stoics hold that our lives can go better by our having various "preferred indifferents" in our lives, which are not *good* for us, but which are *preferable* for us. Socrates might hold such a view. The extent of genuine disagreement and not merely verbal disagreement among Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics remains unclear to me.

[25] Kant holds a similar view to traditional eudaimonists. In the *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788), Kant presents his view of the goodness of our happiness (5:61-62). For Kant, our happiness is not unconditionally good. Our happiness is only good if, and insofar as, we deserve our happiness. And we deserve happiness only insofar as we are moral. Happiness that follows from our immorality is not good. In interpreting Kant, this is what John Rawls (2000) calls "the priority of the right" (230-232).

[26] Cf. Gaita (2004): "Socrates would say that an evildoer always gets more than he bargained for, and that when good people do evil they get something they could not accept as part of a package along with whatever else they get through their deeds. They get themselves as evildoers. Socrates would say that could only seem true but trivially so, if we do not know what it is to be—what it *means* to be—an evildoer" (231). I will return to discuss this point in Chapter Four.

Consider the philosopher-kings in Plato's *Republic*. According to Socrates, they are justly demanded to rule the city, and they fulfill this demand, even though they thereby cannot engage in the highest human good—the activity of philosophical contemplation—which they would prefer to ruling. As Talbot Brewer (2009) notes, the philosopher-kings understand that their good no longer consists in philosophical contemplation once they become subject to the demand to rule (202-205). This just demand determines which goods are available to them, which activities their living well could partially consist in. A life of philosophical contemplation would no longer be good for them. The goodness of such a life would be diminished or countered by the injustice that makes that life possible. Such a life would be marred by injustice. Once the philosopher-kings are subject to the just demand to rule, ruling is the best life—and the only good life—that is available to them.[27]

According to the Priority Claim, our obligations of regard limit the goods that are genuinely or fully available to us, constraining the ways in which we can live and fare well. This can be a misfortune, or even a tragedy, for us. But not fulfilling our obligations of regard is not a way for us to live and fare better. If the philosopher-kings had not been subject to just demands to rule, they might have lived and fared better. But they were subject to those demands, and so they could not have lived and fared better by not ruling.

In *Natural Goodness* (2001), Philippa Foot provides another example of the Priority Claim. She discusses a group of people whom she refers to as "the Letter-Writers." The Letter-Writers resisted the Nazis in the various ways. Some preached against Nazism. Some refused to swear an oath of loyalty to Hitler. And some conspired and attempted to assassinate Hitler. The Nazis executed all of them. Some of their last letters to family and friends before they were executed were collected in the book *Dying We Live* (1968), hence "the Letter-Writers." Foot suggests that the Letter-Writers believed both that justice demanded their resistance to the Nazis and that, unfortunately, a good long life was no long possible for them, as continuing to live would require them to act unjustly:

> The letters give the impression that those who wrote them were especially well fitted for the enjoyment of the best things in life: for great happiness. So one may very naturally say that they knowingly sacrificed their happiness in making their choice. And yet this does not seem to be the only thing we could say. One may think that there was a sense in which the Letter-Writers did, *but also a sense in which they did not*, sacrifice their happiness in refusing to go along with the Nazis. In the abstract what they so longed for—to get back to their families—was of

[27] Cf. Irwin (2007, §62).

> course wholly good. But as they were placed it was impossible to pursue this end by just and honorable means. And this, I suggest, explains the sense in which they did not see as their happiness what they could have got by giving in. Happiness in life, they might have said, was not something possible for them. (95-96)

The example of the Letter-Writers is extreme. They risked and accepted death to resist and avoid injustice. But at least in some instances, we might not believe they were obligated to oppose injustice as they did, such as refusing to swear an oath of loyalty to Hitler. Such refusal might have been supererogatory. They might have sworn an oath, for example, but then found various ways to continue resisting the Nazis. Terrence Malick's film *A Hidden Life* (2019) presents such a possibility. The protagonist is an Austrian farmer who refuses to swear an oath of loyalty to Hitler. He will not do what he believes is unjust. Given his belief of what justice demands of him, he no longer considers a good, long life with his family as genuinely available to him. He will not live a life marred by such an oath. The Nazis give him the option of swearing the oath and being assigned as a medical orderly in a hospital. But he refuses this option. Even if some of the Letter-Writers' conduct was supererogatory, or otherwise not obligatory, I believe they vividly present how justice might demand that we risk our lives or accept death in order to resist or avoid injustice, and how the good lives that are genuinely available to us can be constrained by those demands.[28]

Again, the example of the Letter-Writers is extreme. More mundane examples of the Priority Claim might be less contentious, and such examples abound. Consider, for example, people who are "successful" in business, but whose success is ill-gotten. They have cheated their customers, competitors, and creditors. And they are never caught. They reap their "gains" and live a long life enjoying them. But according to the Priority Claim, such ill-gotten gains are not genuine gains at all,

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[28] For further discussion of the Letter-Writers, see David McPherson (2020, Ch. 3). For another example, consider Martin Luther King Jr. and how he concludes his final speech on April 3, 1968:

> So I don't know what will happen now. We've got some difficult days ahead. But it really doesn't matter with me now, because I've been to the mountaintop. And I don't mind. Like anybody, I would like to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the Promised Land. So I'm happy tonight. I'm not worried about anything. I'm not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the coming of the glory of the Lord.

King was assassinated the following day.

or at least such gains are significantly lessened by being ill-gotten. The pleasures and satisfactions of such success are hollow. And someone whose life revolves around such pleasures and satisfactions has lived not only a morally worse life, but a worse life *simpliciter*, than someone whose success is not ill-gotten.

To clarify, the Priority Claim does not imply that there is a "lexical priority" of the good of properly regarding others over all other goods for us. If there were such a lexical priority, no amount of other goods could be better for us than our properly regarding others.[29] In this, the good for us of properly regarding others would be incommensurable with all other goods for us.

I do not believe that those goods are incommensurable. That is why I have claimed that certain goods might only be less fully available to us, or their goodness for us might only be lessened, if we fail to properly regard others on our way to those goods. But I suppose there are instances in which the badness for us of seriously wronging others could not be balanced by any other goods. Our life could never be as good for us as our life could have been if we had not seriously wronged them.

I cannot provide a comprehensive view of the ways in which our properly regarding others and not wronging them conditions the other goods that are available to us, or how fully those goods are available to us. But I will return to discuss possible conflicts between our obligations of regard and our own good, as well as issues of supererogation, in §3.3.

§3.2 The Necessity, Non-Sufficiency, and Supremacy Claims

(3.2) *The Necessity Claim*: Properly regarding others is necessary for *eudaimonia*.

(3.3) *The Non-Sufficiency Claim*: Properly regarding others is not sufficient for *eudaimonia*.

(3.4) *The Supremacy Claim*: Properly regarding others is a supreme, or immensely important, good for us.

To fully articulate the Necessity, Non-Sufficiency, and Supremacy Claims, we need to distinguish between how well we live and fare in our life as a whole, how well we live and fare during a part of our life, and how specific instances of our conduct matter for how well we live and fare in our life as a whole or only during a part of our life. We also need to distinguish between living and

[29] In *The Right and the Good* (1930), W. D. Ross seems to hold such a view about the goodness of virtue compared to the goodness of other goods, especially the goodness of pleasure and knowledge (150-154). But I am unsure whether, for Ross, such goodness is goodness *for us*, or rather only goodness of the world. For discussion of Ross, see David Phillips (2019, Ch. 4).

having an ideally good life, or a great or excellent life, and our living and having a good life, or a good enough life.[30] And we need to distinguish between the ways in which our wrongful conduct can, both in itself and in its consequences, make our lives good or bad, or better or worse.

As with the Priority Claim, I cannot provide a comprehensive view of these matters here. Nor am I aware of any traditional eudaimonists who provide such a view. But I believe the following remarks suffice for my purposes.

In regard to the Necessity Claim, I suppose that our properly regarding others and not wronging them at least much of the time, and not seriously wronging them most of the time, is necessary for us to live well. In this, properly regarding others is necessary as a constituent of *eudaimonia* and as a necessary condition for other possible goods in our lives.[31] In accord with the Priority Claim, whether our pleasures or the satisfaction of our desires, for example, are good for us depends on whether these pleasures and satisfactions come about in accord with our properly regarding others. The Priority Claim thereby implies, and supports, the Necessity Claim.

In regard to the Non-Sufficiency Claim, I suppose we need to enjoy various goods of life beyond that of properly regarding others if we are to live and fare well. We need, for example, to engage in and enjoy various activities and relations with others. Properly regarding others is at most only part of those activities and relations, and so at most only part of what is needed for us to live and fare well.

According to the Supremacy Claim, the good of properly regarding others and not wronging them is in itself among the most important goods for us. But properly regarding others is also among the most important goods for us in that this good is necessary for, and centrally constitutive of, the most important and best relationships that human beings can have with one another, including our closest, loving relationships with family and friends. Properly regarding others is also necessary for, and centrally constitutive of, good neighborly, collegial, and civic relations. As I noted in Chapter One, I suppose that the goods of such relationships are also among the supreme, or most important, goods of life. I should note that such relationships also consist in part in according others forms of regard beyond those which we owe one another, which I will call *supererogatory forms of regard*. Among such forms of regard are, for example, certain forms of love.

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[30] Distinguishing between more perfect and less perfect forms of *eudaimonia* begins with Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, and continues through Aquinas and beyond.

[31] This claim is affirmed both by traditional eudaimonists and by Kant. This claim is also given expression in the Bible, such as in Mark 8:36: "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (KJV).

§3.3 Possible Conflicts Between Our Own Good and Our Obligations of Regard

I conclude this section by reflecting on possible conflicts between our own good and our obligations of regard. I also note possible conflicts between our own good and our having supererogatory regard for others. Lastly, I consider a few further issues regarding supererogation.

Improperly regarding others in certain instances could have good consequences for us. For example, our wrongful conduct in a certain instance could occasion our ethical development or reform. Suppose that in response to being held to account for our conduct, we acknowledge its wrongfulness and commit to improving our character. If we had not wronged others in this instance and been held to account for that, we would not have gone on to improve our ethical character.

We might therefore reasonably affirm certain instances of our wrongful conduct for their redeeming consequences. In this, we could correctly regard that conduct as wrongful while also properly not regretting that conduct, if the consequences of that conduct are sufficiently good. Or rather, we could properly regret that wrongful conduct and its necessity for those good consequences, but in such a way that we do not wish that we had not wronged, given those good consequences.[32]

Properly regarding others can also have bad consequences for us and for those whom we properly regard. For example, our proper concern for others might put them at risk of being harmed by those who hate us and who desire to harm us by harming those for whom we have such concern. In this, there could be tragic consequences of conducting ourselves with proper regard for others. And there could be instances in which we wish we had not properly regarded others, because by properly regarding them, they came to suffer tragic consequences.

We cannot, however, improperly regard others with the aim of avoiding such consequences. This is because the quality of our regard for others is a matter of our attitudes toward them. We could pretend to improperly regard them for the sake of avoiding such consequences, so that they would be less at risk. But we could not hold attitudes of improper regard for others in light of our concern to protect them. This is a conceptual impossibility. If we were aiming to avoid those consequences for their sake, we would be properly regarding them.

[32] See Wallace (2013), who claims that we can appropriately, and sometimes must, affirm bad and wrongful events in the past insofar as these were necessary conditions for some of their consequences, which we cannot but affirm.

But could there be cases in which we induce ourselves to improperly regard others for their own sake? Suppose we believe that we can only protect them if our disdain for them is convincing, and we doubt we could be convincing if we only pretended to disdain them.

Such cases are complicated. I suppose we could assess our quality of regard for them as proper in light of the history of our disdainful attitudes. Our disdain for them reflects our proper regard for them, even if we, when we regard them with disdain, lack the forms of respect and concern that we would owe them—but for our history. Alternatively, we could assess our quality of regard for them as improper and hold that we are wronging them and are blameworthy for our disdainful conduct.

Could those alternatives be consistent? I suppose that in such unusual cases, there could be an issue of personal identity. Perhaps, if I induced myself to despise certain others for their own good, the person who I was when making that decision would be properly regarding them, and even praiseworthy, whereas the person who I induced myself to become would not be properly regarding them, and could be blameworthy. Whether this is so depends, for example, on whether my original concern for them remains, whether I am aware of the source of my disdainful attitudes, and whether I am disposed to amend them.[33] In Chapter Three, I will return to discuss such cases, in which a complex plurality of attitudes can be called for from us if we are to correctly construe them.

Except in those unusual cases, I suppose we can only appropriately affirm our wrongful conduct retrospectively in light of its good consequences. In affirming our wrongful conduct, we should not, however, regard that conduct as having been justified. Rather, if we can appropriately affirm the consequences of such conduct, we can appropriately affirm the necessary conditions of those consequences. And we can affirm such conduct as necessary for its good consequences without regarding that conduct as justified.

To clarify, the relation between properly regarding others and our own good does not allow for a conflict between our own good and our ethical obligations such that we could wrong others in a way that directly contributes to our own good. Fulfilling our ethical obligations cannot conflict with our own good in our deliberations. This is because our external obligations and our own good jointly determine one another, and we cannot be obligated to sacrifice our own good to fulfill our external obligations.[34] But, as I have discussed, the consequences of properly regarding others can nonetheless conflict with our own good, as well as the good of others whom we properly regard.

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33 Cf. Rebecca Stangl (2020, Ch. 6) on what she calls "moral risk."

34 Cf. Scanlon (1998) on what he calls "the problem of priority" (160). Scanlon holds that our moral claims on one another and our claims of friendship on one another, for example, are jointly determined (161).

Even though the consequences of our properly regarding others can be contrary to our own good and to theirs, such consequences seem to me uncommon. And even if our properly regarding others has such consequences, we cannot intelligibly desire to not properly regard them. If we properly understand what matters, we cannot but affirm our desire to properly regard others despite the risk of bad consequences for us and for them—except, as I mentioned, in certain unusual cases.

There can also be conflicts between our own good and our having *supererogatory regard* for others. Supererogatory forms of regard are those which we or others are worthy of but are not owed. If we lack supererogatory attitudes for others in our conduct, we do not wrong them and we are not blameworthy. But giving others such regard is ethically virtuous and is in itself good for us.[35]

Just as properly regarding others can have bad consequences for us and for others, so can having supererogatory regard for them. For example, supererogatory regard can move us to sacrifice our lives for others, or at least risk sacrificing our lives for them. Suppose I risk my life to save a stranger from drowning. And suppose that we both drown. Or suppose that I drown but the stranger lives because the stranger saves themselves. Having such supererogatory regard for others makes us vulnerable to such tragic consequences. I would not have been blameworthy for not risking my life to save the stranger, and my life would have been better had I not risked my life for them.[36]

Let me return for a moment to the example of the Letter-Writers to consider a few further issues regarding supererogation. Suppose that the Letter-Writers regarded their conduct as obligatory but also as in accord with their good. Would they be any less admirable than if they regarded their conduct as obligatory but as contrary to their good, or as non-obligatory and as contrary to their good? How should we understand the relation between supererogatory regard for others and our attitudes toward our own actions—our attitudes toward them as externally obligatory or as morally required? As with other questions that arose in this chapter, I cannot provide comprehensive answers to these questions here. That is partly for the sake of brevity. But that is also because I have, as of yet, no such answers to offer. But I will offer the following tentative remarks.

We might suppose that if the Letter-Writers were moved, in light of a good that they regarded as higher than their own, to sacrifice their own good for that higher good, then they would be more

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[35] Note that supererogation is usually discussed in relation to actions, not attitudes or forms of regard. For discussion of supererogation in relation to actions and virtue, see Roger Crisp (2013) and Stangl (2020).

[36] See the biennial reports of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission for many such real-life instances in which people have risked, and lost, their lives to help others.

admirable than if they did not regard their conduct as sacrificing their own good. But I am not sure that is so. If they considered no other life to be possible for them that would be as good for them, in light of the priority of their obligations, that seems to me no less admirable.

Self-sacrifice, in the sense of sacrificing one's own good for the good of others, is not what seems to me to matter most here. That is because the Letter-Writers understand their obligations as calling for them to let go of the goods that those who regard themselves as sacrificing their own good regard themselves as sacrificing. The Letter-Writers understand what it is that they are letting go of in letting go of the possibility of living a long life with their families. But they also understand that their own good has been limited by their obligations. I believe they would be no less admirable in their recognition of their obligations and of how their own good is limited by those obligations.

So far I have supposed that the Letter-Writers were obligated to risk or even accept death in resisting the Nazis. But, again, we might suppose that many of their actions were supererogatory. Here we might distinguish between actions that exceed our external obligations to one another, which are *externally supererogatory*; actions that are our moral duty, or that are otherwise morally required of us, but that we are not obligated to one another to perform; and actions that reflect our *supererogatory regard* for others, whether our external conduct is obligatory or morally required of us or not. In turn, we might suppose that many of the actions of the Letter-Writers were externally supererogatory, but were morally required of them, whereas other of their actions were neither.

Whether and how the Letter-Writers were admirable for their conduct seems to me to depend more on whether and how their regard for others was proper or supererogatory than on whether they were externally obligated or morally required to perform their actions. That might make sense of our disposition to regard their conduct as more admirable if *we* regard their conduct as externally supererogatory and as not morally required, but less admirable if *they* regard their conduct as supererogatory and as not morally required. This disposition is puzzling. But if this disposition reflects our sense of their quality of regard for others, perhaps we can piece together what is going on.

In this chapter, I considered what is at stake for us in properly regarding others and not wronging them, and I developed and defended the Platonic Claim that properly regarding others is in itself good for us, wronging others is in itself bad for us, and properly regarding others, and not wronging them, is an essential and supremely important part of our good. I also proposed that we should ideally regard one another in light of the Platonic Claim. That is, we should ideally regard one another with the Platonic Attitude.

In the following chapters, I will consider ways in which our sympathetic concern for others should ideally by informed by the Platonic Attitude and how this concern should ideally dispose us to other attitudes toward others. I will elaborate how the Platonic Attitude should ideally dispose us to certain attitudes of sympathetic understanding of the harm their wrongful conduct constitutes for them, and benevolent concern to foster their proper regard for others, not only for the sake of those others but also for their own sake.

Chapter Three:
"Blaming Anger, Fittingness, and Virtue"

> [W]e can experience fear, confidence, desire, anger, pity, and generally any kind of pleasure and pain either too much or too little, and in either case not properly. But to experience all this at the right time, toward the right objects, toward the right people, for the right reason, and in the right manner—that is the median and the best course, the course that is a mark of virtue. (1106b)
>
> [I]t is not easy to determine in what manner, with what person, on what occasion, and for how long a time one ought to be angry, and at what point right action ends and wrong action begins. (1126a)
>
> — Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*

Assessing the ethical quality of our attitudes toward wrongdoers is a central task for views of ethical responsibility. Among the attitudes that we have toward wrongdoers, Strawsonians focus most on assessing our blaming attitudes, especially certain forms of anger. And in assessing those forms of anger, Strawsonians focus most on their appropriateness, specifically their *fittingness*.[1] This is because, for Strawsonians, for us to be responsible for wronging others—in the sense of being blameworthy—is primarily for us to be the fitting object of blaming attitudes. Articulating the nature and fittingness of blaming attitudes is therefore a central task for Strawsonians.

"Fittingness" is a philosophical term of art, which is meant to reflect certain ways in which we ordinarily assess our beliefs, desires, emotions, and other "intentional" attitudes—that is, attitudes that are directed toward objects. Philosophers commonly describe the fittingness of an attitude as its appropriateness with respect to the norms that are internal to its nature. For example, many philosophers hold that truth is an internal norm of belief because it is the nature of beliefs to construe their contents as true. True beliefs are fitting in that they correctly construe their contents as true, whereas false beliefs are unfitting in that they incorrectly construe their contents as true. Many philosophers also hold that desirability is an internal norm of desire because it is the nature of desires to construe their objects as desirable. Desires for desirable objects are fitting in that they correctly

[1] Strawsonians also refer to the relevant notion of appropriateness as "aptness."

construe their objects as desirable, whereas desires for undesirable objects are unfitting in that they incorrectly construe their objects as desirable. Similarly, many philosophers hold that emotions have their own internal norms, which correspond to the ways in which emotions construe their objects.

For Strawsonians, the form of anger that is paradigmatically fitting in response to wrongdoers is what I will follow David Shoemaker (2015) in calling *blaming anger*. According to Strawsonians, for us to be blameworthy—in a certain paradigmatic sense—is just for us to be the fitting object of blaming anger. In recent years, Shoemaker and other Strawsonians have converged in affirming what I will call *the Minimalist Conception* of blaming anger and its fittingness.[2]

On *the Minimalist Conception of blaming anger*, blaming anger essentially consists in a certain construal and a certain aim. In blaming anger, we construe those toward whom we have blaming anger as wronging others. That is, we construe them as manifesting or expressing improper regard for others in their conduct, or as failing to fulfill their obligations of regard toward others. In blaming anger, we also aim to hold them to account for their wrongful conduct. That is, we desire and are motivated to demand their acknowledgment of its wrongfulness and their proper regard for those whom they have wronged. And on *the Minimalist Conception of fittingness*, the fittingness of our blaming anger depends only on the correctness of its construal and on the propriety of its aim. In other words, our blaming anger is fitting if and only if—and insofar as—its construal is correct and its aim is proper. (To clarify, its aim also involves our construing those whom we blame as owing acknowledgment and proper regard, and so as the appropriate object of demands for such acknowledgment and regard. But I will refer to its construal of wrongfulness as its "construal" and those other construals as part of its "aim.")

The Minimalist Conception of blaming anger and its fittingness is, I believe, correct as far as it goes. And I believe the recent convergence among Strawsonians in affirming this conception constitutes significant philosophical progress. Prominent skeptics regarding certain philosophically and culturally pervasive conceptions of responsibility—conceptions that involve certain notions of desert—have also converged with Strawsonians in affirming the Minimalist Conception. I believe these Strawsonians and skeptics have identified a form of anger that is paradigmatically fitting toward

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[2] Strawsonians who seem to more or less affirm the Minimalist Conception, though in different terminology, include Lucy Allais (2021), Justin D'Arms and Daniel Jacobson (2022), Stephen Darwall (2006), Miranda Fricker (2016), Pamela Hieronymi (2001; 2019), Coleen Macnamara (2013; 2015), Michael McKenna (2012a; 2012b), T. M. Scanlon (2013; 2015), David Shoemaker (2015; 2017; 2021), Angela Smith (2019), R. Jay Wallace (1994; 2019b), and Susan Wolf (2011), among others.

one another in response to our wrongful conduct, even if we lack certain forms of agency and freedom that various philosophers have regarded as necessary for us to ethically responsible and blameworthy. I will return to discuss the limits of our agency and freedom, and the convergence among Strawsonians and skeptics regarding the implications of those limits, in Chapter Four.

In this chapter, I will argue that Minimalist Conception of blaming anger and its fittingness is limited, however, in important ways. The Minimalist Conception only provides a conception of what I will call *the minimal fittingness* of blaming anger. I agree with Strawsonians that the notion of minimal fittingness fulfills an important theoretical role in articulating what our being ethically responsible and blameworthy for our wrongful conduct consists in. But the Minimalist Conception does not, I claim, adequately account for changes in the fittingness of blaming anger over time or its comparative fittingness with other attitudes at a given time or over time. The Minimalist Conception neglects the full complexity of the construals and aims that blaming anger can consist in, and so also neglects various considerations that can bear on the correctness of its construals and the propriety of its aims.

To better assess the fittingness of our blaming anger—that is, its appropriateness with respect to the norms that are internal to its nature—I offer a fuller conception of its nature. I propose that in feeling blaming anger toward others, certain sorts of considerations regarding their conduct are not only salient to us in certain characteristic ways but also appear worthy of salience for us. That is, those considerations seem to us worth attending to, focusing on, caring about, and being moved by in certain characteristic ways. I propose that the fittingness of our blaming anger therefore depends on whether and to what extent those considerations are worthy of such salience for us—that is, on whether those considerations are important in the ways that they appear to us to be in such anger.

In Section One of this chapter, I will further elaborate the Minimalist Conception and illustrate its limitations. Along the way, I will introduce a conception of fittingness beyond minimal fittingness, which I will call *the Virtue Conception* of fittingness. In Section Two, I will further develop and defend the Virtue Conception. On that conception, what I will call *the full fittingness* of our blaming anger depends not only on whether those whom we blame have wronged others and whether they have acknowledged the wrongfulness of their conduct, such that if they have acknowledged its wrongfulness, our aim of holding them to account is no longer proper. The full fittingness of our blaming anger also depends on how their wrongful conduct is worthy of salience for us at a given time or over time in relation to other objects that are worthy of our concern and consideration.

To clarify, on the Minimalist Conception, the correctness of its wrongfulness construal and the propriety of its aim are necessary and sufficient conditions for blaming anger to be minimally fitting. I propose that these conditions are necessary for full fittingness, but they are not sufficient. Because it is the nature of blaming anger to construe certain considerations as worthy of salience in certain characteristic ways, our blaming anger is also subject to internal norms of salience, or internal norms of virtue. Considerations of virtue can thereby bear on the full fittingness of our emotions, such as blaming anger, contrary to what many Strawsonians seem to suppose.[3]

Again, I am not denying that the notion of minimal fittingness is important. I believe the notion of minimal fittingness does reflect ways in which we ordinarily assess the appropriateness of our intentional attitudes. Rather, I am articulating another notion of fittingness—*full fittingness*—which I believe reflects other ways in which we ordinarily assess the appropriateness of those attitudes.

Although I focus primarily on blaming anger and its fittingness in this chapter, I will consider other emotions and attitudes and their fittingness in Section Two. I should note here that I believe those other emotions and attitudes can also consist in construals of salience, and so the full fittingness of those attitudes can also depend on whether the considerations that those other emotions and attitudes present as worthy of salience for us are genuinely worthy of such salience. In other words, the Virtue Conception of fittingness is not only applicable to blaming anger.

Following on my discussions of sympathetic concern and the Platonic Claim in Chapters One and Two, I also propose in Section Two of this chapter that the individual good of wrongdoers and the sources of their wrongful conduct can be worthy of salience for us in the course of responding to them. In turn, certain attitudes of sympathetic concern and certain attitudes of understanding toward wrongdoers can be called for from us if we are to correctly construe and properly aim to respond to what matters and should be salient to us in responding to them. The full fittingness of our blaming anger toward wrongdoers therefore depends in part on how those other attitudes toward wrongdoers should inform, qualify, or even supersede our blaming anger in the course of responding to them. In Chapters Four and Five, I will develop and defend these claims further.

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[3] Cf. Darwall (2006), Shoemaker (2017), and Wallace (2019b). See also D'Arms and Jacobson (2000: 84-86).

Section One. The Minimalist Conception of Blaming Anger and Its Fittingness

There are many forms of blame, including various blaming attitudes, blaming actions, and expressions of blame. Among our blaming attitudes, Strawsonians focus most on assessing the ethical quality of certain forms of anger, rather than on certain forms of distrust or contempt, for example. Following Strawson, Strawsonians commonly refer to those forms of anger as forms of "resentment," "indignation," or "guilt," depending on the relation between the blamer and the blamed. Resentment is anger toward another person for wronging oneself. Indignation is anger toward another person for wronging someone else. And guilt is anger toward oneself for wronging someone else—or rather, guilt can involve anger toward oneself, but guilt can also consist just in construing oneself as worthy of others' resentment or indignation.[4]

Resentment, indignation, and guilt can also take many forms, which can be identified and differentiated by their constitutive aims. For Strawsonians, all of these forms of anger involve construing those at whom such anger is directed as manifesting or expressing improper regard for others in their conduct, or as failing to fulfill their obligations of regard toward others. That is, all of these forms of anger involve construing those at whom such anger is directed as wronging others. But these forms of anger differ in their aims. Some of them involve the desire or motive to harm those at whom we are angered, or the desire that they be harmed, with the belief that such harm is good in itself or an end in itself. Such anger can also involve being disposed to take pleasure in their harm. Anger can involve such desires, motives, beliefs, and dispositions either prominently or subtly.[5]

Strawsonians claim that the fittingness of our affective attitudes depends on the correctness of their construals and on the propriety of their aims. For most Strawsonians, vengeful or retributive anger could be fitting in terms of correctly construing those blamed as wronging others, but such anger could not be fitting in terms of the propriety of its aims. The form of anger toward wrongdoers that Strawsonians claim can be fitting—by having a proper aim—is what I will call *blaming anger*.[6]

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[4] For discussion, see McKenna (2021).

[5] As Nomy Arpaly (2006) notes, "anger, even very righteous anger, is a complicated thing, and is rarely a purely moral emotion" (27).

[6] Besides Shoemaker (2015, Ch. 3), see Darwall (2010: 331), Scanlon (1998: 276), and Wallace (1994: 68).

§1.1 Blaming Anger and Its Minimal Fittingness

On what I call *the Minimalist Conception of blaming anger*, which is held by many Strawsonians, blaming anger essentially consists in a certain construal and a certain aim. In blaming anger, we construe those toward whom we have blaming anger as wronging others. That is, we construe them as manifesting or expressing improper regard for others in their conduct, or as failing to fulfill their obligations of regard toward others. In blaming anger, we also aim to hold them to account for their wrongful conduct. That is, we desire and are motivated to demand their acknowledgment of its wrongfulness and their proper regard for those whom they have wronged. And on what I call *the Minimalist Conception of fittingness*, which is held by many Strawsonians, the fittingness of our blaming anger depends only on whether its construal is correct and its aim is proper. I call this notion of fittingness *minimal fittingness*.

Consider a mundane example. Suppose my neighbor insults me out of envy, and I resent him with blaming anger for this. By insulting me, my neighbor wrongs me. And I, in feeling blaming anger, construe him as wronging me. On the Minimalist Conception, my resentment is fitting in terms of the correctness of its construal. My resentment also moves me to demand his acknowledgment of its wrongfulness. Demanding his acknowledgment is proper in response to being wrongfully insulted by him. My resentment is therefore fitting in terms of the propriety of its aim.

In resenting my neighbor with blaming anger, I do not desire to harm him. Nor do I desire that he be harmed, with a belief that such harm is good in itself. According to Strawsonians, I could properly desire that he feel badly—guilty, remorseful, contrite, or ashamed—for insulting me, but I could not properly desire him harm for its own sake. I could only properly desire that he feel badly as a form of understanding, or appreciating, the wrongfulness of his conduct. For him to acknowledge his wrongful conduct requires such understanding, which can take the form of guilt, remorse, contrition, or shame. I could therefore properly desire that he feel badly only because, and insofar as, I can properly desire his acknowledgment. The fittingness of our feeling guilt, remorse, contrition, and shame for wronging others is also what makes others feeling blaming anger toward us fitting in terms of the propriety of its aim. For its aim is to bring wrongdoers to have attitudes that are appropriate and called for from them.[7]

[7] See Linda Radzik (2009), who holds that the goodness of, and the appropriateness of, our feeling guilt, shame, and remorse depends on how these attitudes are forms of acknowledgment of our wrongful conduct (35-36, 89). Their painfulness, Radzik claims, is the "natural consequence" of such acknowledgment (68).

On the Minimalist Conception, the fittingness of our anger can be a matter of degree. For example, insofar as our anger toward wrongdoers consists not only in blaming anger with its proper aim of bringing wrongdoers to understand their conduct, but also in vengeful or retributive anger with its improper aims, our anger would at least be less fitting in terms of its aims than if our anger consisted only in blaming anger. Our anger can also be more or less fitting in terms of whether we correctly construe the seriousness of the wrongful conduct of those whom we blame. In general, the intensity of our anger corresponds to how seriously wrongful we construe their conduct to be and corresponds to the intensity of our desire for, and our motivation to demand, their acknowledgment of its wrongfulness. For example, by resenting my neighbor too intensely for insulting me, I would misconstrue the seriousness of his wrongful conduct.[8] I would desire my neighbor to feel a greater intensity of guilt, remorse, contrition, or shame than would be fitting for him to feel. My overly intense resentment would be unfitting—or at least less fitting than less intense anger would be—in terms of the correctness of its construal and the propriety of its aim. (Note that, for Strawsonians, the intensity of our anger seems to only be a matter of its intensity at a given time, not over time.)

On the Minimalist Conception, the fittingness of our anger can also change over time. Insofar as wrongdoers acknowledge their wrongful conduct and properly regard those whom they have wronged, the aims of our blaming anger are satisfied. This aspect of the Minimalist Conception corresponds to a conception of a certain sort of forgiveness, which consists in relinquishing blaming anger in light of such acknowledgment and proper regard from wrongdoers. On this conception of forgiveness—affirmed by Shoemaker (2021), for example—such acknowledgment and proper regard makes forgiving wrongdoers fitting and makes our continuing to have such anger toward them unfitting, or at least less fitting, insofar as its aim is satisfied and thereby no longer proper.

To clarify, Strawsonians affirm that there are other appropriate ways for us to relinquish our blaming attitudes, including blaming anger, besides that sort of forgiveness. Luke Brunning and Per-Anders Milam (2022) call these ways of relinquishing our blaming attitudes ways of "letting go." In letting go of blaming anger, for example, we can appropriately relinquish such anger in light of the recognition that the wrongful conduct that angered us is not worthy, or is no longer worthy, of our attention or consideration in the ways that are distinctive of anger. We can have sufficient reasons to let go of our anger, even though our continued anger would be fitting.

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[8] Shoemaker (2018), for example, notes that the correctness of our angered construals can come in degrees, and that overly intense anger can misconstrue the seriousness of a wrong (1007).

That, in brief, is the Minimalist Conception of blaming anger and its fittingness. Blaming anger essentially consists in a certain construal and a certain aim, and instances of blaming anger are minimally fitting insofar as that construal is correct and that aim is proper. The only considerations that bear on the minimal fittingness of our blaming anger are whether those whom we blame have wronged others and whether they have properly acknowledged their wrongful conduct and come to properly regard those whom they have wronged. In turn, wrongdoers are blameworthy in a certain paradigmatic sense insofar as blaming anger toward them is minimally fitting. Wrongdoers can also be regarded as blameworthy for their wrongful conduct in the sense that blaming anger toward them was minimally fitting prior to their rendering such acknowledgment and proper regard, if they have already rendered them. But once they have rendered such acknowledgment and proper regard, they are no longer blameworthy, in that blaming anger toward them would no longer be minimally fitting. Such anger would merely be the sort of attitude that can be minimally fitting in response to such conduct, and so would only be appropriate in that—even more minimal—sense.

§1.2 Strawsonians and Skeptics

In the introduction of this chapter, I noted a recent convergence among Strawsonians and skeptics regarding certain culturally and philosophically pervasive conceptions of responsibility that involve certain notions of desert. I will now elaborate on that convergence.

In brief, Strawsonians are also skeptics regarding those pervasive conceptions of responsibility, and skeptics affirm the Minimalist Conception of blaming anger.[9] Whereas skeptics have focused on critiquing conceptions of responsibility that involve certain notions of desert, Strawsonians have focused on articulating conceptions of responsibility that involve other notions of desert, if any.

For both Strawsonians and skeptics, wrongdoers can deserve blame in the sense that they can be worthy of blaming anger. To deserve blame in that sense is just for certain blaming attitudes to be fitting.[10] Wrongdoers can also deserve blame in the sense that certain blaming actions toward them could be appropriate, permissible, or not wrong. Blaming actions are actions that manifest or express our blaming attitudes. Wrongdoers could deserve blame in that they are liable to certain blaming actions by others, having no claim or right against such actions. In this way, others are entitled to

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9 Prominent skeptics, including Neil Levy (2011: 211), Derk Pereboom (2021, Ch. 2), and Bruce Waller (2014, Ch. 5), seem to acknowledge this convergence. Prominent Strawsonians, including Pamela Hieronymi (2019), Paul Russell (2017), and Gary Watson (2019), also seem to acknowledge this convergence.

10 Cf. Shoemaker (2015, Conclusion).

blame them.[11] For wrongdoers to deserve blaming actions in this sense is for those actions to be *negatively justified*. Blaming actions are negatively justified insofar as they are appropriate, permissible, or not wrong. But the minimal fittingness of our blaming anger is not in itself sufficient for us to be entitled to express or act on such anger.

That wrongdoers can deserve certain blaming actions in that way is not, however, for those blaming actions to be *positively justified*. For blaming actions to be positively justified is for them to be worth doing. That an action is permissible, for example, is not what makes that action worth doing. For both Strawsonians and skeptics, what makes blaming actions worth doing are the goods or ends that such actions can further. The goods or ends for whose sake we could or should blame them provide blaming actions with their point. Strawsonians and skeptics alike hold that harming wrongdoers is not good in itself, and so both reject notions of desert according to which harming wrongdoers makes blaming actions worth doing. Rather, what makes blaming actions worth doing are, for example, the goods of exacting acknowledgment and proper regard from wrongdoers and enforcing external standards of regard against them.

Michael McKenna (2019) clarifies that, for Strawsonians, in blaming anger, we aim at no more than is deserved by those who are blameworthy. And what those who are blameworthy deserve, according to McKenna, is "[n]o more than what is involved in that person having a proportionally pained response to others altering their interpersonal relations with her—and altering them as would befit their communicating to her their moral demands and concerns from a place of proportionate moral anger. *That is all*" (279). Giving those who are blameworthy what they deserve is not, however, the aim of our blaming actions, or what makes those actions worth doing. Our positive justification for those actions toward them is provided by other goods and reasons. But their having wronged others is what negatively justifies our blaming them.

To clarify, according to Strawsonians, our feeling guilt, which is painful, can manifest proper ethical concerns and a proper understanding of our wrongful conduct. As a manifestation of such concerns and understanding, guilt could be considered good, and insofar as its painfulness is essential to manifesting such concerns and understanding, its painfulness could also be considered good. Guilt can also be motivationally good in fostering our proper regard for others and in moving us to acknowledge those whom we have wronged. In light of the goods of feeling guilt, blaming actions can be worth doing for the sake of bringing about guilt in those blamed. Bringing about their proper

[11] On being entitled to blaming anger or blaming actions, see Allais (2008: 28-29), Scanlon (2019: 133), Walker (2006: 19, 23), and Wallace (2019: 169).

understanding and acknowledgment of their wrongful conduct can be a proper end. And so, our bringing them to feel guilt can be proper insofar as our end is to bring about their guilt as constitutive of such understanding and acknowledgment.

Although differences among Strawsonians and skeptics remain regarding our proper concerns and ends in responding to wrongdoers, I believe their views on the minimal fittingness of blaming anger have significantly converged. Following on that convergence, Strawsonians and skeptics have also converged in affirming its corresponding conception of forgiveness.[12]

By converging on a conception of blaming anger and its minimal fittingness, Strawsonians and skeptics have articulated a form of blame that is, I believe, pervasive in our ordinary lives and that is consistent with our forms of agency and freedom. I will return to consider other convergences among Strawsonians and skeptics, as well as remaining differences, in Chapters Four and Five.

§1.3 Beyond Minimal Fittingness

In the remainder of this section, I will illustrate limitations of the Minimalist Conception. In this, I will introduce a more complete conception of fittingness, which I will elaborate in Section Two.

To begin, I should clarify that for blaming anger to be minimally fitting toward wrongdoers is not for it to be *conceptually* or *psychologically necessary* for us to correctly construe and to properly aim to respond to their wrongful conduct.[13] For blaming anger to be fitting is for feeling such anger to be a way of correctly construing and properly aiming to respond. This allows for the possibility of our correctly construing and properly aiming to respond without feeling blaming anger. For most Strawsonians, we can properly judge and feel that certain conduct is wrongful and be moved to respond, holding wrongdoers responsible and to account, without feeling blaming anger. But feeling such anger may be epistemically or motivationally necessary for at least some of us to correctly construe and properly aim to respond to at least certain wrongs, or at least necessary to respond most appropriately or virtuously to those wrongs—with an especially vivid appreciation of the seriousness of that wrong and what is called for from us in response. Blaming anger may therefore not only be fitting but also called for if we are to respond well or excellently to certain wrongs. In this chapter, I

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12 Cf. Shoemaker (2021) and Pereboom (2021).

13 As Wallace (1994) claims, "holding a person responsible does not involve the belief that the reactive emotions are required by the person's violation of moral obligations, or that one ought to be subject to them, but only the weaker belief that it would be appropriate or warranted for one to feel such emotions in response to the violation of those obligations" (76, n. 38).

will follow other Strawsonians, however, in focusing on how we can correctly construe and properly aim to respond to wrongs in blaming anger, rather than on whether or how blaming anger is necessary for correctly construing and properly aiming to respond to certain wrongs.

I should also clarify that for blaming anger to be minimally fitting is distinct from its being *intelligible*, *understandable*, or *human*. Our feeling blaming anger is commonly intelligible, understandable, or human without its being fitting, especially in those instances in which we are liable to misconstrue certain forms of conduct as wrongful. On such occasions, we can regard blaming anger as intelligible or understandable insofar as we can understand how those who feel such anger could, in light of our more or less common epistemic and ethical imperfections as human beings, come to construe that conduct as wrongful.

Lastly, I should clarify that for blaming anger to be minimally fitting is distinct from its being *warranted*. Warrant is, at least primarily, an epistemic notion of justification.[14] In resenting my neighbor, for example, my resentment is fitting to the extent that I correctly construe him as wronging me and have proper aims in responding. But whether my resentment is warranted depends on whether I am epistemically justified in construing him that way. If I lack sufficient epistemic justification, then my anger is unwarranted. As with the fittingness of my blaming anger, how warranted my anger is can be a matter of degree. My warrant for my anger can also change over time as I acquire further evidence of his quality of regard for me. If my friend tells me of the apparent insult, and my friend is, in general, a reliable witness regarding the interpersonal attitudes of others, then I could be warranted in resenting my neighbor when my friend tells me of the apparent insult. On many occasions, our blaming anger could be intelligible or understandable precisely because such anger is warranted, even if not fitting.

Strawsonians tend to focus more on issues of fittingness than on issues of warrant. But there are important ways in which our warrant and our epistemic attitudes can affect the nature of our blaming attitudes. For example, the credence I put in the judgment of my friend who tells me of my neighbor's conduct can affect the intensity of my anger. The intensity of my anger depends not only on how serious I construe the apparent wrong to be but also on my credence in the correctness of

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[14] Warrant is perhaps not a purely epistemic notion, in that the standards for being justified in assenting to or affirming our construals in blaming anger could be affected by what is ethically at stake in making that assent or affirmation. The ethical stakes might make those standards more demanding in some instances and less demanding in others, depending on the seriousness of responding with unfitting blaming anger or responding without blaming anger when such anger is called for.

"Wrong sorts of reasons" might also provide us with warrant for our attitudes. In Chapter Two, §3.3, I considered an example in which we induce ourselves into disdaining someone in order to protect them.

that construal. The mere intensity of my anger is also not its only quality that can be assessed in terms of warrant. I might feel anger toward my neighbor in a way that I can take, or remain disposed to take, a critical distance from my construal of him in anger. I might be angered without fully assenting to or affirming that construal. Or I might feel anger such that I cannot take, and do not remain disposed to take, such critical distance. I might instead fully assent to or affirm that construal, with certainty. Whether and how we assent to or affirm our construals in anger can affect the nature of our anger.

Our warrant for feeling blaming anger might also be distinct from our warrant for affirming its construal. Suppose, for example, I feel blaming anger toward my neighbor but remain uncertain whether he has wronged me. I can be warranted in feeling that anger in light of my friend's testimony while also giving my neighbor a benefit of doubt. And both my anger and my uncertainty might move me to confront my neighbor. In confronting him, I could demand an account from him of his conduct, reflecting my uncertainty regarding his attitudes toward me. But in communicating my anger to him, I also demand acknowledgment from him of his wrongful conduct, if he has genuinely wronged me. His account might remove my warrant for anger. He might explain that he had made a joke, which my friend must have overheard and mistaken for an insult. And I could take my neighbor at his word.

Considering issues of warrant for our blaming anger provides a way into thinking about the limitations of the Minimalist Conception and what matters for what I call *the full fittingness* of our blaming anger.

If my neighbor has wronged me, then insofar as I have sufficient evidence for his having wronged me, my belief that he has wronged me is fitting and warranted indefinitely, unless I acquire further evidence. But my blaming anger toward him for wronging me is not thereby indefinitely fitting. That is because anger is not a belief. Anger is an occurrent emotional attitude, constituted by occurrent construals and aims, which can differ from what I otherwise believe or desire.

In feeling blaming anger for my neighbor, his having wronged me is salient to me in certain ways: I attend to and focus on his having wronged me in certain ways, and I am disposed to form certain beliefs and desires, and to otherwise think and act in certain characteristic ways.[15] But how I construe him in feeling blaming anger can differ from how I construe him in my non-angered beliefs.

[15] See Ronald de Sousa (1987) on how emotions make their objects salient to us in certain ways (194-203).

I could, for example, feel anger toward him without believing, or judging, that he has wronged me. And I could judge my anger as unfitting, and unwarranted, in terms of its construal.[16]

In blaming anger, we construe those at whom we are angered as wronging us or others and we construe their wrongful conduct as more or less seriously wrong. This construal is occurrent and makes their wrongful conduct salient to us in certain characteristic ways. In my anger at my neighbor, how his insult is salient to me corresponds to my aims in anger. In my anger, I desire his acknowledgment of having wronged me. His acknowledgment—in the form of a sincere apology, for example—can satisfy that desire and so satisfy the aim of my anger, thereby disabling its fittingness.

If a wrong is no longer worthy of being salient to me in certain ways, then my construing that wrong as worthy of salience in those ways is a misconstrual. If my neighbor acknowledges his wrongful conduct and properly regards me, then continuing to desire his acknowledgment in anger, as though he has not already given me that acknowledgment, is improper, and so unfitting. His acknowledgment makes his wrong no longer worthy of salience for me in the way that his wrong had been. And so continuing to construe him in blaming anger misconstrues whether and how his wrongful conduct is worthy of salience for me.

To clarify, I am proposing that, in blaming anger, the apparently wrongful conduct of others is not only salient to us but also seems worthy of salience for us in certain ways—that is, worthy of our attention or consideration in certain ways. In blaming anger, we are not only focused on or disposed to focus on certain considerations. Those considerations appear to us as worthy of our focus.[17] Those considerations appear to us as worth caring about and being moved by. And if we do not construe the apparently wrongful conduct of others as worthy of salience for us in such ways, then we would not, I claim, be feeling blaming anger toward them. If we had no tendency to regard their conduct as important in those ways, we would not be feeling such anger. That we construe their conduct as worthy of salience for us in certain characteristic ways is what makes the construals of blaming anger distinct from other ways of construing their conduct as wrongful. And insofar as our blaming anger is constituted by construing their conduct as worthy of salience in those ways, our blaming anger can be unfitting insofar as their conduct is not worthy of such salience for us.

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16 See Robert C. Roberts (2003) on how emotions are distinct from beliefs in light of the "recalcitrance" of emotions to beliefs. See also Shoemaker (2021) and Pereboom (2021).

17 See Shoemaker (2019; 2021) and D'Arms and Jacobson (2017: 260, 267; 2022: 21), who follow Nico Frijda (1986: 77-84) and Andrea Scarantino (2014: 170) in describing emotions as involving "control precedence." Control precedence refers to how our attention and motivation can be directed toward the objects of our emotions in ways that are distinctive of those emotions, and which can be resistant to redirection.

To clarify further, I am proposing that the Minimalist Conception neglects certain construals that are essential to the nature of blaming anger, and so the Minimalist Conception also neglects certain considerations that bear on the fittingness of blaming anger.

If blaming anger consists in construing others' wrongful conduct as worthy of salience for us in certain ways, then the fittingness of our blaming anger can also change over time independently of whether its aims are satisfied. This is a possibility that Strawsonians tend to reject.[18] But I suppose that just as my anger toward my neighbor, for example, could be too intense, thereby misconstruing the seriousness of his wrongful conduct, my anger could also endure for too long, and thereby misconstrue its *importance*, or its being worthy of salience for me. If I ruminated on his insult in anger for years, my enduring anger would, I suppose, misconstrue its importance, and not only its seriousness, or how wrongful his conduct was. This is not to claim that bouts of anger in occasionally remembering or reflecting on his insult would necessarily be unfitting. But bouts of anger that are too frequent or too long would, I suppose, be unfitting. My enduring anger could also reflect my misconstruing the importance of his insult in a way that disposes me to that anger. But insofar as I construe his insult as worthy of my continued attention or consideration in anger, my anger itself would misconstrue its importance and not only reflect such a misconstrual.[19]

And so, I suppose that even if my neighbor fails to acknowledge his wrongful conduct toward me, my blaming anger could fittingly diminish over time, and its not diminishing could be unfitting. In other words, my enduring anger toward my neighbor could be unfitting—and not only prudentially bad for me, for example—even if he never acknowledges his wrongful conduct. And this is because my enduring anger toward him could misconstrue the importance of his wrongful conduct by making his conduct seem worthy of salience for me in ways that his conduct is no longer worthy of salience.

Without such enduring anger, I could hold various true beliefs and proper desires regarding him and his conduct, remaining disposed to affirm its wrongfulness and hold him to account for that conduct. But I suppose that for me to correctly construe the importance of his wrongful conduct in blaming anger, the intensity and endurance of my blaming anger over time matters. These points are

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[18] Hieronymi (2001) and Shoemaker (2021), for example, seem to deny this possibility. And Wallace (2019b) even holds that acknowledgment by wrongdoers of their wrongful conduct cannot change the fittingness of blaming anger, because the past wrongful conduct makes such anger perpetually fitting (91). I suspect that my disagreements with Hieronymi, Shoemaker, and Wallace might, however, be less substantive than they seem. I suppose that they are focused on minimal fittingness, and that Wallace is focused on an even more minimal form of fittingness. But they have not articulated this more complete conception.

[19] See Scanlon (2008: 150) and Stefan Riedener (2022: 83), who claim that blameworthiness is in part a function of the importance of wrongful conduct for the blamer, which makes blameworthiness "agent-relative."

not accounted for on the Minimalist Conception of blaming anger and fittingness. And that, again, is because the Minimalist Conception does not offer a full conception of the nature of blaming anger. The Minimalist Conception does not offer a full conception of the construals such anger consists in.[20]

§1.4 An Objection to a Conception of Fittingness Beyond Minimal Fittingness

Some Strawsonians might insist that the notion of minimal fittingness reflects all of the internal norms of blaming anger. On their view, blaming anger essentially consists in construing the conduct of those at whom we are angered as more or less seriously wrongful and in aiming for their acknowledgment of its wrongfulness and for their proper regard for those whom they have wronged. And so, on their view, the norms internal to anger only include the correctness of that construal and the propriety of that aim. Therefore, considerations that bear on the fittingness of our blaming anger only include those considerations that bear on whether that construal is correct and that aim is proper. Only those considerations are considerations of fittingness, or what many philosophers call "considerations of the right sort." Considerations about what is worthy of salience for us at a given time or over time cannot be fittingness considerations. Rather, those considerations are what many philosophers call "considerations of the wrong sort." Such considerations—which can, for example, include various prudential or moral considerations—bear on whether or how we should feel blaming anger or respond to our anger. But those considerations do not bear on whether blaming anger is fitting, or on whether those at whom such anger is directed are blameworthy in the relevant sense.[21]

In reply to this objection, I would insist that the phenomenology of blaming anger is more complex than the Minimalist Conception of blaming anger supposes. Our experience of those at whom we feel blaming anger involves construing their conduct not only as wrongful but also as important—that is, as worthy of our attention and consideration—in certain characteristic ways. The intensity of our anger not only corresponds to how seriously wrongful we construe their conduct to be but also to how important and worthy of salience we construe their conduct to be. And

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[20] See Oded Na'Aman (2020; 2021) for other recent discussions of how the fittingness of our blaming anger could change over time independently of whether its aims are satisfied. I believe Na'Aman's account of changes in the fittingness of attitudes over time is consistent with my own, though he presents his account in quite different terms. I believe his appeal to the fittingness of "processes" can, for example, be supported by my appeals to the "salience" and "importance" of the objects of processes, such as the process of responding to wrongdoers, and how the salience or importance of those objects can change in the course of the process.

[21] Cf. D'Arms and Jacobson (2000), Darwall (2006), Shoemaker (2017: 76; 2021: 32-33), and Wallace (2019b).

considerations that bear on the importance of their wrongful conduct go beyond the seriousness of its wrongfulness and whether they have acknowledged its wrongfulness.

Consider how in the course of ruminating on how my neighbor has insulted me, I might reflect not only on whether he has insulted me, or how seriously he has thereby wronged me, but also on whether his having insulted me is as important as I am construing it to be in continued anger. In so reflecting, I am not simply considering how I should most prudently respond to my anger. I am not simply considering, for example, whether I should relinquish my anger so that I would be less stressed or less preoccupied. I am also not simply considering whether I would be more moral or virtuous if I relinquished my anger. Nor am I simply considering how my anger might affect others whom I care about. My consideration of whether his conduct is as important as I am construing it to be is also about whether my angered construals of his conduct are correct. Certain prudential and moral considerations can bear on the importance of his conduct for me, and so such considerations can bear on the fittingness of my anger. Such considerations do not only bear on whether my feeling blaming anger is more or less prudent or moral in light of the consequences of feeling such anger.[22]

To clarify, I am not denying the distinction between moral or prudential considerations that bear on the fittingness of our blaming anger and those that can otherwise bear on whether and how we should feel or respond to such anger. But I believe that distinguishing between these considerations can be difficult. For example, suppose that my neighbor would become extremely defensive if he sensed my anger toward him. This could provide me a reason to not be angered—or to overcome or set aside my anger—in confronting him. I believe we can have such reasons to not feel blaming anger, even though that anger would be fitting. But I also believe that in having such a reason to not be angered, the considerations that give us that reason can bear on the fittingness of our blaming anger. That I have a reason to not make my neighbor extremely defensive can make my anger less fitting,

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[22] D'Arms and Jacobson (2000) note that some of our emotions consist in part in moral or prudential construals, and so certain moral and prudential considerations can be considerations of fittingness (87-88). But D'Arms and Jacobson clarify that moral and prudential considerations about the consequences of feeling an emotion are not themselves considerations of fittingness. I agree with them. What I am proposing is that the moral and prudential construals involved in our emotions are more complex than Strawsonians acknowledge, and that certain considerations of virtue are also considerations of fittingness.

D'Arms and Jacobson (2017) also describe emotions as fitting if and only if their objects "merit" the sorts of directed attention and motivation that are characteristic of those emotions. And they note that whether an object merits an emotion depends on context. For example, "something that is dangerous [and worthy of fear] in suburbia is not [or might not be] so in a warzone" (261, n. 20). Here they seem to acknowledge that the fittingness of an emotion depends on what I call the *importance* of its object for us. I believe that they thereby open the door for my view that blaming anger is fitting only insofar as the conduct of the blamed is worthy of salience for us in the ways that blaming anger makes that conduct salient to us.

insofar as I, in my anger, am not correctly construing or properly aiming to respond to what matters in the situation. But this allows that I could, in my anger, correctly construe and properly aim to respond to what matters in the situation, even though my feeling anger would have bad consequences. That our attitudes correctly construe and properly aim to respond to the situation is consistent with those attitudes not being the most prudent or moral for us to have, in that our having those attitudes can have bad consequences.

I should also acknowledge that there might not be a significant practical difference between viewing certain moral or prudential considerations as bearing on whether and how we should feel or respond to our blaming anger by way of bearing on its fittingness compared to viewing those considerations as not bearing on its fittingness. If Strawsonians deny that those considerations bear on the fittingness of our blaming anger, they could nonetheless acknowledge that those considerations bear on whether and how we should feel or respond to our blaming anger.

But I believe viewing those considerations as bearing on the fittingness of our blaming anger is more phenomenologically accurate and better reflects our ordinary practices of assessing our attitudes. I also believe that viewing those considerations as not bearing on the fittingness of our blaming anger exaggerates the possible conflicts among considerations that bear on whether and how we should feel or respond to our blaming anger. For example, in ruminating in anger on my neighbor's insult for years, I would not merely be unresponsive to certain prudential or moral reasons to let go of my anger. Others would, I believe, regard me as misconstruing the importance of his insult in my anger, and so regard my anger as unfitting insofar as I am misconstruing its importance in my anger. I will briefly return to discuss issues regarding "considerations of the wrong sort" in Section Two.

In this section, I proposed that the fittingness of our blaming anger toward others depends not only on whether they have wronged us or others, whether our aims in anger are the sort of aims that are proper to have toward wrongdoers, and whether they have acknowledged their wrongful conduct. I proposed that the fittingness of our blaming anger also depends on what is worthy of salience for us at a given time or over time in the course of our responding to their wrongful conduct. And this is because it is the nature of blaming anger to make certain considerations salient to us and to construe those considerations as worthy of salience for us. In the following section, I will develop and defend that conception of *the full fittingness* of our blaming anger, which I call *the Virtue Conception*.

Section Two. The Virtue Conception of Blaming Anger and Its Fittingness

In Section One, I presented the Minimalist Conception of blaming anger and its fittingness, which is held by many Strawsonians, and I illustrated its limitations with a simple example of a neighbor who insults me. In this section, I consider a more complex example to further illustrate the limitations of the Minimalist Conception and to illustrate a conception of fittingness beyond minimal fittingness.

The example I consider in this section involves a parent responding to the misbehavior of her young child. There are several reasons why I consider such an example. As I discussed in Chapters One and Two, parents tend to respond to the wrongful conduct of their children with deepened sympathetic concern, including a deepened sense of what is at stake for their children in how they regard others. Parents also tend to respond to the wrongful conduct of their children with a deepened sense of the nature and sources of that conduct. As I noted in Chapters One and Two, this is not to deny that parents often fail to respond in these ways. But I believe parents commonly respond in these ways, and these ways of responding constitute common ideals for how parents should respond to the wrongful conduct of their children. Parents and other adults also commonly regard children as not fully responsible for their conduct. But parents and other adults commonly regard children, from a young age, as at least partially responsible for their conduct.

Reflecting on examples of parents responding to the misbehavior of their young children, as well as their older children, can remind us how sophisticated our assessments of the fittingness of our blaming attitudes can and should be in light of the complex plurality of attitudes that can be appropriate or called for from us in the course of responding to the wrongful conduct of others. The complex plurality of parental attitudes toward the wrongful conduct of their children also provides a model, I believe, for understanding the complex plurality of attitudes that we can and should ideally have toward adults in light of their wrongful conduct. This is not to claim that we should have exactly the same attitudes toward adults as we have toward children, or that we should have exactly the same attitudes toward our own children that we have toward the children of others. But as I proposed in Chapters One and Two, we should ideally have many of the same sorts of attitudes toward other adults, and the children of others, that we commonly have toward our own children, and toward our other loved ones. I will go on to develop and defend that point further in Chapters Four and Five.

§2.1 An Example: Sarah and Ruth

> Sarah has two young children, Ruth and Penelope, who are playing in their living room. Sarah is talking to her friend Beth on the couch. They are chatting away, cupping their coffees, focused on one another, but occasionally glancing over to check on the girls.
>
> There is suddenly a scream and crash. Sarah and Ruth both gasp and turn. Sarah sees shattered glass, her wailing younger daughter, Penelope, and the hint of a smile on Ruth's face. That smile disappears as Ruth looks toward her mother, who yells "Ruth, what did you do?!"
>
> Ruth, who is a year older and taller than Penelope, has smashed a glass paperweight, which she grabbed off a nearby bookshelf, onto the floor. A few shards of glass have pierced her sister in the shin.
>
> Penelope screamed at the sight of her sister about to throw the glass, and she continues to wail from the pain and fright of the glass in her shin, with blood dripping to her ankles. As Sarah rushes over to Penelope, she sees her daughter's bloody shin and yells "Ruth, look at what you've done!" Ruth looks worried, and glances toward the open door to the kitchen, the nearest way out of the living room. But she remains in place, whether from fear or fascination.
>
> Sarah's friend Beth is a retired nurse. She has swiftly followed Sarah over to Penelope. "Let me take care of her," Beth says gently, placing a hand on her friend's shoulder. Sarah, who is kneeling by Penelope, presses Beth's hand. Beth kneels down and inspects Penelope's shin. "Come her, sweetie," Beth says as she lifts Penelope, putting one arm under her shoulders and the other under her knees. "You'll be okay," she says with assurance. "I'll clean your shin and you'll be playing again in no time." Beth smiles at Penelope, who ceases wailing and responds with an uncertain smile of her own. But as Beth takes her toward the kitchen, Penelope looks back and glares at her sister.
>
> Sarah watches them go and then turns to Ruth, who looks defiant. But inchoate shame and guilt seem to Sarah to show through on Ruth's face. "Ruth, you know you're not supposed to touch the objects on that shelf. And I know you know better than to throw them," Sarah says in a stern voice. She waits for a response from Ruth, who remains silent and avoids her mother's eyes. Sarah takes a breath and sighs. Her agitation lessens. "Ruth, did you mean to break the glass?" Sarah asks her daughter in a softer voice. Sarah waits intently, her face full of worry. For a moment, Ruth's face remains inscrutable. But her defiance soon yields to tears.

Sarah's response to Ruth's conduct involves a complex plurality of attitudes both at a given time and over time. Penelope's attitudes and Beth's attitudes toward Ruth, and Ruth's attitudes toward herself, are similarly complex. And much about the scene remains undescribed. Suppose the following:

> Ruth is six or seven years old. Her ethical capacities are not fully developed. But she understands that hurting others and destroying their things is "mean," "not nice," "bad," and "wrong."
>
> Ruth meant to break the glass. She was angry that her father has been working late into the evenings recently and has not been able to see her much. Her father works as an administrator at an underfunded and understaffed hospital, and has been working long hours to keep the hospital operating. Ruth knows that the glass paperweight was given to her father for his dedication to the hospital. She knows that glass can break and that shards of glass are dangerous.
>
> Ruth was also annoyed at her sister for not sharing a game earlier. While playing with her sister in the living room with her mother and Beth, she remembered how her father would not be home before her bedtime that night, and so she would not see him until the following night. She noticed the glass paperweight and went to grab it. Without a thought for her sister, she smashed the glass into the floor at her sister's feet, giving expression to her anger at her father and her annoyance at her sister.

Consider Sarah's blaming anger toward Ruth. I suppose that, on the Minimalist Conception, Sarah's anger is fitting and warranted. Her anger is minimally fitting insofar as she correctly construes Ruth as improperly regarding Penelope, and insofar as she properly aims to respond to Ruth, holding her to account for her conduct. Sarah has no desire to harm Ruth and no desire that any harm come to her. Rather, she desires for Ruth to account for, and take responsibility for, her conduct. And even though Ruth has not acted in this way before, Ruth's smile could be sufficient evidence of her improper regard for Penelope to warrant Sarah's anger.

Some Strawsonians might question whether Ruth manifests improper regard for her sister or is blameworthy for her conduct. If this is because of Ruth's age—and the limited ethical understanding or integrity in agency that she might have at that age—let us suppose Ruth is a few years older. There must be a time in the course of becoming an ethically responsible adult when we become able to manifest or express improper regard for others in our conduct and be blameworthy. I suppose that even though Ruth's ethical understanding and integrity in agency are imperfect, she can wrong her sister and be worthy of Sarah's blaming anger, as well as her sister's blaming anger.[23]

To clarify, in supposing that Sarah's anger toward Ruth is minimally fitting, I am not claiming that its fittingness is fully and adequately assessed in terms of minimal fittingness alone. Ruth's imperfect ethical understanding and imperfect integrity in agency also matter for the fittingness of Sarah's anger.

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[23] I am not aware of any discussion by Strawsonians specifically on the fittingness of children's blaming anger.

§2.2 The Virtue Conception of Blaming Anger and Its Fittingness

On what I call *the Virtue Conception* of blaming anger and its fittingness, *the full fittingness* of our blaming anger at a given time or over time depends on whether we, in our anger, are responsive to the considerations that matter and should be important to us.

The full fittingness of Sarah's anger, for example, depends on whether she is, in her anger, responsive to what matters and is worthy of salience for her in the situation. There are various considerations that Sarah should be responsive to in the course of responding to Ruth. And I propose that some of those considerations can bear on the full fittingness of her blaming anger, not by making her anger not minimally fitting, but rather by calling for other attitudes that should inform, qualify, or even supersede her anger, if she is to correctly construe and properly aim to respond to what matters and is worthy of salience for her in the situation. Among such considerations are Ruth's own good, Ruth's imperfect ethical understanding and imperfect integrity in agency, the sources of Ruth's conduct, and the development of Ruth's ethical character, as well as Penelope's good and her common good with Ruth.

I will call such considerations, which bear on the full fittingness of our blaming anger, but not on its minimal fittingness, *qualifying considerations*. Qualifying considerations for an attitude call for us to hold what I will call *qualifying attitudes*, which should inform, qualify, or even supersede that attitude, so that we more correctly construe and properly aim to respond to the object of that attitude as a whole. And so, qualifying considerations for an attitude bear on its full fittingness by bearing on whether and how correctly we construe and properly aim to respond to its object as a whole.[24]

The full fittingness of Sarah's blaming anger, for example, depends on whether and how her anger is informed, qualified, or superseded by qualifying attitudes, so that she correctly construes and properly aims to respond to what matters and is worthy of salience for her as a whole. Sarah is greatly concerned to understand what Ruth's conduct indicates about her regard for Penelope and to

[24] See Brian Penrose (2010) on what he calls "type-3 considerations." Here Penrose is following Watson (1987), who distinguishes between "type-1 pleas" and "type-2 pleas" in explicating Strawson's (1962) discussion of different types of "pleas" we can make that bear on blameworthiness. For Penrose, type-3 considerations are neither (type-1) excusing considerations nor (type-2) justifying considerations. Rather, type-3 considerations make certain attitudes of understanding and concern toward wrongdoers appropriate without making blaming attitudes unfitting (453). Penrose claims that failing to be responsive to such considerations, and failing to have the attitudes that they make appropriate, constitutes a failing of the virtue of humility, and we would be better people if we were responsive to them (434, 437-438). I think Penrose would affirm the distinction I make between minimal fittingness and full fittingness and the notions of qualifying considerations and qualifying attitudes that I offer.

understand the sources of her attitudes toward Penelope. Sarah is also greatly concerned to facilitate the development of Ruth's ethical character, not only for Penelope's sake or for the sake of others whom Ruth might wrong, but also in part for Ruth's own sake. In all this, Sarah is vividly aware of what is at stake in how she responds to Ruth. Sarah's concerns are responsive to what matter most and is most worthy of her concern. And her concerns inform how she initially reacts to and scolds Ruth, as well as how she goes on to engage Ruth more calmly, yet sternly, in conversation.

Sarah is deeply concerned for Ruth to have a good relationship with her sister and to have good relationships with others, and such relationships require her to have proper regard for them. Sarah wants her daughter to live a good life, and, as I proposed in Chapter Two, properly regarding others is an essential and supremely important part of such a life. In other words, Sarah has a deepened form of sympathetic concern for Ruth, which is informed by the Platonic Attitude. Sarah's aims in responding to Ruth's conduct are informed by that concern. And that concern, and the attitudes that this concern disposes her to, inform the quality of her blaming anger—affecting how she practically reasons and is disposed to form beliefs and intentions to act in such anger.

Sarah's sense of Ruth's ethical development as imperfect, ongoing, and dependent on others also informs her sense of the sources of Ruth's conduct and her sense of what is at stake in how she responds to Ruth. Sarah appreciates that Ruth's ethical understanding and her capacity to conduct herself in light of her ethical understanding are imperfect and need fostering. Ruth needs to continue to learn what she owes others by way of regard and how to acknowledge her own wrongful conduct, including how to make apologies and amends. Ruth also needs to continue to learn what the attitudes of others toward her mean. She needs, for example, to learn what her mother's anger and disappointment mean. If she does not understand that her mother's anger and disappointment are only temporary and narrowly focused, Ruth might, for example, repress her inchoate shame and guilt and deny the wrongfulness of her conduct out of fear.

Sarah understands that she needs to clarify for Ruth the meaning of her scolding. She might tell Ruth, "I scold you so that you learn to behave better, not because I want you to be upset. I love and care about you and your sister. You need to tell Penelope that you're sorry so that she knows that you love and care about her too." In this, Sarah hopes to enable Ruth to appreciate why, and the way in which, she is upset with her. Sarah also hopes to enable Ruth to appreciate that feeling ashamed or guilty at wronging Penelope should also be narrowly focused. Sarah wants Ruth to appreciate that she is not bad as a whole because of what she has done, and that she can make apologies and amends, and so be forgiven by and reconciled with her sister.

Because we have limited resources of attention and consideration, what is worth our attending to and considering at a given time or over time is an importantly holistic matter. Our different affective attitudes can make certain considerations salient to us to the exclusion of others. And because the considerations that some affective attitudes make salient to us can be more or less worthy of salience than those which other affective attitudes make salient to us, some affective attitudes can be contrastively more or less fitting compared to others.

For example, Sarah's anger toward Ruth could be unfitting insofar as her focus in anger is on considerations that are not worthy of salience for her, or are less worthy of salience for her than other considerations, which other affective attitudes would make salient to her. Suppose that Beth had not been with Sarah when Ruth injured Penelope. If Sarah's anger toward Ruth were too intense, or too intense for too long, such that her anger precludes her from focusing on Penelope and her injury, Sarah's anger would not only be morally bad, or have morally bad consequences. Her anger would be unfitting, or at least less fitting than less intense anger would be. That is because, in her anger, she would misconstrue the importance of responding to Ruth in comparison with responding to Penelope. What would make Sarah's anger unfitting would not be that Ruth is not worthy of blaming anger in any form at any time. Rather, Sarah's anger would misconstrue when and how Ruth's wrongful conduct is worthy of the sort of attention that she, in her anger, gives it.

Similarly, if Sarah's anger precludes her from striving to better understand Ruth's wrongful conduct, or precludes her from striving to facilitate Ruth's ethical development, in part for Ruth's own sake, her anger would be less than fully fitting, if not unfitting. She would not, in her anger, attend to and consider what is most worthy of her consideration. Because blaming anger tends to preclude us from striving to better understand those at whom we are angered, and tends to preclude us from acting out of concern for them, correctly construing and properly aiming to respond to them in light of their wrongful conduct calls for us to be mindful of these tendencies and counter them.

The way in which Ruth's wrongful conduct is worthy of salience for Sarah can also change over time, such that the fittingness of Sarah's attitudes toward Ruth can change over time, including the sort of blaming anger that is fitting for her to have, if any. In other words, changes in what is worthy of salience for her can enable or disable, or increase or decrease, the fittingness of different forms of anger for her. In initially reacting to Ruth in anger, Sarah's anger prepares her to intervene, defend Penelope, and hold Ruth to account for her conduct. But over time, as Sarah forms beliefs about what happened, or what could have happened, and forms intentions about how to respond to Ruth, her initial anger changes. Its intensity fittingly lessens, and her focus fittingly widens.

As I have noted, for Sarah to correctly construe Ruth's conduct toward Penelope calls for her to have a complex plurality of attitudes in the course of responding. And those attitudes can be mixed. For example, Sarah can be appropriately indignant toward Ruth and appropriately feel badly for her, either at a given time or over time. Sarah can appropriately pity her for the distress she has suffered in not having her father around, which contributed to her conduct. In feeling sorry for her, Sarah correctly construes Ruth's distress as a misfortune worthy of her attention and consideration. But Sarah can also be appropriately indignant toward Ruth. Her indignation and pity can both be fitting. Indignation and pity can be qualifying attitudes for one another.

In having such mixed attitudes toward Ruth—either by alternating between feeling them, or by feeling them to some extent at the same time—Sarah need not be ambivalent about how to feel toward Ruth. Her pity and her indignation are responsive to distinct aspects of Ruth's conduct. Her pity and indignation are not contrary responses to the same aspects. But Sarah could be ambivalent in how to feel about Ruth, in that she could be unsure about when or to what extent she should focus on Ruth's wrongful conduct compared to her distress. In this, she would be unsure about which is more worthy of salience for her at a given time or over time compared to the other. Sarah could also be ambivalent in how to act toward Ruth. She could, for example, be unsure about whether or when to express or act on her indignation by scolding Ruth compared to expressing or acting on her pity by consoling Ruth. And both of those forms of ambivalence—ambivalence about how to feel and ambivalence about how to act—can be fitting. Such ambivalence can reflect that we correctly construe what matters and that we properly aim to respond. As Talbot Brewer (2009) remarks, such ambivalence can be "a sign of clarity and comprehensiveness in our appreciation of value" (30).

Sarah could also be ambivalent in a third way. She could be ambivalent about whether the distress Ruth has suffered makes indignation toward her unfitting. She could be ambivalent, for example, about whether the distress Ruth has suffered excuses her conduct by changing the meaning of her conduct toward Penelope.

Whether that distress excuses Ruth is a difficult issue. To my mind, there are clearer and less clear cases wherein the distress we suffer can excuse our conduct by changing its meaning—that is, by changing what forms of regard we manifest in our conduct toward others, or by changing what expectations or demands for regard toward us are reasonable. Our attitudes should be responsive to that lack of clarity. I will return to discuss issues of mixed attitudes and ambivalence—including those regarding our reasonable expectations and demands for regard—in Chapter Four.

Let me briefly return to discuss issues regarding "considerations of the wrong sort." Recall the example of my envious neighbor from Section One. Suppose that in responding to my neighbor's wrongful conduct toward me, I come to believe that cultivating a disposition to overly intense, seemingly unfitting blaming anger toward him could bring him to acknowledge its wrongfulness and enforce standards of external conduct against him, such that he does not insult me or others from envy. Suppose I am justified in this belief, and suppose that my overly intense anger is justified as well. How should we assess the full fittingness of my overly intense, seemingly unfitting blaming anger, if we suppose that I am, in virtue of my justified aims in such anger, also seemingly responsive to what should matter to me, and what is seemingly worthy of salience for me, in responding to him?

As I discussed in Chapter Two, §3.3, cases of wrong sorts of reasons can be difficult to assess. Here is how I am inclined to assess such cases though. To begin, if my anger would not be minimally fitting, then my anger would not be fully fitting. Minimal fittingness is necessary for full fittingness. And so, if, in my anger, I am misconstruing how seriously wrongful my neighbor's conduct is, or I am aiming for him to feel greater self-blame than would be fitting for him to feel, then my anger would be unfitting insofar as these construals and aims are incorrect or improper.

We might nonetheless be warranted in cultivating unfitting emotions for their consequences, just as we might be warranted in holding certain false beliefs for their consequences. Our holding such false beliefs could be warranted—but not epistemically warranted. In this, our holding such false beliefs could be warranted by considerations other than those which would make them fitting. But we should understand such unfitting emotions and false beliefs as warranted in virtue of other fitting attitudes that we have in the course of responding to their objects. That is, our warrant for inducing ourselves to have those unfitting emotions or false beliefs is provided by our having other justified beliefs and aims, which those unfitting emotions or false beliefs reflect. In this way, even if we extend the context in which we are assessing our attitudes, we could assess those attitudes as responsive to what should matter to us, but we could not assess them as fitting.

§2.3 Virtues of Responsiveness to Wrongs

To assess the full fittingness of blaming anger at a given time or over time, we need a conception of what is worthy of salience for us. For that, we need a conception of what responding well or excellently to wrongdoers can call for from us in the course of responding to them. In other words, we need a conception of the virtues that matter for this.

Our conception of good parents, for example, seems to provide the background against which we assess the fittingness of parental anger and other parental attitudes toward the wrongful conduct of their children. We have conceptions of what good parents should ideally attend to and consider in responding to their children, and insofar as their anger reflects, or is constituted by, inappropriate patterns of attention and consideration, we regard their anger as unfitting. To respond well or excellently to the wrongful conduct of their children, parents need virtues of love, patience, perseverance, empathy, humanity, compassion, hope, generosity, self-respect, humility, judiciousness, fairness, tact, self-control, forgivingness, tolerance, and acceptance, among others.[25] If parents are to correctly construe and properly aim to respond to the wrongful conduct of their children, their anger needs to be informed, qualified, or even superseded by other attitudes—that is, by other emotions, beliefs, desires, patterns of attention and consideration, and so on—which reflect those virtues.

Parental attitudes to the wrongful conduct of their children, such as those which Sarah has toward her daughters, provide a paradigm, I believe, for thinking about how our various attitudes in response to wrongs can, and should, qualify one another, and how the fittingness of any given attitude depends on its place among a complex plurality of other attitudes that can be fitting and called for. In considering how adults might ideally respond to the wrongful conduct of their adult friends, I suppose that adults friends need the same sorts of virtues that parents need to ideally respond to their children. I suppose that adult strangers need many of the same virtues as well.

Many Strawsonians point to Martin Luther King, Jr. as an exemplar of virtuous responsiveness to wrongs.[26] To my mind, King is an exemplar of how our blaming anger can and should ideally be informed and qualified by various other attitudes, not only in responding to our children or other loved ones, but also in responding to mere acquaintances and strangers. His unconditional and universal love and goodwill for his fellow human beings, and his deep understanding of how human beings can come to wrong one another, profoundly informed the quality of his anger regarding serious social injustices. I suppose that his anger was not only virtuous, but also especially fitting compared

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[25] Many virtues bear on how whether and how we should be disposed to anger and think and act in anger. Following Aristotle, we might call this complex of virtues, or this complex virtue, "gentleness" or "mildness" (*NE* 4.5) Or, as Pettigrove (2012a) proposes, we might follow Christian traditions and call this virtue "meekness." Or, following the Dalai Lama (2018), we might call this virtue "patience." See Watson (2012) on the complex virtue of being "non-judgmental," which consists in appropriate generosity in interpreting the conduct of others and in being appropriately accepting of the wrongful conduct of others, such that we are not inappropriately dismissive and disdainful toward them. See Roberts (1995) and Pettigrove (2012a) on the complex virtue of "forgivingness."

[26] Cf. Watson (1987), Nussbaum (2016), and Pereboom (2021).

to the anger that many of us ordinarily feel, because his anger was informed by those other attitudes. He regarded those who were unjust as worthy of neighborly love despite their injustice. He also regarded their injustice as reflecting a lack in their ethical understanding or a lack in the integrity of their agency. In these ways, I suppose that King more correctly construed and properly aimed to respond to what matters in responding to wrongs than those who lack such love or understanding. In Chapter Five, I will return to elaborate what I call *King's Ideal* of ethical responsiveness to wrongdoers.[27]

In the remainder of this section, I will outline some considerations of virtue that can, I believe, bear on the full fittingness of our blaming anger. I will focus especially on ways in which perfecting our sympathetic concern for those wronged and for wrongdoers, perfecting our understanding of the nature and sources of wrongful conduct, and perfecting our concerns and aims in holding wrongdoers to account can bear on our blaming anger and its fittingness. In Chapters Four and Five, I will discuss these issues in greater depth.

§2.3.1 Perfecting Our Regard for Those Wronged

As I discussed in Chapter One, perfecting our sympathetic concern for others consists in part in perfecting our sense of what they are owed by way of regard from others and our sense of the seriousness of properly regarding them. Perfecting our sympathetic concern for others is thereby a part of perfecting our recognition respect for them. In turn, perfecting our sympathetic concern and recognition respect for others consists in part in perfecting our sense of what wrongdoers owe those whom they have wronged and the seriousness of their fulfilling those obligations.

Wrongdoers owe those whom they have wronged acknowledgment of the wrongfulness of their conduct. But what such acknowledgment calls for can vary, as can the ways in which such acknowledgment can be rendered. That is, what constitutes sufficient, if not ideal, acknowledgment by wrongdoers of their wrongful conduct can vary. For example, the forms of apology and amends that wrongdoers owe those whom they have wronged and can owe others can vary.[28] Perfecting our

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[27] See Ryan West (2016) for a discussion of King and the quality of his anger. I am indebted to West throughout this section for his discussion of the plurality of virtues and vices relevant to anger. For West, "The relevant concerns and correlated perceptual sensitivities [that is, the virtues relevant to anger] include not only those that make culpable offenses emotionally salient, but also those that attune the agent to factors that should rule out, mitigate, delay, or qualify anger" (882). West puts these points in terms of virtue, however, and not in terms of fittingness. See also Aristotle (*Eudemian Ethics*, 1221b).

[28] For discussion of different forms of apologies and amends, see Nick Smith (2008) and Linda Radzik (2009).

sense of what constitutes sufficient acknowledgment for wrongs also perfects our blaming anger by perfecting our sense of the conditions in which its aims are satisfied.

Part of perfecting our regard for those wronged is also perfecting our sense of their various interests and claims in regard to wrongdoers besides those of acknowledgment. Our sympathetic concern and recognition respect for them can, for example, call for our consideration of their safety and protection, their relationships and reconciliation with those who wronged them, and their own sympathetic concern and recognition respect for those who have wronged them. In light of these considerations, our proper place in responding to those who have wronged them can be limited, or be at the discretion of those wronged, in various ways. Proper sympathetic concern and recognition respect for those wronged can also call for us to acknowledge them—their dignity and worth—whether as friends or family, or simply as fellow human beings. That is, those wronged are worthy of and can be owed our affirmation of their worth and dignity in the wake of their being wronged, even if we are not those who wronged them.[29] We can owe them such solidarity.

In these ways, we can perfect our regard for those wronged by perfecting our sympathetic concern and recognition respect for them. Such concern and respect properly dispose us not only to blaming anger toward those who wrong them, but also to various other attitudes, which should inform, qualify, or even supersede our blaming anger at a given time or over time.

§2.3.2 Perfecting Our Regard for Wrongdoers

Perfecting our regard for wrongdoers is also central to perfecting our attitudes in response to wrongs. Perfecting our sympathetic concern and recognition respect for wrongdoers can, for example, correct our dispositions to improper aims in anger and correct our dispositions to express or act on our anger in various objectionable ways. Perfecting such concern and respect for them is necessary, for example, to properly consider the various harms and other consequences that holding them to account, or responding to them in various other ways, can have on them or on others. This includes our properly considering what is at stake for them and others if we happen to be mistaken in blaming them or in how we blame them. We need to properly consider those possible harms and other consequences if we are to perfect how we hold them to account or otherwise respond to them. We need to consider how to respond to them in ways that do not subject them to—or at least reduce the

[29] See Margaret Walker (2006) and Carla Bagnoli (2022) for discussion of our duties to respond to the moral distress of those wronged by providing them moral reassurance.

risk of subjecting them to—greater guilt, shame, remorse, or other harms than are appropriate, fitting, or deserved by them. We need to consider, for example, how our ways of responding to them might dispose them to despair or humiliation, either directly from our responding to them or by way of others who respond to them following on our response. That is, we should be concerned that others do not go on to respond to them inappropriately or unfittingly. We should also be concerned that their own responsiveness to being blamed does not dispose them to self-blame, fear, or hopelessness that is unfitting for them to feel. We should at least aim to limit the ways in which those whom we blame could be harmed in such ways. Whether and how we blame or otherwise respond to them in the wake of their wronging us or others should ideally reflect our consideration of such matters.

As I proposed in Chapter Two, we can perfect our attitudes of sympathetic concern and understanding for wrongdoers by holding the Platonic Attitude toward them. By perfecting our sense of how their wrongful conduct is in itself bad for them, and how properly regarding others is in itself good for them, we can perfect our ends in holding wrongdoers to account. We can understand that their proper regard for others is an essential and supremely important part of their good. And we can include their good among our ends in holding them to account. We can aim to bring them to acknowledge their wrongful conduct and properly regard others, not only for the sake of those others, but also for their own sake. And by remaining mindful of our proper concerns and ends in responding to their wrongful conduct, we can also correct our dispositions to improper aims in anger and correct our dispositions to express or act on our anger in various objectionable ways.

For example, in light of the Platonic Claim, my desire for my envious neighbor's understanding and acknowledgment—in the form of such pained responses as guilt, remorse, contrition, or shame—is a desire for something that is to his benefit, namely his proper understanding and acknowledgment of his wrongful conduct. And insofar as I should have sympathetic concern for my neighbor, I should have sympathetic concern for him to understand and acknowledge his wrongful conduct for his own sake. In light of the Platonic Claim, I should also, I believe, ideally have mixed feelings about aiming to cause, and causing, guilt, remorse, contrition, or shame, as well as fear, for example, in my neighbor. I should ideally regret having to blame him. And I should understand its necessity as a response to the lack or loss of certain common goods.[30]

[30] See Amy Olberding (2019, Ch. 8) for discussion of such mixed feelings regarding "righteous indignation."

Many Strawsonians—including McKenna, Shoemaker, and Wallace—affirm that our blaming practices, or our practices of holding one another to account, function to "foster dialogue aimed at resolution and reconciliation" and "sustain bonds of moral community" (McKenna 2012a: 169), develop the empathic capacities of others so as to support moral community (Shoemaker 2015: 111), and "reorient the parties toward norms that properly govern their interactions with each other" and "restore the value of interpersonal recognition that was damaged through the original act of wrongdoing" (Wallace 2019a: 94-95). But Strawsonians do not articulate how understanding those aims as among our proper concerns and ends in responding to wrongdoers should inform and qualify our blaming anger. Nor do Strawsonians affirm that among our proper concerns and ends in holding others to account is to develop or reform their ethical character for their own sake, as an essential and supremely important part of their own good. But such concern for wrongdoers makes a crucial difference to the spirit or manner in which we respond to them. I will return to consider the ways in which we can perfect our concerns and ends in holding wrongdoers to account in Chapter Five.

§2.3.3 Perfecting Our Understanding of the Nature and Sources of Wrongful Conduct

We can also perfect our understanding of the nature and sources of others' wrongful conduct, and our own. This involves, for example, understanding the limits of others' ethical understanding and the limits of the integrity of their agency, as well as the limits of their being in control of, or the sources of, their conduct. We can, in turn, also perfect our sensibility with regard to how to express or act on our blaming anger and other attitudes toward wrongdoers to bring them to acknowledge their wrongful conduct and properly regard others. That is, by better understanding the nature and sources of their conduct, we can better understand what is needed by them from us or from others in order for them to acknowledge and otherwise properly respond to their wrongful conduct. I will discuss these issues further in Chapter Four. But in brief, I propose that just as our attitudes of sympathetic concern and recognition respect for wrongdoers and those wronged can inform and qualify our blaming anger and thereby perfect its fittingness, so can our attitudes of understanding.

In this chapter, I argued that the Virtue Conception of blaming anger and its fittingness provides a more complete conception of the nature and fittingness of blaming anger than the Minimalist Conception. I claimed that the Virtue Conception provides a more complete conception of the nature of blaming anger—its construals and aims—and so also a more complete conception of

its fittingness. As noted in the introduction to this chapter, I believe the Virtue Conception of fittingness applies to other emotions and attitudes as well, insofar as those other emotions and attitudes consist in construing certain considerations as worthy of salience for us. The full fittingness of blaming anger depends in part on whether and how other attitudes should ideally inform, qualify, and even supersede our blaming anger in the course of our responding to wrongs. The full fittingness of other emotions and attitudes can also depend, I believe, on whether and how other attitudes are called for from us in the course of responding to their objects.

In the following chapters, I will continue to consider how our construals and aims in regard to wrongdoers can be perfected. In Chapter Four, I will focus on ways of perfecting our construals of one another's wrongful conduct in light of the limits of our agency and freedom. I will articulate how our lack of certain forms of freedom in wronging others are qualifying considerations for our blaming attitudes. These considerations call for us to hold certain qualifying attitudes toward wrongdoers, including what I will call *the Spinozan Attitude* and *the Socratic Attitude*. And in Chapter Five, I will focus on ways of perfecting our aims—our concerns and ends—in holding one another to account. There, as in Chapter Four, I will articulate other qualifying considerations and qualifying attitudes for our blaming attitudes, including what I will call *the Senecan Attitude*.

Chapter Four:
"Freedom and Understanding"

For Strawsonians, our being ethically responsible is a matter of our owing others certain forms of regard in our conduct; we wrong others when we fail to properly regard them; and we can be worthy of blaming anger and other blaming attitudes for wronging them. That, in brief, is the Strawsonian view of ethical responsibility and blameworthiness I presented in Chapters One and Two. But in those chapters, I put questions about the conditions of ethically responsible agency and blameworthiness aside. In this chapter, I turn to those questions, which include traditional questions about freedom and determinism.

In Section One of this chapter, I outline a Strawsonian view of the conditions of ethically responsible agency and blameworthiness. I agree with Strawsonians that the forms of agency and freedom that make us ethically responsible and worthy of blaming anger and certain other blaming attitudes are compatible with determinism. In other words, I agree with Strawsonians that the sorts of agential abilities, capacities, and competencies that give us ethical obligations and make us blameworthy in certain ways for failing to fulfill those obligations are compatible with determinism. In this chapter, I will not, however, develop or defend this Strawsonian view in depth. Rather, I will outline what I regard as the most promising view, and I will note some of the issues that remain for Strawsonians in developing and defending such a view.

In Chapter Three, I proposed that even if we are blameworthy for our wrongful conduct, we can also be worthy of certain non-blaming attitudes in response to that conduct. In this chapter, I argue that we can be worthy of certain non-blaming attitudes in response to our wrongful conduct in virtue of the limitations of our agency and freedom in wronging others and in virtue of how our wrongful conduct constitutes a harm for us, especially in light of the Platonic Claim that I introduced in Chapter Two. Strawsonians have not yet, I believe, satisfyingly considered how such non-blaming attitudes are called for in response to one another's wrongful conduct and how those attitudes should inform, qualify, or even supersede our blaming attitudes in the course of responding to wrongdoers.

In Sections Two and Three of this chapter, I contrast the forms of freedom that, according to Strawsonians, make us ethically responsible and blameworthy with two other ethically significant forms of freedom. I will call those other forms of freedom *ultimacy* and *normative integrity*. In brief, ultimacy is the form of freedom we would have if we were in ultimate control of, and not ultimately

subject to luck in, our character and conduct, whereas normative integrity is the form of freedom that we have when we conduct ourselves in accord with our fundamental desire for the good, which includes our properly regarding others and not wronging them. Ultimacy is also commonly called "libertarian free will," whereas there is no standard term in contemporary philosophy for normative integrity. But the notion of normative integrity has a long history in Western philosophy, which I will briefly discuss.

Although we do not need ultimacy or normative integrity to be ethically responsible and blameworthy for our wrongful conduct, I propose that our lack of these forms of freedom in wronging others matters for how we are blameworthy and for how we should ideally respond to one another's wrongful conduct. As I discussed in Chapter Three, *qualifying considerations* are considerations that bear on *the full fittingness* of our attitudes without bearing on their *minimal fittingness*. In this chapter, I claim that our lack of ultimacy and normative integrity in wronging others are qualifying considerations for our blaming anger. In other words, our lack of ultimacy and normative integrity in wronging others bears on the full fittingness of our blaming anger toward wrongdoers without making such anger not minimally fitting.

In Section Two, I propose that we should ideally hold what I will call *the Spinozan Attitude* toward one another, which consists in regarding one another as lacking ultimacy and in being disposed to various other attitudes in light of that. In Section Three, I propose that we should ideally hold what I will call *the Socratic Attitude* toward one another, which consists in regarding one another as lacking normative integrity in wronging others and in being disposed to various other attitudes in light of that. As with the Platonic Attitude, the Spinozan and Socratic Attitudes are general stances or outlooks, which should ideally dispose us to various specific attitudes—including various emotions, beliefs, desires, motives, and intentions, for example—especially in the course of responding to one another's wrongful conduct.

I propose that holding the Spinozan and Socratic Attitudes, along with the Platonic Attitude, should ideally dispose to us to what I call *attitudes of understanding* and *attitudes of sympathetic understanding* toward wrongdoers. That is because our lack of ultimacy and normative integrity in wronging others, and the harm that our wrongful conduct constitutes for us, make us worthy of such attitudes. Attitudes of understanding are responsive to the limitations of our agency in wronging others, and attitudes of sympathetic understanding are responsive to the harm that our wrongful conduct constitutes for us. In turn, attitudes of understanding and sympathetic understanding should ideally inform, qualify, or

even supersede our blaming attitudes in the course of responding to one another's wrongful conduct. These attitudes are what I, in Chapter Three, called *qualifying attitudes*.

As in Chapter Three, I will also clarify in this chapter how Strawsonians and certain skeptics regarding freedom and responsibility have recently converged in their views regarding the conditions of ethical responsibility and blameworthiness. Both Strawsonians and skeptics hold that certain blaming attitudes, such as blaming anger, can be fitting, despite determinism. In this, Strawsonians and skeptics are compatibilists. The project of articulating the conditions of ethical responsibility and blameworthiness is therefore a project for which both Strawsonians and skeptics are responsible. This means that skeptics share the difficulties faced by Strawsonians in fully developing and defending a view of those conditions. Both Strawsonians and skeptics also hold that our lack of certain forms of freedom and other limitations of our agency can matter for how we are blameworthy and for what other attitudes can be appropriate and called for toward us in light of our wrongful conduct.

In this chapter, I offer a view that, I believe, furthers the convergence among Strawsonians and skeptics by clarifying how we can be worthy of attitudes of understanding and sympathetic understanding in response to our wrongful conduct and how our being worthy of such attitudes matters for how we are blameworthy, or for the fittingness of blaming attitudes toward us.

Section One. Ethically Responsible Agency and Blameworthiness

> It is quite true, indeed tautological, that an agent can be justly blamed for an action only when he can be held morally responsible for it; and it is true that he is responsible for so acting only if he acted freely. […] But it is quite false that these requirements of justice can only be met by the satisfaction of some condition of *ultimate* responsibility which can no more be coherently stated than can the libertarian's conception of free will. Human beings, or the more judicious among them, are really quite skilled in determining whether, and to what degree, the conditions of moral responsibility are satisfied. It would be tedious to rehearse them, since this has been done again and again. So we can relax: the whole issue between determinists and libertarians is an irrelevance; and the fact that it has been so long and earnestly debated is but one more illustration of the tendency of philosophers to raise a dust and then complain that they cannot see. So do I emerge as a straight compatibilist? If so, *ainsi soit-il* [so be it].
>
> — P. F. Strawson (1998: 170)

In this section, I outline a Strawsonian view of the conditions of ethically responsible agency and blameworthiness. I begin with general conditions that most Strawsonians affirm. These conditions are along the lines of those which Strawson (1962; 1977) sketches, but contemporary Strawsonians offer more complete views of them.[1] These conditions include various agential abilities, capacities, and competencies that enable us to have obligations of regard toward others and be worthy of blaming anger and certain other blaming attitudes for failing to fulfill them.[2] These conditions notably do not include any abilities, capacities, or competencies that are incompatible with determinism. I agree with Strawsonians that, even if determinism is true, we can be ethically responsible and blameworthy in certain ways for our conduct. But I will note various issues that remain for Strawsonians in articulating the specific ways in which, and conditions in which, we can fail to fulfill our obligations of regard toward others and be blameworthy. The view I offer remains tentative, but I outline what I believe is the most plausible Strawsonian view.

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[1] See Gary Watson (1987; 2014) and Russell (2017) on the limitations of Strawson's discussion of those conditions.

[2] Strawsonians commonly call ethically responsible agency "morally accountable agency." I prefer "ethically responsible agency," however, because I believe this term can better connote how such agency involves being ethically obligated, blameworthy, and accountable.

§1.1 General Conditions of Ethically Responsible Agency and Blameworthiness

The conditions that make us ethically responsible and blameworthy are those which make our expectations and demands for regard from others reasonable, and which make certain blaming attitudes, such as blaming anger, appropriate—or specifically *fitting*—in response to violations of those expectations and demands.

According to Strawsonians, to be ethically responsible, we need to be able to conduct ourselves in light of evaluative and normative considerations, and we need to be able to reflect on and assess our values and reasons. By having such abilities, we can conduct ourselves in ways that reflect evaluative and normative attitudes, which are our own. But to be ethically responsible, we also need to be able to conduct ourselves in ways that reflect specifically *ethical* attitudes. And for that, we need to be able to conduct ourselves in light of ethical considerations. Strawsonians commonly call this condition "moral competence."[3] Moral competence is the general ability or capacity to identify and appreciate the interests of others and their claims against us.[4] That is, moral competence is the general ability or capacity for having attitudes of recognition respect and sympathetic concern for others.

To be morally competent, we need to be able to have certain "reactive attitudes" toward others, such as blaming anger. We also need to be able to understand and engage in practices that can manifest or express those attitudes. Following Strawson (1962, §5), Strawsonians call this condition "moral sense."[5] We need moral sense to be able to regard ourselves as ethically responsible, and we need to be able to regard ourselves as ethically responsible in order to be ethically responsible.[6] That is because what we expect and demand of one another by way of regard—such as attitudes of recognition respect and sympathetic concern—can only be reasonably expected and demanded from those who can regard themselves as owing others such regard. And that is because only those who can understand themselves as owing such regard can render others such regard, because such regard

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[3] Strawsonians also call this condition "normative competence." See, for example, Wallace (1994).

[4] As I discussed in Chapter One, Shoemaker (2015, Ch. 3) puts this in terms of a capacity for "identifying empathy." Such empathy includes both "evaluational empathy," which enables us to understand the values of others, and "emotional empathy," which enables us to understand the emotional cares of others. These empathic capacities enable us to identify and appreciate the claims and interests of others.

[5] See especially Russell (2017).

[6] Galen Strawson (1986) and John Fischer and Mark Ravizza (1998) call this a "subjective requirement" for responsibility.

consists in part in recognition of its being owed.[7] And we need to be able to render others such regard in order to owe them that regard. But the way in which we need to be able to appreciate or understand these reactive attitudes and engage in practices that manifest or express such attitudes is minimal. We do not, for example, need to be able to provide any philosophical theory of them. Nor do we need to think of them in any specific terms.

In sum, moral competence is a general condition of ethically responsible agency. If we are morally competent, we can intelligibly and appropriately be subject to expectations and demands for regard. That is, we can reasonably be expected and demanded to accord others certain forms of regard in our conduct. In this, our having moral competency is a necessary condition for us to owe others forms of regard in general.

But our specific obligations of regard, and the conditions in which we fail to fulfill them, are a matter of our specific ethical relations, the obligations of regard constitutive of those relations, and the specific forms of ethical agency—that is, the specific abilities, capacities, or competencies—that enable us to engage in those relations and be intelligibly and appropriately subject to those obligations. In other words, we need specific forms of ethical agency, and not only moral competency, to have specific obligations of regard toward others and be blameworthy for failing to fulfill them.

Articulating the specific forms of regard that we can reasonably expect and demand of one another, and the specific conditions in which we can be reasonably expected and demanded to accord one another those forms of regard, remains a difficult task for Strawsonians. As I noted, the view I offer in this section remains tentative and incomplete. I only provide an outline of what seems to me the most promising Strawsonian view of the conditions of ethical responsibility and blameworthiness.

My central claim in this chapter, however, is that even if—or rather, even when—we are ethically responsible and blameworthy for our conduct, we can also be worthy of various non-blaming attitudes that bear on how we are blameworthy, or on the fittingness of blaming attitudes toward us. I will turn to focus on that claim in Sections Two and Three.

In the remainder of this section, I will continue to outline a Strawsonian view of the conditions of ethical responsibility and blameworthiness by returning to and elaborating an example I introduced in Chapter Three. In considering this example, I will note some of the issues that remain for fully developing and defending this view.

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[7] See Darwall (2006) and Wallace (2019a), who hold that for us to be ethically responsible, we need to be able to understand and respond to ethical demands. Darwall refers to such demands as "second-personal reasons," and Wallace calls them "relational claims."

§1.2 Specific Conditions of Ethically Responsible Agency and Blameworthiness

Consider the example of my envious neighbor, which I introduced in Chapter Three:

> Suppose my neighbor is envious of my garden. His envy is mixed with a sense of inadequacy about his own gardening and a fear of being humiliated. His sense of self-worth is strongly dependent on his gardening. This moves him to insult me and my garden. He is not, however, aware of his envy or fear. He is not aware of them as the source of his contempt for me. And he is not aware of his contemptuous conduct as wrongful, as reflecting improper regard for me. He instead considers his conduct proper. He considers me an arrogant showoff with bad taste, who deserves to be confronted for my arrogance and bad taste. In this, he considers me to be wronging him, not the other way around. He construes me as thinking of myself as better than him, and as intent on, or at least indifferent to, humiliating him.

Suppose I feel blaming anger toward my neighbor for insulting me. What makes my neighbor owe me certain forms of regard that he fails to render me by insulting me? And what makes him worthy of my blaming anger for failing to render me that regard? In other words, what conditions would make my blaming anger toward him minimally fitting?

Suppose my neighbor is able to appreciate or understand—at least in a minimal way—various ethical expectations and demands, because he is able to appreciate or understand—at least in a minimal way—various ways in which others are worthy of his respect and concern. In turn, he is able to reflect on his own attitudes and critique them. He is able to identify with or endorse some of his attitudes and reject or disown others. And he is, in general, able to alter his conduct in light of such reflection.

That my neighbor has moral competency makes him ethically responsible for how he regards me. My having expectations and demands for regard from him is intelligible and appropriate. And he is someone toward whom such expectations and demands can be reasonably directed and addressed. But just because my neighbor has moral competency and is ethically responsible for how he regards me does not entail that he has specific obligations of regard toward me that he has failed to fulfill in his conduct. To determine whether my neighbor has failed to fulfill any ethical obligations toward me, we need to specify the attitudes that he manifests or expresses in his conduct. And we need to specify the conditions that make him blameworthy for those attitudes.

My neighbor construes me as arrogant and worthy of his contempt. In this, he is mistaken. His attitudes are not fitting. Suppose he is also unwarranted in construing me in this way. He construes

me as contemptuous because of his sense of inadequacy and fear regarding his social status. He does not construe me as contemptuous because I have expressed or manifested arrogant attitudes toward him, or because he has reliable testimony from others that I have expressed or manifested such attitudes. In this, the history of his attitudes matters for whether he is blameworthy for his conduct. If he was warranted in his contempt for me, I suppose he might not be blameworthy for insulting me, even though his contempt for me would not be fitting.

I also suppose that my neighbor wronged me by insulting me, even though he regards his conduct as proper and called for. He wronged me because he lacked proper regard for me in how he came to construe me as contemptuous. In this, my neighbor need not be aware of his conduct as wrongful to wrong me.[8] That he regards his conduct as proper or called for is instead part of what makes his conduct wrongful and blameworthy. He regards me as worthy of contempt, and he was moved to regard me as worthy of contempt in a way that reflects a lack of proper regard for me.

For my neighbor to be blameworthy for his unfitting and unwarranted attitudes toward me, what specific agential abilities, capacities, or competencies does he need to have in regard to those attitudes? For example, must he have been able to construe me correctly, as not worthy of contempt, when he insulted me? Or must he only have had the potential to have come to properly regard me? How does his specific history matter for determining his ethical obligations and blameworthiness?

Again, I suppose that we can be blameworthy for our conduct even if we fail to understand its wrongfulness, and even if we think we are properly regarding those whom we wrong. What matters for blameworthiness is not whether we understand our conduct as wrongful but whether we could and should have understood our conduct as wrongful, or whether we could be reasonably expected and demanded to regard others in ways in which we have failed to regard them. And I suppose that the history of our attitudes can matter both in determining their content and in determining the reasonableness of our expectations and demands for regard toward one another.[9]

Some philosophers hold that blameworthiness can only originate in *akratic* responses to ethical considerations.[10] Some of those philosophers hold that *occurrent akrasia* is necessary for underived

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8 In technical terms, our *de dicto* awareness of the wrongfulness of our conduct is not needed for us to be blameworthy for that conduct. Our *occurrent de dicto* awareness of its wrongfulness is especially unnecessary. See Nomy Arpaly (2003, Ch. 3) and Matthew Talbert (2013) for further discussion.

9 As Watson (2019) notes, deriving blameworthiness for present attitudes from past blameworthy attitudes can, however, be "mind-bogglingly convoluted" (234). And I can only agree.

10 See, for example, Gideon Rosen (2003) and Neil Levy (2011). Their view is commonly called "Internalism."

blameworthiness—that is, we need to be consciously aware of conducting ourselves wrongfully. Other philosophers hold that *dispositional akrasia* is sufficient for underived blameworthiness—that is, we only need a dispositional belief that our conduct is wrongful, not an occurrent belief.

I do not believe that blameworthiness can only originate in akratic responses to ethical considerations. For example, I suppose that my neighbor could be blameworthy for insulting me even though he was not conducting himself akratically when he insulted me, and even if he did not respond akratically in his relevant prior conduct. He might never have been aware of his insecurity and fear, or his dispositions to such attitudes, which disposed him to form his contemptuous attitudes toward me. But I suppose that he can nonetheless be blameworthy for manifesting and expressing those attitudes in his conduct. And that is because he has the sorts of abilities, capacities, and competencies that make certain ethical expectations and demands toward him reasonable, and so make him blameworthy for not fulfilling those expectations and demands.

I should also note that I suppose we can be blameworthy for attitudes that do not reflect our "real" or "deep" selves, or our considered or firmly held ethical beliefs and desires. That our improper attitudes do not reflect our considered or firmly held ethical beliefs and desires can matter, however, for how we are blameworthy for those improper attitudes. This is because our considered or firmly held ethical beliefs and desires might reflect at least some proper regard for others, and so we might not entirely lack the forms of regard that we owe them.[11]

I believe that specifying the agential abilities, capacities, or competencies that we need in specific instances for certain ethical expectations and demands to be reasonable, and so for us to be blameworthy for not fulfilling them, is the most difficult remaining issue for Strawsonians. And I unfortunately cannot offer a fully satisfying view of such conditions. To borrow from Watson (2019), "I am still in the briar patch" (233). At least I am not alone. Here I will offer only a few further remarks.

Suppose determinism is true. There is a sense in which my neighbor could not have regarded me differently. He was casually determined to regard me with unwarranted contempt. There are other senses, however, in which he could have regarded me differently. He had the general abilities, capacities, and competencies to understand or appreciate the sort of attitudes that he had toward me as unwarranted and wrongful, only he did not regard his own attitudes toward me as unwarranted and wrongful. He did not understand or appreciate his own attitudes for what they were.

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[11] For further discussion of our responsibility for our "shallow selves," see Fernando Rudy-Hiller (2020), Samuel Reis-Dennis (2018), and Watson (2019: 236-237).

My neighbor might also be causally determined to not acknowledge his attitudes for what they were. That is, he might never acknowledge their wrongfulness. And if determinism is true, there is a sense in which he cannot acknowledge their wrongfulness. He lacks *the causal-historical potential* to understand and appreciate his attitudes for what they were. But there is another sense in which he has the general abilities and capacities such that he could come to understand and appreciate his attitudes as wrongful. For example, there is, for us, at least the epistemic possibility. We do not know whether he can or will come to understand and appreciate his attitudes as wrongful. There are various ways of responding to him that might, for all we know, bring him to acknowledge their wrongfulness. And so, for all we know, he has the causal-historical potential to, and will be causally determined to, acknowledge their wrongfulness.

I agree with Strawsonians that for us to be blameworthy for our conduct, there need not have been the *causal-historical possibility* that we could have conducted ourselves differently. What matters is whether we should have conducted ourselves differently. The claim that we *should have* conducted ourselves differently, however, seems to imply that we *could have*. But I agree with Strawsonians that the relevant sense of "could have" is not the sense in which there was the causal-historical possibility of our conducting ourselves differently. Again, if determinism is true, there was no such possibility. Given the prior states of the world and the laws of nature, there were no alternative causal-historical possibilities. In this, I am suggesting that our obligations of regard can exceed our *causal-historical abilities* or *causal-historical capacities* to fulfill them.[12]

But, again, there are other senses in which we "could have" conducted ourselves differently, other senses in which there was a "possibility" of conducting ourselves differently, and other senses in which we had the "ability" or "capacity" to conduct ourselves differently. And I agree with Strawsonians that those senses are the senses that matter for whether we are worthy of certain blaming attitudes, such as blaming anger. Those are the senses that matter for whether we can be subject to reasonable expectations and demands to conduct ourselves differently. Those are senses in which, given our moral competency and our specific histories, we can be reasonably expected and demanded to accord others certain forms of regard.

I should also reiterate here that our warrant for our blaming attitudes is distinct from their fittingness. Our blaming attitudes can be warranted even if those attitudes are unfitting. (Our attitudes can also be fitting without being warranted.) For our blaming anger toward others to be warranted,

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[12] Pamela Hieronymi (2021) describes this as our lacking "moral freedom," and she describes the possibility of our being blameworthy even though we lack moral freedom as a secular form of "original sin" (247).

and for us to appropriately hold them to account for their conduct, we need to justifiably believe that they could have the causal-historical ability or capacity to acknowledge the wrongfulness of their conduct and to render others the forms of regard that we expect and demand of them. But for us to be justified in that belief, they need not have that ability or capacity.

We might still wonder, "But why do those conditions make blaming anger minimally fitting? And why is the causal-historical possibility of our fulfilling our ethical obligations not necessary?"

At this point, Strawson would warn us of "over-intellectualizing" the facts, and warn us of seeking *justification* for what is to be *acknowledged*.[13] I suppose Strawson would claim that the fact that certain forms of regard constitute improper forms of regard is a fact to be acknowledged, not justified. Our expectations and demands for certain forms of regard from others who have certain general abilities, capacities, and competencies are reasonable, and their failing to render those forms of regard can make them blameworthy. These are fundamental, or basic, ethical facts. Given such abilities, capacities, and competencies, we are appropriately subject to certain basic expectations and demands regarding our responsiveness to certain ethical considerations. And our failing to properly respond to those ethical considerations constitutes an original, or underived, form of improper regard, for which we can be blameworthy. Other forms of improper regard can, in turn, derive from those original forms.

I am inclined to believe that Strawson is correct, or nearly so. In light of what blaming anger consists in, I do not believe the conditions that make us worthy of blaming anger include the causal-historical possibility of fulfilling our ethical obligations. The conditions that make certain expectations and demands for regard toward us *reasonable*, or *appropriate*—in a certain intuitive sense—are enough.[14]

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[13] See Strawson (1962) for warnings about "over-intellectualizing" the facts. See also Strawson's (1985) appeal to Wittgenstein: "It is so difficult to find the *beginning*. Or better: it is difficult to begin at the beginning. And not to try to go further back" (*On Certainty*, §471; quoted in Strawson 1985: 24). Consider Watson's (1987) remark that, for Strawson, our holding one another responsible is "as primitive in human life as friendship and animosity, sympathy and antipathy. It rests on needs and concerns that are not so much to be justified as acknowledged" (223). On how our fundamental attitudes are to be acknowledged, not justified, see also Stanley Cavell (1969; 1979, Part Four).

[14] See Shoemaker (2017), who follows Strawson by offering a "response-dependent" view of the conditions of blameworthiness on which our blaming attitudes can be basically fitting in response to certain conditions.

Note that I have not yet explicitly mentioned any forms of *freedom* or *control* as conditions for ethically responsible agency and blameworthiness.[15] To clarify: for Strawsonians, the notions of freedom and control that are relevant for ethically responsible agency and blameworthiness are those which enable us to have attitudes of regard for others and manifest or express attitudes in our conduct. And for Strawsonians, these forms of freedom and control are compatible with determinism.[16] I have already mentioned some of them, but I put them in terms of our "abilities" or "capacities" to conduct ourselves in light of ethical considerations, and thereby manifest or express our ethical attitudes in our conduct. In Sections Two and Three, I will consider other important ethical notions of freedom.

In this section, I have outlined a Strawsonian view of the conditions of ethically responsible agency and blameworthiness.[17] Although such conditions call for further articulation and justification, I agree with Strawsonians that such conditions are often fulfilled. Most of us owe one another various forms of regard and can be worthy of blaming anger and certain other blaming attitudes for failing to render others such regard. But I will put aside the task of further articulating and justifying these conditions, which is a task on which many Strawsonians are presently working.[18]

To conclude, I should note once more that skeptics, insofar as they agree with Strawsonians that blaming anger can be fitting, also owe such a view of the conditions of ethically responsibility and blameworthiness. Skeptics therefore share the difficult task of specifying the abilities and capacities and other conditions that make us ethically responsible and blameworthy.

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[15] Many Strawsonians refer to "control" conditions rather than "freedom" conditions. Some also refer to "ownership" or "authenticity" conditions regarding our attitudes and actions rather than, or in addition to, "control" or "freedom" conditions. And some also refer to "epistemic" conditions. All of these conditions, I believe, are best understood as conditions on reasonable expectations and demands for regard, or on our quality of regard. For discussion, see Scanlon (2008, Ch. 4), and Shoemaker (2015, Conclusion).

[16] See, for example, Scanlon (2008: 178), Shoemaker (2015: 224), and Wallace (1994: 1). Among Strawsonians, Darwall (2006) is a notable exception—he might hold an incompatibilist view.

[17] The view I have outlined combines aspects of so-called "Capacitarian Views" and "Quality of Will Views." As with many philosophers who affirm "Internalism," many philosophers who affirm Capacitarian and Quality of Will Views are not focused on specifying the conditions for the fittingness for blaming anger. They often have in mind other forms of blame, which involve certain objectionable conceptions of desert. What their views are regarding the conditions for the fittingness of blaming anger is not therefore clear.

[18] For recent discussions of the issues that I considered in this section, see the essays in Robichaud and Wieland (2017) and in Rodriguez-Blanco and Pavlakos (2021). See also Rudy-Hiller (2022).

Section Two. Ultimacy and the Spinozan Attitude

> Most of those who have written of the affects, and men's way of living, seem to treat, not of natural things, which follow the common laws of Nature, but of things which are outside Nature. Indeed they seem to conceive man in Nature as a dominion within a dominion. For they believe that man disturbs rather than follows, the order of Nature, that he has absolute power over his actions, and that he is determined only by himself. And they attribute the cause of human impotence and inconstancy, not to the common power of Nature, but to I know not what vice of human nature, which they therefore bewail, or laugh at, or disdain, or (as usually happens) curse.
>
> — Spinoza, *Ethics*, III, Preface

> I took great pains not to laugh at human actions, or mourn them, or curse them, but only to understand them.
>
> — Spinoza, *Political Treatise,* Chapter 1, Introduction, §4

In Section One, I outlined a Strawsonian view of the conditions of ethically responsible agency and blameworthiness, including the forms of freedom that make us ethically responsible and blameworthy for our wrongful conduct. In this section, I consider another important ethical notion of freedom, which I will follow Paul Russell (2017) in calling *ultimacy*. Ultimacy is the form of freedom we would have if we were in ultimate control of, and not ultimately subject to luck in, our character and conduct.

As I noted in Section One, Strawson and other Strawsonians deny that we need ultimacy to be ethical responsible and blameworthy. For Strawson, the notion of ultimacy is incoherent, and therefore our lack of ultimacy is irrelevant to the fittingness of certain of our blaming attitudes, such as blaming anger. Strawson seems to acknowledge, however, that our lack of ultimacy is relevant to the fittingness of certain of our blaming attitudes, which involve objectionable notions of desert.[19] But Strawson puts those objectionable blaming attitudes aside. His focus is on the fittingness of our blaming attitudes that do not involve objectionable notions of desert.

Contrary to Strawson, I believe that the notion of ultimacy is coherent in a way that makes our lack of ultimacy matter for the fittingness of our blaming anger: the claim that we are ultimately

[19] Cf. Strawson (1980: 265).

subject to luck in our conduct is coherent, even if there is no coherent way for us to have control of our conduct in a way that precludes our ultimate subjection to luck. In this section, I propose that although we do not need ultimacy to be ethical responsibility and blameworthy for our wrongful conduct, our lack of ultimacy matters for the fittingness of blaming attitudes toward us by making us worthy of certain non-blaming attitudes, which should inform, qualify, or even supersede those blaming attitudes in the course of responding to our wrongful conduct. In elaborating this proposal, I will appeal to similar views proposed by other Strawsonians.

§2.1 The Spinozan Claim and the Spinozan Attitude

Spinoza is among the most prominent philosophers in the history of Western philosophy to claim that we lack ultimacy. I will therefore call the claim that we lack ultimacy *the Spinozan Claim*. Along with Strawson and other Strawsonians, I affirm the Spinozan Claim, and I will assume its truth in what follows. I will assume that we are ultimately subject to luck in our character and conduct.

In light of the Spinozan Claim, I propose that we should ideally hold what I call *the Spinozan Attitude* toward one another. As with the Platonic Attitude, the Spinozan Attitude is a general stance or outlook, which consists in our being disposed to regard and respond to one another in certain ways. In holding the Spinozan Attitude, we should ideally be disposed to certain attitudes of humility, and to what I call *attitudes of understanding* and *attitudes of sympathetic understanding* toward one another, especially in responding to one another's wrongful conduct. We should also ideally be disposed to a mix of certain optimistic and pessimistic attitudes regarding our agency and its limitations.

§2.2 Attitudes of Humility

We all desire to live and fare well. But our lack of ultimacy means that we are all ultimately fortunate or unfortunate regarding how well or badly we live and fare. Insofar as we live and fare well, we are fortunate, subject to good luck. Insofar as we live and fare badly, we are unfortunate, subject to bad luck. Our lack of ultimacy means that we lack ultimate control over whether we conduct ourselves well or badly, including whether we properly regard others or not, and whether we otherwise fare well or badly. Recognition of how we are all ultimately subject to luck in how we live and fare should, I propose, humble us.

In responding to one another's wrongful conduct, I believe we should have *epistemic humility*, which is humility in regard to the correctness of our construals and our warrant for them, including

the correctness and warrant for our beliefs, desires, emotions, and other intentional attitudes. We should also have epistemic humility about the correctness of our ethical outlook and the correctness of our attitudes toward the ethical character and conduct of others. We should acknowledge the possible limitations of our understanding of these matters and keep these possible limitations in mind. To have epistemically humility is to properly consider those possibilities and not neglect them.[20]

But the sort of humility that the Spinozan Attitude should dispose us to is what I will call *agential humility*, which is humility regarding the limits of our agency. Among Strawsonians, Scanlon, for example, proposes that we should have such humility, especially in responding to wrongdoers. Scanlon (1988) claims that although blaming attitudes, such as blaming anger, can be appropriate toward wrongdoers, and although we can be justified in inflicting certain forms of suffering on wrongdoers, "in justifying these sufferings, and inflicting them, we have to say not 'You asked for this' but 'There but for the grace of God go I'" (216). Scanlon (2008) describes this attitude as reflecting "a sense of arbitrariness" in how our lives are subject to luck (192, n. 61).[21]

Simply put, how we are affected by luck is not deserved by us. And so, although our subjection to luck does not preclude our being blameworthy for our conduct, our lack of ultimacy matters for how we should ideally regard and respond to wrongdoers. Recognition of our lack of ultimacy calls for us to hold attitudes of humility that should inform, qualify, or even supersede our blaming attitudes in the course of responding to them. Our humility regarding our subjection to luck should, I propose, also dispose us to various attitudes of understanding and attitudes of sympathetic understanding, especially toward wrongdoers.

§2.3 Attitudes of Understanding

Attitudes of understanding toward wrongdoers include desires to understand the nature and causes of one another's wrongful conduct and beliefs about the nature and causes of such conduct. In the course of responding to one another's wrongful conduct, we should be disposed to such attitudes of understanding independently of the Spinozan Attitude. But the Spinozan Attitude should, I propose, dispose us to certain deepened forms of these attitudes.

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[20] The virtue of epistemic humility in regard to our ethical attitudes contrasts with various vices, including the vice that Watson (2012), for example, calls "being judgmental," which is the vice of being overly confident, and not generous enough, in our construals of the character and conduct of others.

[21] Cf. Scanlon (1998: 294).

The Spinozan Attitude is, I propose, essential to fully understanding how wrongful conduct comes about—as a matter of causes that are not in our ultimate control, and so as a matter of luck. The Spinozan Attitude should dispose us to inquire into the nature and causes of one another's wrongful conduct, framing both our inquiry and our deliberations about how to respond to one another's wrongful conduct in light of our understanding of its nature and causes. The Spinozan Attitude should, for example, dispose us to deepen our general understanding of the individual, social, and historical causes of our character and conduct, as well as our understanding of specific instances.

Responding to wrongdoers with attitudes of understanding can, in turn, perfect our blaming attitudes toward them. As Bruce Waller (2014) remarks, in feeling blaming anger toward others, we commonly have an overly individualistic and overly present focus, and we are reluctant to acknowledge the social and historical sources of wrongful conduct (209, 240).[22] This reluctance inhibits our inquiry into and understanding of the nature and sources of one another's wrongful conduct, as well as our inquiry into and understanding of how to foster relations of proper regard with one another (47). Holding the Spinozan Attitude toward wrongdoers can correct the epistemic and motivational vices of blaming anger by disposing us to attitudes of understanding.

§2.4 Attitudes of Sympathetic Understanding

To have sympathetic understanding for wrongdoers is to regard them with a sense of regret, compassion, pity, or even grief, in recognition of the harm that their wrongful conduct constitutes for them. To have sympathetic understanding for wrongdoers reflects our sympathetic concern for them and our holding the Platonic Attitude toward them. Again, to hold the Platonic Attitude toward them is, in part, to regard their properly regarding others, and not wronging them, as an essential and supremely important part of their living and having a good life.

Holding the Spinozan Attitude toward wrongdoers informs our sense of the harm that their wrongful conduct constitutes for them as unfortunate for them, or even tragic, if their wrongs are serious. In wronging others, we are subject to luck, which makes the harm that our wrongful conduct constitutes for us a misfortune for us. This misfortune makes attitudes of regret, compassion, pity, or even grief toward us fitting.

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[22] See José Medina (2012) on what he calls "resistant imagination." Medina claims that those who are privileged are commonly ignorant of their privilege and resist acquiring truths about or acknowledging their privilege, especially the ways in which their privilege—and others' lack of privilege—is a matter of luck.

I propose that having proper sympathetic concern for others—and holding the Platonic and Spinozan Attitudes toward them—should ideally dispose us to such attitudes. This is because the harm that wronging others constitutes for us is *undeserved* by us, in the sense that none of us deserve to become wrongdoers. None of us deserve such bad luck. But that harm is not undeserved by us in the sense that we should not, given our wrongful conduct, be subject to such harm. For such harm consists just in the harm of wronging others.

Consider the following passage from Joseph Butler (1729):

> [T]hough injury, injustice, oppression, the baseness of ingratitude, are the natural objects of indignation, or if you please resentment, as before explained; yet they are likewise objects of compassion, as they are their own punishment, and without repentance will for ever be so. No one ever did a designed injury to another, but at the same time he did a much greater to himself. If therefore we would consider things justly, such [a] one is, according to the natural course of affections, an object of compassion, as well as of displeasure: and to be affected really in this manner, I say really, in opposition to shew and pretense, argues the true greatness of mind. (9.27)

As I discussed in Chapters One, Two, and Three, I believe we commonly have such attitudes of sympathetic understanding in response to the wrongful conduct of our loved ones. I propose that these attitudes can be appropriate and called for toward others as well. And the Spinozan Attitude can, I believe, bring that more fully into view by deepening our sense of the misfortune that wrongful conduct constitutes for wrongdoers.

Beginning at least with Socrates and Plato—or with Euripides, their near contemporary—attitudes of sympathetic understanding, informed by the Platonic Attitude, have been regarded as appropriate or even called for toward others, including those with whom we are not close. In Plato's *Gorgias*, Socrates claims that no one, including a ruler, such as Archelaus of Macedon, can be judged as living and faring well if they are unjust. Socrates claims that those who are unjust are worthy of pity, since being unjust is the worst of all evils (469a-b, 470d-e). And in Euripides' *Medea*, the Chorus pities Medea for murdering her own children. Consider the Roman Stoic Epictetus's remarks on Medea:

> It is because the very gratification of her passion and the taking of vengeance on her husband she regards as more profitable than the saving of her children. "Yes, but she is deceived." Show her clearly that she is deceived, and she will not do it; but so long as you do not show

> it, what else has she to follow but that which appears to her to be true? Nothing. Why, then, are you angry with her, because the poor woman has gone astray in the greatest matters, and has been transformed from a human being into a viper? Why do you not, if anything, rather pity her? As we pity the blind and the deaf, why do we not pity those who have been made blind and deaf in their governing faculties? (*Discourses*, 1.28)

In Section Three, I will return to discuss how ethical ignorance and dis-integrity in our agency can also make us worthy of pity and other attitudes of sympathetic understanding for wronging others.

For a relatively recent literary example of sympathetic understanding for wrongdoers informed by the Platonic Attitude, consider Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* (1866). Raimond Gaita describes how Sonya's pity for Raskolnikov exemplifies Socrates' view in Plato's *Gorgias*—that is, Socrates' affirmation of what I have called the Platonic Claim.[23] Raskolnikov confesses to Sonya that he murdered Alyona, the pawnbroker, and Alyona's sister, Lizaveta. In feeling pity for Raskolnikov, Sonya appreciates the profound harm Raskolnikov has done to himself by murdering them: "What, what have you done to yourself! […] No one, no one in the whole world, is unhappier than you are now!" (Part Five, Ch. 4).

To clarify, Sonya's pity for Raskolnikov is not only pity for his suffering from remorse. Her pity is also, and more importantly, pity for the harm that he has done himself just in becoming a murderer. Her exclamation that no one is "unhappier" than he is now is about his individual good, or *eudaimonia*, not merely his subjective unhappiness. In this, her pity for Raskolnikov would be fitting even if he did not feel remorse. (And whether he genuinely feels remorse at this point in the novel is suspect.) Sonya's pity for him would be even more fitting, and her feeling greater pity would be fitting, if he lacked remorse, because his lacking remorse would be worthy of greater pity.

In Chapter Two, I discussed how some Strawsonians affirm a form of the Platonic Claim—according to which properly regarding others is in itself good for us, wronging others is in itself bad for us, and properly regarding others, and not wronging them, is an essential and supremely important part of our good—but few Strawsonians discuss how our wrongful conduct can make us worthy of the sympathy of others. And Strawsonians who do discuss that do not appeal to the Platonic Claim. Consider Angela Smith's (2021) remarks on the tragedy of being vicious and our subjection to luck:

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[23] See Gaita (2000: 32-33; 2004: 36-37).

> It is profoundly sad that some people, perhaps due to their natural constitution, their unfortunate social circumstances, or their horrible upbringing, find themselves unable to take seriously the needs, interests, and welfare of others, for they are likely to live lives of intense solitude, emptiness, and isolation. […] This is a kind of moral tragedy, but one that cannot be avoided through some kind of reconfiguration of our moral responsibility practices. (344)

Smith does not affirm the Platonic Claim here. She only claims that vice can be instrumentally bad for the vicious. I should also note that I am unsure how to interpret Smith's remarks about our responsibility practices. Acknowledging the tragedy of being vicious could go some way, I believe, toward reconfiguring those practices, especially by disposing us to greater sympathetic concern and understanding toward wrongdoers. Although not all of these tragedies could thereby be prevented, having such concern and understanding toward one another could prevent some of us from living morally tragic lives. I suppose that Smith would agree.

§2.5 The Compatibility of Blame and Sympathy

I have proposed that wrongdoers can be worthy of attitudes of understanding and attitudes of sympathetic understanding as part of our complete response to their wrongful conduct, and that those attitudes are consistent with our having certain blaming attitudes toward them. In other words, our understanding of the sources of their wrongful conduct and our sense of the misfortune that wronging others constitutes for wrongdoers are consistent with our appropriately feeling and expressing blaming anger toward them for their conduct and with holding them to account for their conduct.[24]

As I discussed in Chapter Three, we might not be able to fully feel sympathy and blaming anger toward someone at the same time, but we can have mixed feelings toward them at a given time and over time.[25] We have psychological limitations in feeling blame and sympathy toward someone at the same time, and these attitudes can move us to act in different ways. But that is consistent with our having both sorts of attitudes toward someone over time for their conduct in ways that inform, qualify, or supersede one another. We can feel blaming anger toward them for their wrongful conduct and be

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[24] Note that the Spinozan Attitude is therefore not exactly Spinoza's own attitude. I have named the attitude after him to place emphasis on his denial of ultimacy and the importance of attitudes of understanding. But Spinoza seems to have denied the fittingness of blaming attitudes.

[25] See Glen Pettigrove (2020) for further discussion of the plurality of attitudes that can be fitting in response to wrongful conduct and the limits on our having all of those attitudes either simultaneously or sequentially (70-72).

moved to confront them and demand their acknowledgment while understanding that their conduct constitutes a harm for them, such that they can also be worthy of our sympathy in the course of our response to them.

Our coming to better understand the nature and causes of the wrongful conduct of others can, however, lessen our sympathy and increase our blame toward them in various ways. If we come to understand their conduct as worse or more seriously wrongful than we had construed their conduct to be, they can be worthy of greater blame. But they can also thereby be worthy of greater sympathy, because worse or more seriously wrongful conduct also constitutes a greater misfortune for them.

As with blaming anger, attitudes of sympathetic understanding can change in their fittingness over time, or their fitting quality can change over time. Redemption, for example, matters. Those who have redeemed themselves might no longer be worthy of certain attitudes of sympathetic understanding for their past conduct, especially if that conduct was not serious, or they might at least be worthy of less sympathy. This is because their past wrongful conduct can become less worthy of salience for us in the ways that those attitudes of sympathetic understanding make such conduct salient to us.

I should note that the needs of those wronged can also call for our attention and consideration and sympathy, such that neither our blaming anger nor attitudes of sympathetic understanding for wrongdoers might be fully fitting at a given time. But those attitudes can remain minimally fitting, and our dispositions to them can be appropriate or even virtuous. Again, we are limited in what we can attend to and consider at a given time and over time. And our dispositions to attend to and consider certain harms to others, and to neglect other harms, can constitute vices. The Spinozan Attitude is among those attitudes that enable us to accord wrongdoers sympathy along with according sympathy to those whom they have wronged. And the Spinozan Attitude should not dispose us to sympathy for wrongdoers to the neglect of sympathy for those whom they have wronged. But I propose we should ideally be disposed to have sympathy for both wrongdoers and those whom they have wronged.[26]

[26] See Martha Nussbaum (2001), who suggests that there are cultural differences in our capacity or readiness to regard ourselves or others as both offenders and victims, as both active and passive, and that Americans seem especially limited in this capacity and readiness (206-208).

§2.6 Objections to the Spinozan Attitude

I will now consider some objections to, or worries about, our holding the Spinozan Attitude toward one another. Although Strawsonians do not deny the Spinozan Claim, some Strawsonians and other philosophers might object to our holding the Spinozan Attitude as liable to being disrespectful, excusing, exempting, or condoning.[27] I agree that holding the Spinozan Attitude can dispose us to such objectionable or improper attitudes. That is, I agree that by regarding others as lacking ultimacy, we can be disposed to such attitudes. But holding the Spinozan Attitude is not in itself objectionable or improper and need not dispose us to such attitudes.

The Spinozan Attitude is what Strawson (1962) calls "an objective attitude." But as Strawson (1985) acknowledges, objective attitudes are responsive to an aspect of reality: human beings are part of the order of nature and subject to its laws, such that we lack ultimacy.[28] Regarding others in light of our lack of ultimacy is therefore not in itself disrespectful, excusing, exempting, or condoning. The Spinozan Attitude responds to an aspect of reality. What can be disrespectful, excusing, exempting, or condoning is to regard others with the Spinozan Attitude while not also regarding them as ethically responsible, which is, as Strawson (1985) claims, another aspect of reality.[29]

To clarify, I am proposing that our attitude toward wrongdoers can and should include various non-blaming attitudes, such as attitudes of understanding and attitudes of sympathetic understanding, along with blaming attitudes. I have not proposed that blaming attitudes, such as blaming anger, or other attitudes by which we regard others as ethically responsible, cannot be fitting. That is, I have not proposed that we excuse or exempt wrongdoers from responsibility or condone their wrongful conduct in ways that disrespect them or those whom they have wronged. But I acknowledge that we should be vigilant in regard to such improper attitudes, because regarding one another as lacking

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[27] Cf. Christopher Bennett (2004): "Mercy shown on grounds of 'unfortunate personal history' goes hand-in-hand with a relegation of the wrongdoer's status as a moral agent, as one whose views are to be taken seriously, as one who is an authoritative judge of the evidence at hand" (10). Tamler Sommers (2007) discusses Susan Wolf (1981) and Saul Smilansky (2000) as holding such views.

[28] Cf. Strawson (1985): "What from one point of view is rightly seen as a piece of disgraceful turpitude, an appropriate object of a reaction of moral disgust, is, from the other point of view, rightly seen as merely the natural outcome of a complex collocation of factors, an appropriate object of scientific, psychological, and sociological analysis and study" (43).

[29] I should note that Strawson does not focus, however, on how we should understand the nature and sources of wrongful conduct by way of objective attitudes or on how our understanding of these should inform or qualify our blaming attitudes. He only notes that focusing on the nature and sources of one another's wrongful conduct can be useful and can modify our blaming attitudes in various ways. He also does not focus on how objective attitudes can bring into view essential aspects of our humanity, such as our subjection to luck, which call for our agential humility.

ultimacy can dispose us to those attitudes. Our lack of ultimacy is also not a consideration that we can appeal to in order to excuse or exempt ourselves from responsibility for our wrongful conduct. We cannot evade our ethical obligations by such appeals. And we can ever be blameworthy for such appeals.

I should note that I suspect that these objections to, or worries about, the Spinozan Attitude might be motivated in part by a sense of shame or even humiliation in our being subject to natural causality and luck, such that our suffering, and how well we live and fare, is not in our ultimate control. But deflecting from the truth of the Spinozan Claim that we lack ultimacy is, I agree with Russell (2017), a form of evasion and self-deception.[30]

§2.7 Other Attitudes that the Spinozan Attitude Should Ideally Dispose Us To

I will conclude this section by considering several other attitudes that are fitting in light of our lack of ultimacy. In discussing these other attitudes, I will draw especially on Russell, Ted Honderich, Bernard Williams, and Robert Adams.

Russell (2017) critiques other Strawsonians for being overly optimistic about the implications of our lack of ultimacy. He claims that we should be moderately pessimistic about its implications, in that our lack of ultimacy is "troubling" and "unsettling" (203). In describing our attitudes toward our lack of ultimacy in terms of "optimism" and "pessimism," Russell is drawing on Strawson's use of those terms to describe how certain compatibilists and libertarians respond to determinism and its implications. Ted Honderich (1988) similarly contrasts the responses of compatibilists and incompatibilists in terms of "intransigence" and "dismay": compatibilists are not bothered enough by our lack of ultimacy, whereas incompatibilists are too bothered.

According to Russell, there are two main reasons for why we should be troubled or unsettled by our lack of ultimacy. The first reason is that we commonly regard ourselves as having a form of agency that is not—ultimately—a form of passivity. Russell claims that our ordinary sense of ourselves as agents should be affected by our recognition that our conduct reflects our agency but also that our agency *happens to us*. Our conduct is determined by our dispositions and aptitudes, our education and enculturation, our opportunities and circumstances, and innumerable other factors, which are beyond our control. The second reason for why we should be troubled or unsettled by our lack of ultimacy is

[30] See Waller (2014) for discussion of how belief in "a just world" is another source of resistance to skepticism about ethical responsibility.

that we can be blameworthy for our conduct *even though* we lack ultimacy. For Russell, that "predicament" is especially worthy of pessimism.

Contrary to Russell, what seems to me especially worthy of pessimism, or dismay, regarding our lack of ultimacy in wronging others is not that we can be blameworthy even though we lack ultimacy. Rather, what is especially worthy of dismay is that we wronged others—and harmed them and ourselves—in ways in which we were not in ultimate control. We should be troubled or unsettled because whether we wrong or harm others, and whether we are wronged or harmed by them, and whether we harm ourselves by harming others, is a matter of fortune and misfortune. I would also place emphasis not only on our attitudes toward *our own* lack of ultimacy but also on our attitudes toward the lack of ultimacy of others. Russell does not elaborate how our recognition of the lack of ultimacy of others should bear on our attitudes toward them, though he suggests that such recognition should affect those attitudes, including our blaming attitudes.

Bernard Williams (1993) clarifies another a reason for why we should be troubled or unsettled by our lack of ultimacy. We hope that the world is ultimately just, and that all will turn out well, or at least that all could turn out well. We might believe ourselves to have—or we at least might desire to have—the sort of freedom that would allow us to conduct ourselves in ways such that we could ensure that all will turn out well. But without ultimacy, we lack such freedom.

Williams claims that we should live with the tragic acknowledgment that the world was not made for us, or us for the world, and that not all will turn out well, or even could turn out well. Here he appeals to attitudes expressed by the Ancient Greeks tragedians—Aeschylus, Euripides, and Sophocles. In this, Williams rejects the optimistic belief, which he attributes to Plato and Kant, that "somehow or other, in this life or in the next, morally if not materially, as individuals or as an historical collective, we shall be safe; or, if not safe, at least reassured that at some level of the world's constitution there is something to be discovered that makes ultimate sense of our concerns" (164).[31] Although this is tragic, Williams notes that at least some of us can—and hopefully many of us can—live good lives within the limits of luck. In all this, I agree with Williams.

There are several other ways in which I believe our lack of ultimacy should affect our attitudes toward our own lives and the lives of others, which neither Russell nor Williams focuses on. According to Ted Honderich (1988), the main reason for why we should be troubled by our lack of ultimacy is that among our desires for how our lives will go are desires to achieve various goods in ways that are

[31] Williams (1985; 1993) regards this belief as characteristic of what he calls "the Morality System." Again, see Waller (2014) on belief in "a just world."

not ultimately a matter of luck. We desire to *earn* certain goods in a way that precludes luck. But because we lack ultimacy, we cannot earn those goods and satisfy those desires. We cannot fulfill those "life hopes."

Robert Adams (2007) considers some of those life hopes, namely our hopes for certain forms of praise. Adams considers the sorts of attitudes that we can appropriately have toward one another regarding our ethically good or virtuous conduct even though we lack of ultimacy (158-170). To begin, Adams claims that "it is inappropriate and misleading to think of virtue primarily as an individual achievement," and that its not being primarily an individual achievement is "no tragedy" (165). Adams proposes that we acknowledge our good fortune in being ethically good or virtuous as a "gift of nature or of grace" and acknowledge that these goods as no less excellent for being matters of luck (165). These goods, Adams claims, are no less worthy of admiration, aspiration, and gratitude for being matters of luck. But they are worthy of forms of those attitudes that acknowledge such luck. In admiring others, aspiring to be like them, and being grateful to and for them for their goodness, we can nonetheless appreciate their good fortune and our own and appreciate how such good fortune is unearned. We cannot earn our good fortune. And those without such good fortune have not failed to earn it. The goodness and desirability of virtuous character and conduct are not lessened by the dependence of our character and conduct on luck—on the influence of our parents and peers, our historical and social circumstances, and innumerable other factors beyond our control.[32]

Following Adams, I propose that holding the Spinozan Attitude should ideally affect what I will call our *praising attitudes*, including admiration, gratitude, and pride, by which we construe one another's quality of regard as proper or supererogatory. In construing others' quality of regard in light of their lack of ultimacy, we can appreciate and approve of their quality of regard and be moved to express this construal and encourage them to also appreciate and approve of their quality of regard.[33] We can similarly appreciate and approve of our own proper or supererogatory regard for others.

Admiring or being grateful to those who manifest proper or supererogatory regard in their conduct is fitting. Taking pride in our own good or virtuous conduct, and in that of others, is also

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[32] Cf. Adams (2007): "If our moral development owes much to the way in which our parents and other important people in our lives cared both for us and for moral goodness, does that *detract* from the value of whatever has been achieved in our moral development? Is it not much more a precious part of our moral history? Would it not be ingratitude, and a blindness to some of the greatest values in human relationships to wish not to be indebted to others for guidance, encouragement, and example that have been important to our moral growth?" (169).

[33] For further discussion of these issues, see Coleen Macnamara (2013; 2019), Stefan Riedener (2020), and Daniel Telech (2021). See also the essays in Roberts and Telech (2019).

fitting. But as with our blaming attitudes, our praising attitudes can be unfitting in various ways. We might misconstrue the quality of regard that others manifest in their conduct. We might misconstrue whether and to what extent the forms of regard that they manifest are supererogatory—that is, whether their quality of regard exceeds our appropriate expectations toward them. If our expectations of regard from others are more minimal than what we should expect from them in light of their ethical competency, for example, then our praising attitudes can misconstrue their quality of regard and can even wrong them by misconstruing their ethical competency. We might even be blameworthy for expecting less of them than, and praising them more than, we should. Our lesser expectations and greater praise can reflect improper attitudes that preclude our recognition of their ethical competency. In this way, our praising attitudes and actions can be both wrongful and harmful.[34]

As with our blaming attitudes, our praising attitudes can also be perfected by being informed by the Platonic and Spinozan Attitudes. The Platonic Attitude informs our admiration, gratitude, and pride with a proper sense of how good and virtuous conduct matters for its own sake and is its own reward. The Spinozan Attitude informs our admiration, gratitude, and pride with a proper sense of the role of luck in the development and integrity of our ethical character. The Spinozan Attitude also informs such attitudes with a sense of gladness that extends to those on whom we have depended for our good or virtuous conduct, and that, perhaps, also extends to the world for otherwise bringing about such conduct. In this, the Spinozan Attitude informs our praising attitudes with agential humility. Such humility—regarding the limits of both our own agency and the agency of others—opposes misguided ideas about how our praiseworthy conduct redounds to us, our individual worth, and what we deserve, especially in comparison to those who are less fortunate in their luck.

Again, the Spinozan Attitude informs our praising attitudes with a recognition of, and gladness for, our good fortune in regard to our praiseworthy conduct. The Spinozan Attitude also informs our praising attitudes with recognition of, and gladness for, the sources of our praiseworthy conduct. And insofar as our praising attitudes toward others fail to acknowledge such good luck and those sources, I believe that our praiseworthy attitudes toward others are imperfect. To clarify, I am not claiming that such luck and those sources are continuously worthy of salience for us in responding to one another's praiseworthy conduct. Rather, I am proposing that we should ideally acknowledge such luck and those sources—at least occasionally, if only briefly. That is, we should not neglect either the role of good luck in praiseworthy conduct or the sources of such conduct.

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[34] For further discussion, see Nathan Stout (2020) and Jules Holroyd (2021).

In sum, I propose that not only our blaming attitudes, but also our other attitudes toward one another's agency, should ideally be informed and qualified by the recognition of our lack of ultimacy. As with other ethical ideals, holding the Spinozan Attitude can dispose us to certain objectionable or improper attitudes if we do not also hold other attitudes that perfect the Spinozan Attitude. And as with other ethical ideals, appeals to the Spinozan Attitude can be misused or abused. But this ideal of ethical responsiveness is not itself objectionable or improper.

Section Three. Normative Integrity and the Socratic Attitude

> Socrates: For Simonides was not so uneducated as to say that he praised all who did nothing bad willingly, as if there were anyone who willingly did bad things. I am pretty sure that none of the wise men thinks that any human being willingly makes a mistake or willingly does anything wrong or bad. They know very well that anyone who does anything wrong or bad does so involuntarily.
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> — Plato, *Protagoras* (345d-e)

> The Athenian Stranger: [E]very unjust man is unjust against his will. No man on earth would ever deliberately embrace any of the supreme evils, least of all in the most precious parts of himself—and as we said, the truth is that the most precious part of every man is his soul. So no one will ever voluntarily accept the supreme evil into the most valuable part of himself and live with it throughout his life. No: in general, the unjust man deserves just as much pity as any other sufferer.
>
> — Plato, *Laws* (731c)

Another ethical notion of freedom that I propose matters for how we should respond to one another's wrongful conduct is what I will call *normative integrity*. Normative integrity is the freedom of conducting ourselves in alignment with the good and the right. In other words, normative integrity is the freedom from false beliefs and bad desires regarding the good and the right, and the freedom of conducting ourselves with true beliefs about the good and the right and with desires that accord with those beliefs.

As I discussed in Section Two, we desire the freedom of ultimacy, in that we desire to not be subjected to luck in our conduct, especially to bad luck, and we desire such freedom so that we can live and fare well. In this section, I propose that we also desire the freedom of normative integrity. And although ultimacy is not possible for us, normative integrity is possible for us. Further, I propose that our lack of normative integrity in wronging others matters for how we are blameworthy for our wrongful conduct, and so also for the fittingness of blaming attitudes toward us. That is because our lack of normative integrity in wronging others makes us worthy of certain non-blaming attitudes, which should ideally inform, qualify, or even supersede certain blaming attitudes toward us in the course of responding to our wrongful conduct.

§3.1 Socratic Freedom, the Socratic Claim, and the Socratic Attitude

The notion of normative integrity has a long history in Western philosophy, beginning at least with Socrates and Plato.[35] Because Socrates was plausibly the first philosopher to articulate this notion of freedom, I will also refer to normative integrity as *Socratic Freedom*.[36]

The notion of Socratic Freedom follows on another ethical notion of freedom, which is the freedom of conducting ourselves in ways that accord with our fundamental desire to live well. Such freedom includes freedom from false beliefs and bad desires, which are contrary to living well. For Socrates, conducting ourselves in light of false beliefs and bad desires regarding the good and the right is a form of unfreedom, or slavery.[37] As I discussed in Chapter Two, for Socrates, our living justly is an essential and supremely important part of our living well. And so, for Socrates, our living justly is also an aspect of our living freely in an important ethical sense. By living justly, we live without being subjected to false beliefs or bad desires, and we live in a way that accords with our own good.

To clarify, there are two aspects of Socratic Freedom. The first aspect is *voluntariness*. Our just conduct is *voluntary* in that such conduct accords both with our subjective beliefs and desires and with our fundamental desire to live well. Our unjust conduct is voluntary in that such conduct accords with our subjective beliefs and desires, but our unjust conduct is *involuntary* in that such conduct is contrary to our fundamental desire to live well.[38] The second aspect of Socratic Freedom is *self-mastery*. By conducting ourselves justly, we are ruled by reason, which is the part of our soul that should rule us, which is most our own, and which we are most properly identified with. If reason rules us—or rather,

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35 Prominent philosophers who follow Socrates and Plato in appealing to this notion of freedom include Aristotle, various Stoics and Neoplatonists, Augustine, Aquinas, and Kant, among others.

36 As Ursula Coope (2020) notes, in Plato's dialogues, neither Socrates nor any other character explicitly articulates a notion of *freedom* that consists in conducting ourselves in alignment with the good and the right, but such a notion can be reconstructed from claims that Socrates and other characters make in the dialogues (14-17). Coope claims that the closest a character in the Platonic dialogues comes to explicitly articulating the notion in terms of freedom is in the *Laws*. The Athenian Stranger claims that those who become slaves to their pleasures "will not deserve without qualification […] to be called free" (635d) (14). But Coope also notes that Xenophon, in his *Memorabilia* (IV.5.3-4), attributes to the historical Socrates the claim that freedom consists in "doing what is best" (16, n. 21).

37 Socrates specifically claims that those who follow their passions contrary to their reason are enslaved to their passions. Such a notion is also present in Christianity in its notion of sinfulness as a form of slavery.

38 See Rachana Kamtekar (2017), who interprets Socrates as claiming that wrongdoing is involuntary, or unwilling, because in doing wrong we act for the sake of our happiness, but injustice is contrary to our happiness, and so we act contrary to our desire for happiness. I prefer to put Socrates' claims in terms of "the good" or "our good" rather than "happiness," for reasons I noted in Chapters One and Two.

if we rule ourselves with reason—we are masters of ourselves, and we are not ruled by or mastered by our passions.

To clarify further, the specific notion of Socratic Freedom, or normative integrity, that I am focused on is a threshold notion. We have such freedom when we properly regard others and do not wrong them. We can conduct ourselves with more perfect ethical understanding and integrity in our agency, such that we conduct ourselves with supererogatory regard for others. But I am focused on the form of freedom we have just in fulfilling our obligations of regard toward others.[39]

Following Socrates, I propose what I call *the Socratic Claim*, which is that in wronging others, we lack normative integrity. That is, in improperly regarding others, or in failing to fulfill our obligations of regard toward them, we either lack ethical understanding or agential integrity, or both. In this, we also either have false beliefs about what would fulfill our fundamental desire to live well, or we have bad desires that make us conduct ourselves in ways that are contrary to our ethical beliefs.

A corollary of the Socratic Claim is that if we properly understand the good and the right, and if we have integrity in our agency, such that we can conduct ourselves in light of that understanding, then we would properly regard others and not wrong others in our conduct.

I propose that we should regard one another in light of the Socratic Claim and its corollary. That is, we should ideally hold what I will call *the Socratic Attitude* toward one another. As with the Spinozan Attitude, by which we regard and respond to one another in light of our lack of ultimacy, the Socratic Attitude is a general stance or outlook, by which we regard and respond to one another in light of our lack of normative integrity in wronging others. And as with the Spinozan Attitude, holding the Socratic Attitude toward wrongdoers should ideally dispose us to certain attitudes of understanding and attitudes of sympathetic understanding, which should inform, qualify, or even supersede our blaming attitudes in the course of responding to their wrongful conduct.

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[39] The early Stoics, at least according to Diogenes Laertius, seem to only appeal to a notion of *perfect normative integrity*. These Stoics claim that only the Sage has no false beliefs about what matters or bad desires that could move them to conduct themselves contrary to the good and the right. And so, for these Stoics, only the Sage, who is perfect in virtue, is free. Anyone who lacks perfect virtue is unfree.

Beyond perfect normative integrity, there is also a form of freedom which consists in our living and having an ideally good life, which includes various external conditions, especially various social conditions, which enable us to live and fare well with others. This is what we could call *Hegelian Freedom*, which Hegel articulates in the *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* (1821). For Hegel—and similarly for Fichte and T. H. Green—such freedom is a form of self-actualization, which is achieved by living as a member of an ideal ethical community. On Hegel, see Allen Wood (1990); on Fichte, see Wood (2017); and on Green, see David Brink (2003). On all three of them, see also Terence Irwin (2009).

In brief, the Socratic Attitude toward wrongdoers should frame our inquiry into the nature and sources of wrongful conduct and frame our deliberations about how to respond to wrongful conduct in light of that inquiry. For example, the Socratic Attitude should dispose us to inquire into the sorts of false attitudes and bad desires that wrongdoers have regarding the good and the right. The Socratic Attitude should also dispose us inquire into the ways in which wrongdoers can lack integrity in their agency, such that they are unable to conduct themselves in light of their true beliefs and good desires regarding the good and the right.

The Socratic Attitude should also dispose us to acknowledge how wrongful conduct is not voluntary in the fullest sense, in that such conduct reflects either a lack of ethical understanding or a lack of agential integrity, or both. Wronging others is contrary to our fundamental desire to live well, if not also contrary to our beliefs about what living well consists in. I propose that recognition that wrongdoers are conducting themselves in ways that are contrary to their own good should ideally dispose us to attitudes of sympathetic understanding for them. Their subjection to a lack of normative integrity can make them worthy of attitudes of regret, compassion, pity, or even grief, because their subjection to a lack of normative integrity constitutes a harm for them, which can be serious.

§3.2 An Example of the Spinozan and Socratic Attitudes

Recall the example of Ruth and Penelope that I introduced in Chapter Three. Suppose that, as adolescents, Ruth and Penelope begin to bully one another from envy. Ruth is envious of Penelope's friendships, and Penelope is envious of Ruth's artistic talents. Suppose that their family friend Beth, who has known them their whole lives, is bringing them home from school when they begin bullying each other again.

In response to their cruel conduct toward one another, suppose Beth feels some blaming anger toward both of them and that her anger is minimally fitting. But suppose that Beth also understands that their conduct has causes and reflects a lack of normative integrity. Note that Beth need not understand the nature and sources of their cruel conduct explicitly in terms of the Spinozan and Socratic Claims for her sensibility toward wrongs to be explicable in these terms. Her blaming attitudes can be informed and qualified by a sense of the causes and forms of ethical misunderstanding or agential dis-integrity that Ruth and Penelope are subject to in bullying one another.

The Spinozan and Socratic Attitudes, along with her deepened sympathetic concern for Ruth and Penelope, should ideally motivate and frame Beth's inquiry into the nature and sources of their

cruel conduct toward one another, as well as her deliberations about how to otherwise respond to them. For Beth to respond well or excellently to their conduct calls for her to not only correctly construe their conduct as wrongful but also for her to understand the sources of their conduct, and understand what each of them lacks in normative integrity, so that she can foster their proper regard for one another.

Beth suspects that envy is motivating Ruth and Penelope to bully one another. She need not hold the Spinozan and Socratic Attitudes to suspect that, or to inquire into the causes of their envy or into how to best foster their proper regard for one another. But holding those attitudes disposes her to widen her focus from the wrongfulness of their conduct, which makes blaming anger minimally fitting, to other matters of importance that should ideally be salient to her in the course of responding to them. Holding those attitudes perfects her construals of their conduct and her blaming anger.

§3.3 Objections to the Socratic Attitude

In Section Two, I considered several objections to the Spinozan Attitude. I will now consider several objections to the Socratic Attitude. Some philosophers might object to the Socratic Attitude by denying the Platonic Claim. But I will put that objection aside. I developed and defended the Platonic Claim in Chapter Two. In this chapter, I assume the truth of the Platonic Claim. And I will consider two other sorts of objections to the Socratic Attitude instead. Objections of the first sort make false assumptions about the implications of the Socratic Claim. Objections of the second sort are direct objections to the truth of the Socratic Claim. But I suspect that those objections are motivated in part by false assumptions about the implications of the Socratic Claim.

§3.3.1 Supposed Implications of the Socratic Claim

Some philosophers might suppose that if we lack normative integrity in wronging others, then we are not ethically responsible or blameworthy for our conduct. But just as Strawsonians affirm that our lack of ultimacy is compatible with our being ethically responsible and blameworthy for wrongs, Strawsonians also affirm the compatibility of our lack of normative integrity in wronging others with our being responsible and blameworthy for wronging them.

Beginning with Socrates and Plato, many ancient philosophers who affirm the Socratic Claim also affirm its compatibility with our being ethically responsible and blameworthy for our conduct. The Roman Stoics—specifically Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius—are prominent among those

who affirm the Socratic Claim but deny that wrongdoers are blameworthy in the sense of being worthy of anger, or at least certain forms of anger. But none of those Roman Stoics claims that wrongdoers are not responsible for their wrongful conduct, or that wrongdoers cannot be blameworthy in the sense of being appropriately held to account or punished for such conduct.[40]

Again, the truth of the Socratic Claim does not render us unworthy of certain forms of blame, such as blaming anger. Rather, its truth makes us worthy of blaming attitudes, such as blaming anger, which are informed or qualified by attitudes that are responsive to the limitations of our ethical understanding and agential integrity and to the harms that such limitations make us suffer. The freedom of normative integrity is not necessary for being ethically responsible and blameworthy for wrongs. Rather, our lack of normative integrity—that is, our subjection to false beliefs and bad desires regarding the good and the right—is necessary for us to be blameworthy. And that is because our lack of normative integrity is necessary for us to improperly regard others in our conduct.

The worry that the Socratic Claim precludes us from being ethically responsible and blameworthy can be put another way as well. Some philosophers, including some Strawsonians, might object that the Socratic Attitude can be disrespectful, excusing, exempting, or condoning. That is, holding the Socratic Attitude toward others might be an objectionable way to regard others as not ethically responsible or blameworthy for their conduct.

As with the Spinozan Attitude, I agree that holding the Socratic Attitude can dispose us to objectionable or improper attitudes, and we need to be vigilant about that possibility. But holding the Socratic Attitude is not in itself improper or objectionable.

In holding the Socratic Attitude toward others, we can, for example, misconstrue the nature of their ethical understanding or agential integrity. We can misconstrue them as having less, or worse, ethical understanding or agential integrity than they have. This can be disrespectful, or condescending, if we take ourselves to be ethically superior to them, especially if we take this superiority to reflect well on us in a way that suggests we are not equally subject to luck in our own conduct. We can also disrespect wrongdoers by regarding them as unable to, or as unlikely to, come to understand and acknowledge their wrongful conduct—if we are not warranted in regarding them in that way.

But in holding the Socratic Attitude, we do not necessarily take ourselves to be ethically superior to those who wrong us or others. We need not consider ourselves to have greater normative

[40] Cf. Coope (2020): "The Stoics held that only the sage is free, but they took it to be obvious that those of us who are not sages are rightly blamed when we act badly" (23). Coope notes that Neoplatonists hold similar views. I will return to discuss Seneca's view of anger in Chapter Five.

integrity than others in general. And if we warrantedly judge ourselves to have greater normative integrity than others in general, that is not in itself disrespectful or condescending, because some of us have greater normative integrity than others.[41] The Socratic Attitude should, however, be qualified by epistemic humility regarding the correctness of our construals of others' lack of normative integrity, as well as by epistemic and agential humility regarding the limits of our own ethical understanding and agential integrity. We can and should remain open to ethical conversation with and to being corrected by those whom we regard with the Spinozan and Socratic Attitudes.[42] We also remain open to criticism and even blame for how these attitudes dispose us to regard others.

I should note that I suspect that these objections to the Socratic Attitude might be motivated in part by shame at our lack of normative integrity, or fear of being regarded as ethically inferior to others. Such shame and fear are, I believe, commonly reflected in our ordinary difficulty in being corrected by others, especially in our disposition to resent those who correct us. We want others to regard us as people who conduct themselves responsibly, as people who are trustworthy and worthy of various social relations. In other words, we want to be regarded as ethically responsible in the sense of being ethically competent and decent, if not virtuous. And we can, I believe, be owed recognition of our being ethically responsible in that way and recognition of our being worthy of certain social relations. In turn, I believe that we can fittingly resent those who fail to regard us in those ways. But, in the face of our own wrongful conduct, we often regard ourselves as ethically responsible in ways that our own wrongful conduct would indicate otherwise. In turn, we would rather feel only guilt for our wrongful conduct and not also feel shame at our lack of normative integrity or feel fear that we might not be regarded as ethically competent and decent by others.

§3.3.2 Supposed Counterexamples to the Socratic Claim

Some philosophers might offer supposed counterexamples to the Socratic Claim, in which wrongful conduct does not involve either a lack of ethical understanding or a lack of agential integrity. But no genuine counterexamples to the Socratic Claim are possible.

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41 J. B. Schneewind (1998) claims that "the deepest and most pervasive difference" between premodern and modern moral thinking is that premodern moral thinking assumes inegalitarianism regarding the moral capacity and competency of human beings, whereas modern moral thinking assumes egalitarianism (4). According to Schneewind, Kant was especially influential in affirming the moral equality of human beings in that sense. See Waller (2014), who claims that believing in such equality is delusional (243-244).

42 See Lawrence Stern (1974) on how, in holding others to account, we should remain open to genuine dialogue with them and to being corrected in our own attitudes.

Supposed counterexamples to the Socratic Claim suppose that we can understand how other people matter and what we owe them by way of regard, yet conduct ourselves in ways that are contrary to that understanding without dis-integration in our agency. But conducting ourselves in ways that are contrary to our understanding of the good and the right just is a form of dis-integration in our agency. In wronging others, we are therefore conducting ourselves with either false beliefs or bad desires, which dis-integrate our agency, or both. If we have true beliefs about the good and the right, but these beliefs are not active, or occurrent, then our wrongful conduct necessarily reflects other beliefs, which are false, or bad desires, which are contrary to our true beliefs. In conducting ourselves in this way, we are liable to experience what Wallace (1994) calls a "split in the self," such that we cannot regard ourselves as "all of a piece" (241). In other words, we experience dis-integrity in our agency.

Consider the example of Ruth and Penelope as adolescents. Suppose they believe that bullying and humiliating other people is wrongful and unworthy of taking pleasure in. Yet they bully and humiliate one another and take pleasure in that. Even if they both believe that such cruel conduct is wrongful, neither of them conducts themselves in light of that belief when bullying or humiliating the other. In other words, they lack an occurrent understanding of the wrongfulness of their conduct. They might even have an occurrent belief that their conduct is proper or called for toward their sibling. But if they actively understood the wrongfulness of their conduct, then they would experience dis-integrity in their agency.

As with Ruth and Penelope, I suppose that adults who are cruel to others do not understand, or at least do not actively understand, how those others matter and what those others deserve by way of regard. Adults who are cruel either do not understand their cruel conduct *as cruel*—or at least do not understand the wrongfulness of their cruel conduct—or they lack integrity in their agency. Sadists, for example, might falsely construe their cruel conduct *as good*, and take pleasure in this false good. Such sadists lack a proper ethical understanding of their conduct.[43]

I suppose that in many instances of wrongful conduct, wrongdoers do not regard their conduct as wrongful. As Neil Levy (2011) claims, "When an agent acts immorally, this is often because they believe either that they are doing the morally right thing, or because they fail to give morality its proper weight, thinking, wrongly, that moral considerations are outweighed in this case by prudential ones

[43] In my discussion of cruelty, sadism, and Socrates in this chapter, I am indebted to Gaita (2004: 37, 43, 229).

(or whatever it may be)" (101).[44] In other words, wrongdoers often have false beliefs about what is morally right or permissible, or about the significance of being morally right or permissible, or both.

Consider the testimony of people who experience an ethical reformation and make remarks such as the following: "Only then did I understand what it really means to humiliate someone." "Only then did I realize that he was someone's son, brother, father, spouse, friend." "Only then did I truly appreciate what it means to have someone you love taken from you."[45] Consider also the common, hopeful remarks of older adults reflecting on misguided adolescents and younger adults: "One day they'll understand." "One day they'll realize what they've done." Such remarks reflect a recognition of how wrongful conduct commonly involves a lack of proper ethical understanding. And in any instance in which we wrong others and do not lack proper ethical understanding, we necessarily lack integrity in our agency. We necessarily conduct ourselves contrary to how we believe we should conduct ourselves. And, in turn, we cannot regard ourselves as "all of a piece."

I suppose that in the face of our wrongful conduct, we often would rather admit that we lacked agential integrity than admit that we lacked ethical understanding. But I suppose that we often would also rather regard ourselves as willfully wronging others than admit to lacking either agential integrity or ethical understanding. We might falsely assume there is greater dignity in that. Such a false assumption seems to me another source of objections to, or worries about, the Socratic Claim.

§3.4 Further Objections to Attitudes of Sympathetic Understanding Toward Wrongdoers

In Section Two, I considered objections to the Spinozan Attitude. And in this section, I have considered objections to the Socratic Attitude. I will now conclude this section by considering several further objections to, or worries about, our having attitudes of sympathetic understanding toward wrongdoers, which I have claimed the Spinozan and Socratic Attitudes should ideally dispose us to.

§3.4.1 Sympathetic Understanding as Sentimental

Some philosophers might object that attitudes of sympathetic understanding toward wrongdoers are liable to be sentimental. And I agree that sympathy for wrongdoers can be sentimental.

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[44] See Alan Fiske and Tage Shakti Rai (2014), who argue that many acts of violence, for example, are motivated by moral considerations rather than non-moral considerations.

[45] See Anthony Cunningham (2005), for example, who notes that reformed racists commonly testify to experiences of coming to see others and themselves in a new light (65).

It can be sentimental, for example, if such sympathy precludes us from having a proper sense of the seriousness and blameworthiness of their wrongful conduct and the need to confront and hold them to account. But such sympathy need not preclude a proper sense of those matters. To only feel sympathetic understanding for wrongdoers in response to their wrongful conduct, and not also have other attitudes that are responsive to their being ethically responsible or blameworthy, would be to fail to have a fully fitting response to them.[46] But proper sympathetic understanding toward wrongdoers presupposes our recognition of the nature and significance of their wrongful conduct. Our sense of the seriousness of their wrongful conduct is essential to our sense of the harm that their wrongful conduct constitutes for them.

Proper attitudes of sympathetic understanding are also not weak or affectionate but rather strong and can be stern or even severe. In having proper sympathetic understanding toward wrongdoers, we can appropriately blame and hold to them to account for their wrongful conduct. And just as acknowledging the limits of human freedom and agency is not disrespectful but rather truthful and can be courageous—reflecting a form of courageous humility—our sympathy for the misfortunes of our fellow human beings is not necessarily sentimental. Rather, such sympathy can reflect a deepened and perfected responsiveness to the individual worth of our fellow human beings.[47]

§3.4.2 Sympathetic Understanding as Overly Demanding

Some philosophers might object that the ideal of sympathetic understanding toward wrongdoers that I have offered is overly demanding. I agree that this ideal is demanding. That is in part why those who exemplify this ideal—including Jesus, Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., Nelson Mandela, and the Dalai Lama, for example—are often among our highest ethical exemplars. But the difficulty of holding these attitudes is not grounds for objecting to this ideal, or for denying the fittingness of attitudes of sympathetic understanding toward wrongdoers.

Although holding attitudes of sympathetic understanding for wrongdoers can be difficult or even impossible for some of us in response to certain wrongs by certain wrongdoers at certain times, such attitudes can still be appropriate and called for from us as part of our complete response to them.

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[46] See Amia Srinivasan (2022), who argues in response to Nussbaum (2013) that compassion is an incomplete response to injustices.

[47] See Gaita (2004), who regards such objections from sentimentality as reflecting "moralistic" conceptions of morality, which are closed to the complexity of moral life (xiii-xiv). Cultural connotations of "compassion" and "pity" as sentimental attitudes in general are also a plausible source of such objections.

And by not having these attitudes, we can be less than perfectly virtuous. That is not to claim that failing to have these attitudes is necessarily vicious or blameworthy. But in some instances, I believe failing to have these attitudes can be vicious or blameworthy. For example, I suppose that in some instances in which parents lack of sympathetic understanding toward their children in light of the vicious conduct of their children, those parents can be blameworthy. Their lack of sympathetic understanding manifests a blameworthy lack of proper sympathetic concern for their children.

To clarify, in many instances of wrongful conduct, I believe that our primary aims in regard to those wronged—and those who care for them—should be to support them and affirm their worth and dignity. Fostering their sympathetic understanding toward wrongdoers often should not be among our primary aims, at least in initially responding to their being wronged. Calling on them, or on those who care for them, to have sympathetic understanding for those who have wronged them can be inappropriate. And we should be mindful of this. But I suppose that in many instances fostering the sympathetic understanding of those wronged for wrongdoers should be among our aims. For example, I believe that we should, when appropriate, aim to foster such understanding in our children. Fostering such understanding in others to ameliorate their retributive attitudes is also, I believe, important.

In this chapter, I followed Strawsonians in holding that we can be ethically responsible and blameworthy for wronging others even though we lack ultimacy and normative integrity in wronging them. But I proposed that we can also be worthy of attitudes of understanding and sympathetic understanding in light of our lack of ultimacy and normative integrity in wronging others, and in light of the harm that wronging others constitutes for us. I proposed that sympathetic concern for wrongdoers—informed by the Platonic, Spinozan, and Socratic Attitudes—should dispose us to attitudes of understanding and sympathetic understanding toward wrongdoers, which, in turn, should inform, qualify, or even supersede our blaming attitudes toward them. By holding those non-blaming attitudes toward wrongdoers, we can more correctly construe the sources and significance of their wrongful conduct, and we can also improve our aims in responding to them. In Chapter Five, I will further consider how we can perfect those aims.

Chapter Five:
"Concern and Accountability"

> And so the wrongdoer should be corrected both by admonition and by force, softly and roughly, and he must be made better for his own sake as much as for that of the other, not without scolding but without anger. For who feels angry at the one he's healing. (1.15.1)
>
> How much more truly human to regard wrongdoers with a gentle and paternalistic cast of mind, not to persecute them but to summon them back. (1.14.3)
>
> — Seneca, *On Anger*

On *the Minimalist Conception* of blaming anger that I introduced in Chapter Three, the proper aim of blaming anger is the rendering of acknowledgment by wrongdoers of their wrongful conduct. In blaming anger, we desire this acknowledgment from wrongdoers and are motivated to demand this acknowledgment from them. That is, we are motivated to *hold them to account*.

In Section One of this chapter, I will discuss how Strawsonians articulate our proper concerns and ends in holding wrongdoers to account. I believe their views of those concerns and ends are importantly incomplete.

In Section Two, I elaborate what I will call *the Senecan Claim*, which is the claim that among our proper concerns and ends in holding wrongdoers to account is to bring them to properly regard those whom they have wronged, not only for the sake of those whom they have wronged, and not only for the sake of others, but also for their own sake. That is because their properly regarding and not wronging others is, according to the Platonic Claim, an essential and supremely important part of their good. To have the good of wrongdoers among our concerns and ends in holding them to account is to have what I will call *the Senecan Attitude* toward them. And I will call the action of holding them to account with the Senecan Attitude *admonition*, or *admonishment*.[1]

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[1] That "admonition" and its cognates can connote our confronting others in part for their own sake makes these words the best English words, I believe, for referring to this way of holding wrongdoers to account. Contemporary English dictionaries usually provide two entries for "admonish": (1) to rebuke, reprimand, or warn; (2) to advise or earnestly urge. These entries reflect both the demanding and benevolent aspects of the notion of admonition I am proposing. Translators of ancient and medieval philosophers also use "admonition" and its cognates to refer to similar ways of holding others to account. Consider the first epigraph to this chapter, for example, in which Seneca claims that we should correct others by *admonitione*.

A prominent tradition in Western philosophy follows Socrates, Plato, and Seneca in affirming the Senecan Claim. This tradition includes other Roman Stoics, such as Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius; Epicureans, such as Philodemus; Christian philosophers, such as Clement of Alexandria, Augustine, and Aquinas; Jewish philosophers, such as Maimonides; and in the last century, Simone Weil, Iris Murdoch, and Martin Luther King, Jr.—along with many other philosophers influenced by them.[2]

I also believe that we commonly hold the Senecan Attitude toward our loved ones in response to their wrongful conduct. And I propose that admonishing wrongdoers is not only an appropriate and admirable way of holding our loved ones to account for their wrongful conduct but is also an appropriate and admirable way of holding any of our fellow human beings to account. In other words, I propose that the Senecan Attitude should ideally inform and qualify our attitudes toward wrongdoers in general.

In Section Three, I focus on Martin Luther King, Jr. as a recent exemplar of the Senecan Attitude, along with many of the other ethical ideals that I have proposed in this dissertation. I discuss how Strawsonians—although many of them appeal to King's views and conduct as exemplary—have not elaborated and assessed what I will call *King's Ideal* of ethical responsiveness toward wrongdoers. King's Ideal combines deepened sympathetic concern and recognition respect for all of our fellow human beings with the Platonic and Socratic Attitudes in support of the Senecan Attitude. In this, King's Ideal is close to my own ideal of ethical responsiveness toward wrongdoers.

In Section Four, I will consider objections to the Senecan Attitude as an ideal of ethical responsiveness toward wrongdoers. In replying to those objections, I will develop and defend that ideal further.

And in Section Five, I conclude by briefly considering how we should ideally foster our relations of proper regard with one another in ways other than holding wrongdoers to account with the Senecan Attitude.

The Ancient Greek words *noutheteô* and *nouthétēsis* are also commonly translated as "admonition." Consider William Wilson's translation of Clement of Alexandria's remarks on *nouthétēsis*: "Chiding is also called admonishing; and the etymology of admonishing [*nouthétēsis*] is putting of understanding into one; so that rebuking is bringing one to one's senses" (*The Instructor*, I.10).

[2] I will briefly discuss Augustine and Aquinas later in this chapter. For discussion of Philodemus, see Clarence Glad (1995) and Voula Tsouna (2007). For discussion of Maimonides, see Daniel Frank (1990) and Jonathan Jacobs (2011). I should note that Buddhist philosophers, including Shāntideva and Nāgārjuna, also seem to affirm forms of the Senecan Claim. For discussion, see the Dalai Lama (2018). I suspect that many philosophers in other ethical traditions—including Confucian, Hindu, and Islamic ethical traditions—also affirm forms of the Senecan Claim.

Section One. Holding Wrongdoers to Account

As I discussed in Chapter Three, according to the Minimalist Conception of blaming anger, blaming anger essentially consists in construing those whom we blame as expressing or manifesting improper regard for others in their conduct and in aiming to *hold them to account* for their conduct, demanding and desiring their acknowledgment of its wrongfulness and their proper regard for those whom they have wronged. To *hold wrongdoers to account* in this sense just is to demand such acknowledgment and regard from them.

In this section, I will consider how Strawson and Strawsonians articulate our proper concerns and ends in holding wrongdoers to account in the relevant sense. I should begin, however, by clarifying two issues.

First, what is in question in this chapter is not whether blaming anger can be *minimally fitting* toward wrongdoers. Rather, as in Chapter Four, I am considering non-blaming attitudes that should ideally inform and qualify our blaming anger and other blaming attitudes toward wrongdoers. In this, I am considering which other attitudes can bear on *the full fittingness* of our blaming attitudes according to *the Virtue Conception* of fittingness, which I introduced in Chapter Three.

Second, I will put aside the question of whether we could hold wrongdoers to account—in the relevant sense of demanding their acknowledgment and proper regard—without blaming anger. In this chapter, I will assume that holding wrongdoers to account in the relevant way involves blaming anger. This is because other attitudes that could motivate our holding wrongdoers to account in the relevant way seem indistinguishable from blaming anger. And that is because the Minimalist Conception of what blaming anger consists in is so capacious. Such anger can be extremely minimal. By making this assumption, I am not denying that we can *hold wrongdoers to account*, or *hold them responsible*, in ways that do not involve blaming anger. But in this chapter, I will not focus on them.

I now turn to consider how Strawson and Strawsonians articulate our proper concerns and ends in holding wrongdoers to account.

I begin with Strawson (1962), who describes resentment and indignation as involving a readiness to punish, and guilt as involving a readiness to acquiesce to punishment (§5). Strawson does not, however, elaborate a view of what punishment consists in or what our proper concerns and ends in punishing consist in. Nor does he elaborate a view of what our proper concerns and ends in holding one another to account consist in.

As I noted in Chapters Three and Four, Strawson's central focus is to defend the claim that our practices of holding one another responsible not only "exploit our natures, they express them": "these practices […] really *are* expressions of our moral attitudes and not merely devices we calculatingly employ for regulative purposes" (§6). For Strawson, that we express our moral attitudes in our practices of holding one another responsible is essential to these practices and to human life. But again, he does not elaborate our proper concerns and ends in engaging in these practices. Or rather, he only notes that regulating social behavior is among our proper concerns and ends (§6).[3]

Strawsonians go beyond Strawson in articulating our proper concerns and ends in holding wrongdoers to account. Although I cannot consider all of the ways in which Strawsonians have articulated those concerns and ends, the following ways are, I believe, representative.

Strawsonians commonly articulate our proper concerns and ends in holding wrongdoers to account by appealing to two legal models. In reconstructing these models, I will draw most on Wallace (2019a). But for clarity, I put these models in my own terms.[4] The first legal model is *the civil law model*. On this model, holding wrongdoers to account is about *exacting* acknowledgment and proper regard from them, for the sake of those to whom such acknowledgment and regard are owed, namely those whom they have wronged.[5] The second legal model is *the criminal law model*. On this model, holding wrongdoers to account is about *enforcing* external standards of conduct. By demanding wrongdoer's acknowledgment of their wrongful conduct, we put them on notice. Their wrongful conduct, and their not acknowledging the wrongfulness of their conduct, makes them liable to various consequences, such as consequences for their relationships and reputation.

To clarify, proper regard for others cannot be directly enforced. We cannot properly regard others in light of considerations of force, or in light of any other prudential considerations. But we can conduct ourselves in light of prudential considerations so that we do not manifest or express our improper regard for others. And so, in holding wrongdoers to account, we can give them incentives to comply with external standards of conduct, and we can thereby bring about fewer wrongful harms.

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[3] I return to discuss Strawson's view of blame as involving "a readiness to acquiesce in the infliction of suffering on an offender" (§6) in Section Three.

[4] Cf. Wallace (2019a): "There are two legal paradigms to which we could appeal in thinking about our interpersonal practices of moral accountability. One of these is the criminal law, where agents of the state are authorized, on behalf of the community for which they work, to bring charges against defendants for violations of relative statutes. The other paradigm is private law, where standing is assigned to individual claim holders who may sue for damages, on their own behalf, that result from actions that wrong them in particular" (98-99). Darwall (2017) also appeals to civil and criminal law as models for accountability (62).

[5] Cf. Darwall (2006: 85-86). Consider also Mill's remark in *Utilitarianism*: "Duty is a thing which may be *exacted* from a person, as one exacts a debt" (Chapter V).

Besides the concerns and ends that those two legal models bring into view, Strawsonians hold that our proper concerns and ends include making wrongdoers understand that their conduct is wrongful;[6] affirming our own dignity and the dignity of others, especially the dignity of those who have been wronged; and reconciling with them.[7]

I agree with Strawsonians that our proper concerns and ends in holding wrongdoers to account include exacting their acknowledgment, enforcing external standards of conduct, making them understand the wrongfulness of their conduct, affirming our dignity and the dignity of others, and reconciling with wrongdoers. But in Section Two, I propose that the good of wrongdoers is also among our proper concerns and ends in holding them to account. Even Strawsonians who affirm a form of the Platonic Claim do not seem to affirm that the good of wrongdoers is among such concerns and ends. For example, as I discussed in Chapter Two, Darwall, Scanlon, and Wallace each affirm a form of the Platonic Claim. But they do not seem to affirm that the good of wrongdoers is among our proper concerns and in holding them to account.[8]

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[6] For Miranda Fricker (2014), for example, the point of what she calls "communicative blame" is "to make the wrongdoer aware of the wrong that she has done you, with a view to her coming to understand her own motivates and actions more fully and in a moral light. […] she needs to be brought to confront the *moral significance* of what she has done, and this can only be a matter of her feeling *remorse*" (160-161). But Fricker (2016) clarifies that "This aim need not of course be present as an intention in the psychology of the communicative blamer; rather the aim is a function of the type of speech act it is, the nature of its illocutionary point" (173). On my view, however, that aim is among our proper motivations and intentions in holding wrongdoers to account, not merely a function of holding them to account. Lawrence Stern (1974) also proposes a form of communicative blame (78-79). Cf. Bernard Williams (1985) on the "proleptic function" of blame (215-218).

[7] Most Strawsonians seem, however, to construe reconciliation as among *the functions* of holding wrongdoers to account, rather than among our concerns and ends *in* holding them to account. Cf. Michael McKenna (2012a: 169; 2012b: 121).

[8] Among Strawsonians, Michelle Mason (2017) also affirms a form of the Platonic Claim but does not seem to affirm that the good of wrongdoers is among our proper concerns and ends in holding them to account.

Section Two. Admonition and the Senecan Attitude

For Socrates, Plato, and Seneca, central among our proper concerns and ends in holding wrongdoers to account is the good of wrongdoers themselves.[9] This is because properly regarding others is, according to the Platonic Claim, an essential and supremely important part of their good. Because I have already given the names of Socrates and Plato to other important ethical claims, I will call this *the Senecan Claim*. In turn, I will call the attitude of holding wrongdoers to account in light of that claim *the Senecan Attitude*. And I will call the action of holding wrongdoers to account with the Senecan Attitude *admonition*, or *admonishment*. In holding wrongdoers to account with Senecan Attitude, we admonish them.

As a historical note, I should clarify that I suppose that Seneca—despite the epigraphs to this chapter—might have agreed that blaming anger can be fitting toward wrongdoers. Although Seneca claims that anger, or *ira*, cannot be fitting, his conception of what anger consists in differs from the Minimalist Conception of blaming anger. For Seneca, anger is "unbridled and untamed," and "if it listens to reason and follows where it leads, it's no longer anger" (*On Anger*, 1.9.2-3). And according to him, anger is caused by assenting to an impression of a wrong to be avenged (2.1-2). In brief, Seneca seems to reserve "anger" for uncontrollable varieties of anger, especially those with "violent impulses" (1.10.1). But on the Minimalist Conception, blaming anger need not consist in such construals and aims. Such construals and aims would make blaming anger unfitting—or rather, not blaming anger at all. Philodemus, who preceded Seneca by a century, seems to distinguish between fitting anger, which he calls *orgê*, and unfitting anger, which he calls *thymos*. But Seneca seems unaware of this distinction.[10] I will, however, put further discussion of this historical issue aside.

As I noted at the beginning of this chapter, the Senecan Claim has been affirmed in various forms not only by Ancient Greek and Roman philosophers but throughout the history of philosophy.

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[9] Jeffrie Murphy (2020) notes: "This idea of caring about the character or soul of the wrongdoer first appeared in ancient Greece when Socrates (in *Apology* and *Crito*) argued that it is the one who acts unjustly who is really harmed rather than the one who is treated unjustly since the unjust actor has damaged the thing that is of greatest value and should matter the most—his character or soul" (7). Murphy also notes that, for Socrates, "what is most important in dealing with wrongdoers is to save them from the damage that they do to their characters or souls simply by being wrongdoers" (16).

[10] Martha Nussbaum (2016) claims that Seneca seems to have lacked the concept of "transition anger," which is her term for an ideal form of anger that is similar to what I have called *blaming anger*. For further discussion of Seneca's conception of anger, see Katya Vogt (2006), Sarah Byers (2012), and Charles Griswold (2013).

The Senecan Attitude is also, I believe, a part of our ordinary ethical lives, especially in our close relations with our children and friends, as well as with our students, for example.

Consider a commonplace ideal for how parents should strive to hold their children to account for their wrongful conduct. Parents are concerned to foster attitudes of proper regard in their children. Parents are concerned for their children to develop proper regard for others not only for the sake of those whom their children might wrong but also, and especially, for the sake of their children. This concern—and not just a recognition of limits in the freedom and agency of their children—commonly informs the blaming attitudes that parents are disposed to have toward their children and how parents express and act on those attitudes in holding their children to account.

We seem to commonly hold our friends to account with such concern as well. In holding friends to account for disrespecting others, for example, we sometimes demand that they acknowledge their disrespectful conduct, not only for the sake of those whom they have disrespected, but also for their own sake. Teachers, I believe, commonly hold their students to account in that way as well.[11]

Consider an example:

> Suppose that two of your close friends, who are also close friends with each other, have each seriously wronged the other. You witness them arguing, and intervene: "Listen! Each of you owes the other an apology. You were both in the wrong, and your quarreling is going nowhere. You're just hurting one another. Why don't you acknowledge your faults and reconcile?"

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[11] Ancient Greek Epicureans, including Philodemus, regarded such concern as an ideal of friendship and being a teacher. For those Epicureans, friends and teachers should ideally be concerned for the ethical character of their friends and students and have a responsibility to admonish them and otherwise address them with "frank speech" or "frank criticism" (*parrhēsia*). For discussion of these practices among Epicureans, see Tsouna (2007, Ch. 6). I am not sure the extent to which Peripatetic and Stoic schools, for example, held similar views of friendship. What remains of Epicurean writings on friendship and *parrhēsia* are fragmentary, and similar writings by other Ancient Greek and Roman philosophers are lost.

Consider also Aristotle's remarks in the *Nicomachean Ethics*:

> If we accept a person as a friend assuming that he is good but he becomes, and we think he has become, wicked, do we still owe him affection? Surely, that is impossible, since only the good—not just anything—is the object of affection, for a man must not be a lover of evil, nor must he become like what is base. As we have said, like is the friend of like. Should the friendship, then, be broken off at once? Probably not in every case, but only when a friend's wickedness has become incurable. But if there is a chance of reforming him, we must come to the aid of his character more than to the aid of his property, inasmuch as character is the better thing and a more integral part of friendship. But no one would regard a person who breaks off such a friendship as acting strangely, because the man who was his friend was not the kind of man <he turned out to be>: his friend has changed, and since he is unable to save him, he severs his connections with him. (1165b)

In demanding that your friends acknowledge their wrongs in that way, you demand that they render one another acknowledgement and proper regard, and you aim to bring them to render one another that acknowledgment and regard. You aim to bring them to regard one another as worthy of and owed such acknowledgment and regard. You demand this recognition of them, and aim to bring them to such recognition, for their own sakes, and for their common good.

I propose that we should not only have such concern for the ethical character of our children, friends, or other loved ones in holding them to account. We should ideally have such concern for any of our fellow human beings. Such concern for our fellow human beings, informed by the Platonic Attitude, would reflect a deepened awareness of the goods at stake in properly regarding one another and in holding one another to account. Such awareness would thereby perfect our concerns and ends in holding one another to account, and in how we otherwise respond to one another's wrongful conduct, as I will briefly discuss in Section Five. Such awareness would also perfect our blaming attitudes by disposing us to attitudes of sympathetic understanding and to other attitudes of sympathetic concern toward wrongdoers in the course of responding to them.

To clarify, properly regarding others is, I believe, a common good. Properly regarding others is good for us and for those whom we properly regard. Such common goods are shared and non-competitive. And in holding one another to account, the common good of properly regarding others is at stake. Various other goods, including other common goods, which properly regarding one another makes possible, are also at stake. Properly regarding one another enables us to engage in various social relations and activities with one another, which are among the most important goods in our lives. Lacking relations of proper regard with others precludes us from engaging in and enjoying those common goods. In holding wrongdoers to account for their own sake, I am proposing that we should ideally aim to bring them to properly regard others both for its own sake—as an intrinsic, non-instrumental good for them—and for the sake of the other goods that their properly regarding others can enable them enjoy.

I should note that, to my mind, not only is holding the Senecan Attitude toward others an appropriate and admirable ideal worthy of our aspiration, but we should also ideally hope for others to hold us to account with the Senecan Attitude. And I suppose that we commonly hope this for ourselves in regard to our loved ones. That is, I suppose we commonly hope for our loved ones to care about our ethical character for our own sake and for them to hold us to account for our wrongful conduct partly for our own sake. I suppose we commonly have this hope toward our friends and

teachers as well. Further, I suppose we commonly feel gratitude toward our parents, friends, and teachers for appropriately admonishing us. We might not feel gratitude immediately upon being admonished, but a proper appreciation of their regard for us consists in part, I believe, in such gratitude.[12]

We have an interest in understanding what our good consists in, or could consist in, and in being advised or confronted by others who care, or should care, that we not misunderstand our good. Our interest in understanding our good can, I suppose, even give us claims against those who are properly positioned to foster our understanding of our own good. If our parents, for example, fail to properly aim to cultivate our ethical character, we could, I suppose, be fittingly angered at them for this, if only in retrospect. Or suppose we have manifested our concern for the ethical character of our friends in the past in response to their wrongful conduct, but they fail to manifest similar concern for our own. Their lack of concern could, I believe, make our being angered toward them fitting, if only in retrospect.

I will now briefly retrace how the Senecan Claim and the Senecan Attitude are supported by, and should ideally be informed by, other ethical claims and attitudes that I have proposed in this dissertation.

To begin, the Senecan Claim assumes that our fellow human beings are all worthy of our sympathetic concern. As I proposed in Chapter One, sympathetic concern for our fellow human beings is a fundamental ethical attitude, and we owe one another certain minimal forms of such concern. Properly regarding our fellow human beings consists in part in our being concerned for them to live and fare well, for their own sake. But we are, I believe, worthy of greater sympathetic concern than we owe one another. Even if we do not owe wrongdoers concern for their own good in holding them to account, any wrongdoer can, I propose, be worthy of such concern.

As I also proposed in Chapter One, deepened sympathetic concern for our fellow human beings is informed by a sense of their unconditional, equal, singular, and profound individual worth. By regarding all of our fellow human beings as intelligible objects of the sort of love that we have toward our own loved ones, we can, I propose, regard them as worthy of our concern in holding them

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[12] This seems to have been Seneca's view: "You admonished that fellow more candidly than you should, and as a result you didn't correct him, you offended him; in the future consider not just whether what you say is true but whether the person you're talking to can take the truth. A good man delights in being admonished, but all the worst people have the hardest time putting up with correction" (*On Anger*, 3.36).

to account, just as we can regard our loved ones as worthy of such concern. Among the ways in which we can come to regard them as the intelligible objects of such love, and as worthy of such concern, is to regard them in light of their relations as children or grandchildren, siblings, cousins, friends, spouses, parents, and so on.

In Chapter Four, I proposed that in wronging others, we necessarily lack *normative integrity*. That is, in improperly regarding others, we necessarily lack proper ethical understanding or integrity in our agency, or both. I called that *the Socratic Claim*. And I called the attitude of regarding wrongdoers in light of that claim *the Socratic Attitude*. The Socratic Attitude and the Senecan Attitude should, I propose, ideally inform one another.[13] Following Socrates and Seneca, I propose that in holding wrongdoers to account, we should ideally be concerned to foster their normative integrity to enable them to properly regard others, not only for the sake of those others, but also for their own sake. Our concern for wrongdoers in holding them to account should also ideally be informed by our understanding of what might be needed by them from others to fulfill their obligations of regard. But our holding the Senecan Attitude is not dependent on our holding the Socratic Attitude. Nor is the truth of the Senecan Claim dependent on the truth of the Socratic Claim. Rather, our affirming the Socratic Claim and holding the Socratic Attitude toward others supports our affirming the Senecan Claim and our holding the Senecan Attitude toward them.

In Chapter Four, I also proposed what I called *the Spinozan Claim*, which is that we lack *ultimacy*. That is, we lack ultimate control over, and we are ultimately subject to luck in, our conduct. And I proposed that we should ideally hold what I called *the Spinozan Attitude* toward one another, which consists in regarding one another in light of the Spinozan Claim. I believe that the Spinozan Attitude also supports, and should ideally inform, the Senecan Attitude. That we lack ultimacy should, I believe, dispose us to greater concern for the good of others, including our concern for their ethical character. As with our recognition that we lack normative integrity in wronging others, our recognition that we lack ultimacy in wronging others should also, I believe, inform our understanding of what wrongdoers might need by them from others in order to fulfill their obligations of regard. But the Senecan Claim and Attitude are not dependent on the Spinozan Claim and Attitude.

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[13] Seneca also follows Socrates in considering wrongful conduct a symptom of bad ethical health and in recommending that we regard wrongdoers from a medical perspective to diagnose and cure them (*On Anger*, 2.10.7; cf. Plato's *Gorgias*: 478e2-4, 480a6-b5). By taking this perspective, we are disposed to merciful and benevolent attitudes toward wrongdoers. For further discussion of Seneca on these issues, see Nussbaum (1994: 425-427, 510; 2006: 21-24, 32).

Although Strawsonians have neglected the Senecan Attitude as a possible ideal, I am glad to conclude this section by noting that Derk Pereboom, a prominent skeptic regarding certain forms of freedom and responsibility, has recently affirmed a form of what I call the Senecan Claim, as well as several other important ethical claims that I have affirmed in this dissertation.

Pereboom (2021) briefly discusses and affirms a form of what I call the Platonic Claim—and he notes its source in Plato. Pereboom also affirms that the Platonic Claim makes compassion for wrongdoers appropriate (81). And he affirms that among our proper concerns and ends in responding to wrongdoers is their moral formation or reformation. In turn, Pereboom claims that we should ideally respond to wrongdoers with "compassionate moral protest" (170). He appeals especially to Buddhists in claiming that moral protest is ideally accompanied by compassion for wrongdoers in light of the Platonic Claim (81). And he follows Buddhists, Christians, and Hindus in claiming that we should cultivate what he calls "transcendent compassion," "transcendent love," and "transcendent hope." Transcendent compassion is compassion that transcends our ordinary, parochial compassion for others; and transcendent love is love that transcends our ordinary, parochial love for others. Whereas compassion aims at limiting the suffering of others, love aims at their good in general. And transcendent hope is hope that "projects the success of transcendent compassion and transcendent love into the future" (171). Pereboom offers Martin Luther King, Jr. and Gandhi as exemplars of his proposed ideal.

In this dissertation, I believe I more fully develop and defend the ethical ideals that Pereboom and I both affirm. I also make the Platonic Claim central, whereas Pereboom only briefly discusses it. Pereboom and I also have some substantive differences. For example, I am more pessimistic than he is regarding our lack of ultimacy and the misfortune, if not tragedy, of being vicious, which I discussed in Chapter Four. On my view, the Socratic Claim is also central, whereas he does not seem to affirm that claim. Nonetheless, I am greatly encouraged to have Pereboom as a fellow traveler.[14]

[14] I should note that Linda Radzik (2020) has also recently affirmed a form of what I call the Senecan Claim: "I argue that any interference with the wrongdoer should be designed with an eye to the wrongdoer's good, as well as the good of the victim and the community. More specifically, we should design our interference so as to support her abilities as a moral agent and to help her reclaim her place as a trusted member of the moral community" (41). Radzik also claims that making amends and atoning for our wrongful conduct is good for us, and that having relations of trust, respect, and goodwill with others is good for us (42). I am greatly encouraged to have Radzik as a fellow traveler as well.

Section Three. King's Ideal

In this section, I consider Martin Luther King, Jr. as an exemplar of the Senecan Attitude and other ethical ideals that I have proposed in this dissertation.

To begin, I should note that I suppose King commonly felt blaming anger, and I do not suppose his blaming anger was always fitting or virtuous. But King's blaming anger—the anger that he so eloquently expressed in his speeches and writings—seems to have been reliably, and profoundly, informed by a concern for the good of those who angered him and for their common good with one another. He was vividly and lucidly aware of those goods, kept them in mind in holding others to account for injustice, and recurrently reminded others that those goods are among our proper concerns and ends in holding one another to account.

§3.1 Strawsonians on King

Philosophers have long appealed to King—and to Gandhi—in response to Strawson. Lawrence Stern (1974), for example, responds to Strawson's (1962) claim that blame involves "a readiness to acquiesce in the infliction of suffering on an offender" (§6) in the following way:

> The lives of men like King and Gandhi seem to furnish evidence to the contrary. They publicly rebuked others for doing wrong. We have every reason to believe that the rebuke was the sincere expression of a sentiment. Therefore, in some important sense they blamed others for wrongdoing. Yet it is not clear that they wished those they blamed to suffer. Nor did they exclude them from the moral community. For their method of action was to appeal to the conscience of their adversaries. (78)

Gary Watson (1987) notes his indebtedness to Stern in also appealing to King and Gandhi in response to Strawson's claim (257, n. 29). For Watson, King and Gandhi are exemplars of "an ideal of human fellowship or love which embodies values that are arguably as historically important for our civilization as the notion of moral responsibility itself" (257).

The specific question that Watson is considering in appealing to King and Gandhi is whether an ideal of human relationships without "retributive sentiments" is "compatible with holding one another morally responsible" (257). To support the compatibility of that ideal with holding one

another morally responsible, Watson notes that King and Gandhi "are often intensely involved in the 'fray' of interpersonal relations. […] They *stand up* for themselves and others against their oppressors; they *confront* their oppressors with the fact of their misconduct, *urging* and even *demanding* consideration for themselves and others; but they manage, or come much closer than others to managing, to do such things without vindictiveness or malice" (258). Watson follows Stern in concluding that such responses are ways of regarding wrongdoers as responsible and holding them to account.

Watson (2019) later describes his own view of accountability by appealing to King and Gandhi:

> [R]eactive attitudes, including blame, are specific instances of holding morally accountable in the general sense that I favor—once again, reactions that involve or presuppose holding others to moral demands and expectations. This characterization of accountability reactions gives no privileged place to blame, especially understood retributively. Resentment and the like are particular ways in which holding accountable is manifested. It seems to me possible to eschew the retributive attitudes and maintain a robust view of others as morally accountable in view of the fittingness of many other sorts of accountability response. I've illustrated this point with (perhaps idealized) examples of such activists as Martin Luther King Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi. They stand ready to confront or encounter wrongdoers in a way that needn't involve retributive sentiments. (222-223)

Before turning to consider how other Strawsonians have responded to the examples of King and Gandhi, and to articulating the ethical ideals of King in greater depth than Strawsonians have articulated them, I would like to briefly consider how Strawson might have responded to Stern and Watson.

Strawson's claim that blame involves "a readiness to acquiesce in the infliction of suffering on an offender" does not, to my mind, imply vindictive or retributive attitudes. Consider the following passages in "Freedom and Resentment":

> The partial withdrawal of goodwill which *these* [blaming] attitudes entail, the modification *they* entail of the general demand that another should, if possible, be spared suffering, is, rather, the consequence of *continuing* to view him as a member of the moral community; only as one who has offended against its demands. So the preparedness to acquiesce in that infliction of suffering on the offender which is an essential part of punishment is all of a piece with this whole range of attitudes of which I have been speaking. (§6)

> […] so the self-reactive attitudes [such as guilt] are associated with a readiness on the part of the offender to acquiesce in such infliction *without* developing the reactions (e.g. of resentment) which he would normally develop to the infliction of injury upon him; i.e. with a readiness, as we say, to accept punishment as "his due" or as "just." (§6)

For Strawson, a readiness to acquiesce in the infliction of suffering on a wrongdoer in punishing them—or in blaming them—does not seem to involve the belief that such suffering is good in itself, or that such suffering is an end in itself. In other words, the partial withdrawal of goodwill that Strawson claims is an essential part of the moral life as we know it is not retributivist.[15]

As Jonathan Bennett (1980) proposes, Strawson's view seems "excisionary" of retributive conceptions of desert (24-25). I suspect Strawson (1962) found them "over-intellectualized" (§6). Bennett proposes that, for Strawson, the claim that we are blameworthy only means that feeling blaming attitudes toward us can be appropriate and that expressing those attitudes toward us can be permissible (24). And Strawson (1980) seems to confirm this interpretation: "Bennett sets out and elaborates the essence of my position with such thorough and sympathetic understanding as to leave me little to say beyond recording my admiring appreciation" (264).

In claiming that blaming attitudes involve a "partial withdrawal of goodwill," Strawson is not claiming that blaming attitudes necessarily involve "ill will" or "indifferent will." Rather, this partial withdrawal of goodwill consists in a "modification" of "the general demand that another should, if possible, be spared suffering," and a "readiness" or "preparedness" to "acquiesce"—perhaps *reluctantly*—in the infliction of suffering. Although Strawson does not explicitly appeal to Bishop Butler (1729) or Adam Smith (1759) regarding this claim, I suspect Strawson might agree with them that this preparedness to acquiesce is necessary for us to be sufficiently motivated to confront wrongdoers.

Other Strawsonians have followed Stern and Watson in appealing to King and Gandhi to clarify their own views, specifically to clarify how we can regard others as responsible and hold them to account without retributive attitudes. Consider Darwall (2006), for example:

> [A]s Lawrence Stern (1974) has pointed out, examples like Gandhi and King show that it is possible to distinguish between accountability and reactive attitudes, on the one hand, and retaliation and revenge, on the other (see also Watson 1987). Gandhi, King, and, we could

[15] See Maria Alvarez (2021: 198) for a similar interpretation of Strawson.

> add, Mandela certainly addressed demands, expressed attitudes that addressed demands, and explicitly and implicitly held others accountable for respecting them. But they did these in ways that enhanced (or made more visible) their own dignity and respected that of their addresses precisely because they rejected retaliation. (83)

Michael McKenna (2012a) follows Stern, Watson, and Darwall in affirming that our proper concerns and ends of holding wrongdoers to account exclude retributive concerns and ends. And McKenna appeals to King and Gandhi as well. According to McKenna, King and Gandhi strove to respond to wrongdoers and express moral demands to wrongdoers with love, and not with retributive attitudes. McKenna claims that their ways of blaming others, or holding others to account, were nevertheless liable to harm those whom they confronted, namely by preventing those whom they confronted from going about their social, personal, and emotional lives without interference or disturbance (153). As McKenna suggests, King and Gandhi were aware of that liability. McKenna notes that, for King, nonviolent resistance to injustice can call for interfering in and disrupting the lives of those who are committing injustice or who are complicit in injustice (153, n. 2). But McKenna does not note that, for King, nonviolent resistance aims for the good of those who are unjust, and that the interference and disruption that nonviolent resistance calls for is for the good of those who are unjust.

According to McKenna, what makes King and Gandhi exceptional in how they held others to account is that "each took care to do what he could to avoid practices that were themselves *intended* to cause harm" (153). McKenna clarifies that "blame is unlike punishment in that one who knowingly engages in practices that she believes are liable to harm need not intend to harm in so acting, nor need she even harm intentionally. She might just do so knowingly, and even then do what she can to minimize the degree of harm she knows she is likely to cause, while still doing what she does intend to do—namely, blame" (153). McKenna suggests that this "is probably the best way to understand those like King and Gandhi who do hold wrongdoers to moral account, who do make the lives of others uncomfortable by expecting and sometimes demanding a certain kind of conversational exchange, but who seek the emotion of love where possible as a tonic to the harm that normally attaches to the practices of blaming" (153).

I believe that McKenna neglects an essential part of King's view. As with other Strawsonians, McKenna is focused on articulating how King can be understood to have regarded wrongdoers as responsible yet also to have held them to account without retributive attitudes. But McKenna does

not adequately consider King's broader ethical views in articulating King's view of the place of love in holding wrongdoers to account. King's broader ethical views deserve further consideration.[16]

§3.2 King's Ideal

In the remainder of this section, I present what I will call *King's Ideal* of ethical responsiveness toward wrongdoers. King affirms and exemplifies not only the Senecan Attitude but also other ethical ideals that I have proposed in this dissertation. King's Ideal is therefore close to my own ideal of ethical responsiveness to wrongdoers. I differ with King, however, regarding his religious views. But I have presented corresponding aspects of my own ideal in secular terms.

In brief, King affirms that our fellow human beings are all worthy of a form of deepened sympathetic concern, or love, which I articulated in Chapter One. King also seems to affirm the Platonic Claim, which I articulated in Chapter Two, and the Socratic Claim, which I articulated in Chapter Four. In turn, King affirms the Senecan Attitude, which I have articulated in this chapter. He also affirms, as I noted in Chapter One, that the ultimate end of interpersonal ethical life, and the ultimate end of holding one another to account, is "the creation of the beloved community."

Here is perhaps the most compact statement by King of his ideal, which he often calls "nonviolence resistance":

> There are certain things we can say about this method that seeks justice without violence. It does not seek to defeat or humiliate the opponent but to win his friendship and understanding. I think that this is one of the points, one of the basic points, one of the basic distinguishing points between violence and non-violence. The ultimate end of violence is to defeat the opponent. The ultimate end of non-violence is to win the friendship of the opponent. It is necessary to boycott sometimes but the non-violent resister realizes that boycott is never an end within itself, but merely a means to awaken a sense of shame within the oppressor; that the end is reconciliation; the end is redemption. And so the aftermath of violence is bitterness; the aftermath of non-violence is the creation of the beloved community; the aftermath of non-violence is redemption and reconciliation. This is a method that seeks to transform and to redeem, and win the friendship of the opponent, and make it possible for men to live together as brothers in a community, and not continually live with bitterness and friction. (1957b)

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[16] For further discussion of King's philosophical views, see the essays in Shelby and Terry (2018).

As a Christian, King affirms that all human beings are created in the "image of God," or *imago Dei*. For King, God's love for us bestows on us our worth and dignity. We lack worth in ourselves, and we owe one another respect because we are beloved by God. Our worth, which God bestows on us, grounds our dignity. King also claims that we are all "children of God." We are, in a religious and ethical sense, all related as brothers and sisters in the human family. King renders the importance of that claim in Kantian terms: we are all ends in ourselves because we are children of God and God loves us. King also claims that we are all "neighbors."[17]

In turn, Kant affirms Jesus's ethic of love, which calls on us to have *agapic love* for one another. King claims that *agape* is grounded in a recognition that all human beings are created in the image of God, beloved by God, and are children of God, and so are related to one another in the human family, and are neighbors. *Agape* is disinterested love, which seeks not our own good but the good of others, for their own sakes. *Agape* is also grounded in the needs of others and moves us to fulfill their needs. *Agape* is understanding, creative, and redeeming goodwill for all of our fellow human beings.[18]

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[17] Cf. King (1967): "Deeply rooted in our religious heritage is the conviction that every man is an heir to a legacy of dignity and worth. Our Judeo-Christian tradition refers to this inherent dignity of man in the Biblical term 'the image of God.' 'The image of God' is universally shared in equal portions by all men. There is no graded scale of essential worth. […] Every man must be respected because God loves him"; "Human worth lies in relatedness to God. An individual has value because he has value to God. Whenever this is recognized, 'whiteness' and 'blackness' pass away as determinants in a relationship and 'son' and 'brother' are substituted. Immanuel Kant said that 'all men must be treated as *ends* and never as mere *means*.' The immorality of segregation is that it treats men as means rather than ends, and thereby reduces them to things rather than persons" (102-103); King (2015b): "I am convinced […] that man is an end because he is a child of God" (42); King (1963a): "One of the great tragedies of man's long trek along the highway of history has been the limiting of neighborly concern to tribe, race, class, and nation" (31); "The real tragedy of such narrow provincialism is that we see people as entities or merely as things. Too seldom do we see people in their true *humanness*. A spiritual myopia limits our vision to external accidents. We see men as Jews or Gentiles, Catholics or Protestants, Chinese or American, Negroes or whites. We fail to think of them as fellow human beings made from the same basic stuff as we, molded in the same divine image" (33); "The good neighbor looks beyond the external accidents and discerns those inner qualities that make all men human and, therefore, brothers" (33).

[18] Cf. King (2015b): "*Agape* is disinterested love. It is a love in which the individual seeks not his own good, but the good of his neighbor (I Cor. 10:24). *Agape* does not begin by discriminating between worthy and unworthy people, or any qualities people possess. It begins by loving others *for their sakes*. It is an entirely 'neighbor-regarding concern for others,' which discovers the neighbor in every man it meets. Therefore, *agape* makes no distinction between friend and enemy; it is directed toward both" (51); King (1957a): "*Agape* means nothing sentimental or basically affectionate. It means understanding, creative, redeeming goodwill for all men. It is an overflowing love which seeks nothing in return. It is not set in motion by any quality or function of its object. It is purely spontaneous, unmotivated, groundless, and creative. It is the love of God operating in the human heart. When we rise to love on the agape level, we love men not because we like them, not because their attitudes and ways appeal to us, but we love them because God loves them. Here we rise to the position of loving the person who does the evil deed while hating the deed that the person does."

King's two sermons that focus most on how we should ideally respond to wrongdoers are "Loving Your Enemies" and "Love in Action." In "Loving Your Enemies," King reflects on Jesus's words in "The Sermon on the Mount": "Ye have heard it said of old that thou shall love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, love your enemies. Bless them that curse you. Do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew, 5:43-45). And in "Love in Action," King reflects on Jesus's words on the Cross: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

In "Loving Your Enemies" (1961), King affirms that we should have agapic love even for our enemies, or rather for those who are unjust or even evil, though we should hate their injustice and evil. According to King, injustice and evil distort the personalities and wound the souls of those who are unjust and evil.[19] In this, King affirms a form of the Platonic Attitude. Injustice and evil are bad in themselves for those who are unjust or evil. King claims that we must love those who are unjust or evil because they need our love in order for the distortions to their personality and wounds to their soul to be corrected and healed. In loving our enemies, we aim to bring them into conversation, convert them to the good and the just, and redeem them from injustice or evil.[20]

King clarifies that agapic love is not affectionate or sentimental. To love others in this way is not a matter of liking them: "In speaking of love at this point, we are not referring to some sentimental or affectionate emotion. It would be nonsense to urge men to love their oppressors in an affectionate sense" (1957a). To love others in this way is also not cowardly or passive. Agapic love actively resists injustice by moving us to hold wrongdoers account, demanding that they acknowledge the worth and

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19 Cf. King (1961): "hate damages the personality and injures the soul"; "we come to see that there is within every man the image of God, and no matter how much it is scarred, it is still there. And so when we come to recognize that the evil act of our enemy neighbor is not the whole being of our enemy neighbor, we develop the capacity to love him in spite of his evil deed"; King (2015b): "Since the white man's personality is greatly distorted by segregation, and his soul is greatly scarred, he needs the love of the Negro. The Negro must love the white man, because the white man needs his love to remove his tensions, insecurities, and fears" (52).

20 Cf. King (1961): "we must love our enemies because hate, or rather because love has within its very power transforming qualities. […] Hate serves to destroy. Love serves to build up. Hate seeks destructive ends. Love seeks constructive ends. Hate seeks to annihilate. Love seeks to convert. Hate seeks to live in monologue. Love seeks to live in dialogue. And it is only through love that we are able to redeem and transform the enemy neighbor"; "love makes it possible for you to place your vision and to center your activity on the evil system and not the individual enemy who may be caught up in that system"; "there must be an active love for the individuals who may be caught up in an evil unjust system while we continue to work passionately and unrelentingly to do away with the system itself"; King (1963c): "While abhorring segregation, we shall love the segregationist. This is the only way to create the beloved community" (56); King (2015b): "*agape* […] springs from the *need* of the other person—his need for belonging to the best in the human family," and "the point of our greatest need for love" is while we are in sin (52).

dignity of their fellow human beings. But in resisting them with agapic love, we aim to enlighten those who are intellectually and spiritual blind, to defeat the injustice and evil that enslaves them, and so to free them from such blindness, injustice, and evil.[21]

King thereby affirms the Senecan Attitude. Among our proper concerns and ends in holding wrongdoers to account is to free them from injustice and evil for their own sakes. In turn, for King, the ultimate end of our resistance to injustice and evil is "the creation of the beloved community": "a kingdom of understanding, where men will live together as brothers and respect the dignity and worth of all human personality" (2015a, 38). King himself points to Gandhi and Lincoln as exemplifying agapic love and the Senecan Attitude.[22]

In "Love in Action" (1963b), King seems to affirm the Socratic Claim and hold that the Socratic Attitude supports and should ideally inform our agapic love for one another. Following Socrates, King affirms that a lack of proper ethical understanding makes wrongs possible.[23] Regarding

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[21] Cf. King (1957a): "this is not a method of cowardice or stagnant passivity. It does resist. It is true that this method is passive, or non-aggressive, in the sense that the nonviolent resister is not aggressive physically toward his opponent. But his mind and emotions are always active, constantly seeking to persuade the opponent that he is mistaken. This method is passive physically, but it is strongly active spiritually"; "the method of nonviolence is […] directed at forces of evil rather than persons caught in the forces. It is evil that we are seeking to defeat, not the persons victimized with evil."

[22] Cf. King (1963c): "And so when Jesus says, 'love the enemy,' he's saying love the enemy because there is something about love that can transform, that can change, that can arouse the conscience of the enemy. And only by doing this are you able to transform the jangling discords of society into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood and understanding. We've seen examples of this—many cases in history and in biography. We look back at our own history, and we think of Abraham Lincoln, the great president of the United States, one of the great men of history" (54).

[23] King (2015c) provides a personal account of his forming the Socratic Attitude:

> I began to think of the viciousness of people who would bomb my home. I could feel the anger rising when I realized that my wife and baby could have been killed. I thought about the city commissioners and all the statements that they had made about me and the Negro generally. I was once more on the verge of corroding hatred. And once more I caught myself and said: "You must not allow yourself to become bitter." I tried to put myself in the place of the three commissioners. I said to myself these men are not bad men. They are misguided. They have fine reputations in the community. In their dealings with white people they are respectable and gentlemanly. They probably think they are right in their methods of dealing with Negroes. They say the things they say about us and treat us as they do because they have been taught these things. From the cradle to the grave, it is instilled in them that the Negro is inferior. Their parents probably taught them that; the schools they attended taught them that; the books they read, even their churches and ministers, often taught them that; and above all the very concept of segregation teaches them that. The whole cultural tradition under which they have grown—a tradition blighted with more than 250 years of slavery and more than 90 years of segregation—teaches them that the Negroes do not deserve certain things. So these men are merely the children of their culture. When they seek to preserve segregation they are seeking to preserve only what their local folkways have taught them was right. (11-12)

Jesus's words on the cross—"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34)—King remarks: "This is love at its best"; "This was Jesus' finest hour"; "It was an expression of Jesus' awareness of man's intellectual and spiritual blindness"; "Blindness was their trouble; enlightenment was their need"; "They knew not what they did" (41-43). King also claims that "Not badness but blindness killed Socrates" (43). King continues: "This tragic blindness expresses itself in many ominous ways in our own day": "Slavery in America was perpetuated not merely by human badness but by human blindness"; slaveholders "sincerely came to believe that the Negro was inferior by nature and that slavery was ordained by God"; and "The justices who rendered [the Dred Scott] decision were not wicked men. On the contrary, they were decent and dedicated men. But they were victims of spiritual and intellectual blindness. They knew not what they did. The whole system of slavery was largely perpetuated by sincere though spiritually ignorant persons" (43-45).

In "Loving Your Enemies" (1961), King notes how a lack of integrity in our agency otherwise makes wrongs possible:

> If we look at ourselves hard enough, and if we look at all men hard enough, we see a strange dichotomy, a disturbing schizophrenia. We are divided against ourselves, split up so to speak. There is something within all of us which causes us to cry out with Ovid the Latin poet, "I see and approve the better things of life, but the evil things I do." There is something within all of us that causes us to agree with Plato that "the human personality is like a charioteer with two headstrong horses each wanting to go in different directions." There is something within all of us that causes us to cry out with St. Augustine in his Confessions from time to time, "Lord, make me pure, but not yet." Or we find ourselves crying out with the Apostle Paul, "The good that I would I do not, and the evil that I would not that I do."

The last of King's claims that I will briefly consider is that

> the method of nonviolent resistance is […] based on the conviction that the universe is on the side of justice. It is this deep faith in the future that causes a nonviolent resister to accept suffering without retaliation. He knows that in his struggle for justice he has cosmic companionship. […] This is the faith that keeps the nonviolent resister going through all of the tension and suffering that he must inevitably confront. (1957a)

Just as I differ with King regarding the religious grounds of our individual worth, I also differ from him in that I lack faith in the ultimate justice and goodness of the universe. I hope for the Beloved Community, and I regard that community as our ultimate end in interpersonal ethical life. But I do not believe what King seems to have believed—and what Kant seems to have believed—which is that faith in the ultimate justice and goodness of the universe is necessary for commitment to such an ideal.

As I noted at the beginning of this section, I suppose that King commonly felt blaming anger, but his anger seems to have been informed by a profound love for those at whom he was angered. King proposed that we should love the sinner but hate their sins, and we should hope for their salvation, or redemption. For King, the intellectual and spiritual need of those who are unjust for enlightenment and integrity should move us to respond to them with that need in mind.

King was exemplary not only in denying the appropriateness of retributive attitudes but also in calling for us to have deepened sympathetic concern for all of our fellow human beings, and in calling for us to hold the Platonic, Socratic, and Senecan Attitudes toward one another. To my mind, he is perhaps the most powerful exemplar of the overall ideal of ethical responsiveness to wrongdoers that I have proposed in this dissertation. I hope that his example makes this ideal even more plausible and compelling.

To conclude this section, I should note that King follows a prominent Christian ethical tradition that affirms the Senecan Claim by way of affirming "fraternal correction" as an ideal of holding wrongdoers to account. But he does not—as far as I am aware—discuss this specific tradition. Consider the following remarks by Augustine and Aquinas:

> I exhort you to a more faithful exercise of love towards him. For the man who so deals with the wicked as to make them repent of their evil doings, is one who knows how to be angry with them, and yet consult for their good; for as bad companions hinder men's welfare by compliance, so good friends help them by opposition to their evil ways. (Augustine, Letter 151.7)

> Since, then, the admonition which is given in fraternal correction is directed to the removal of a brother's sin, which removal pertains to charity, it is evident that this admonition is chiefly an act of charity. (Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II, II, Q33, A1)

Augustine and Aquinas both affirm the Platonic claim. For Aquinas, for example, injustice harms both those who are unjust and those who suffer the injustice of others. Because of the twofold harms of injustice, Aquinas claims that our aims in correcting wrongdoers should be twofold. In correcting wrongdoers, Aquinas proposes that we aim in part for "justice": "This correction is an act of justice, whose concern it is to safeguard the rectitude of justice between one man and another" (*ST*, II, II, Q33 A1). In this, we are concerned for the good of those who have been wronged and for the common good. But for Aquinas, correcting wrongdoers is also "a spiritual almsdeeds": "To do away with anyone's evil is the same as to procure his good: and to procure a person's good is an act of charity" (*ST*, II, II, Q33 A1). In sum, for Aquinas—as for Augustine—we can and should aim to correct wrongdoers for the sake of those whom they have wronged and for the sake of others, as well as for their own sake.[24]

[24] For further discussion of "fraternal correction" in Christian ethical traditions, see Edwin Craun (2010), Jennifer Ebbeler (2012), and Jeffrey Hause (2018). On Augustine, see also Philip Wogaman (1993, Ch. 5).

Section Four. Objections to the Senecan Attitude

I now turn to consider some objections to the Senecan Attitude as an ideal of ethical responsiveness toward wrongdoers. The first set of objections claim that the Senecan Attitude is inconsistent with what it is to hold wrongdoers to account: we cannot coherently *demand* proper regard from wrongdoers out of concern for them, or to facilitate or cultivate their proper regard for others, for their own sake. The second set of objections claim that the Senecan Attitude is disrespectful to those whom we hold to account. The third objection claims that the concern for wrongdoers involved in the Senecan Attitude is non-voluntary and so cannot be demanded of us. And the fourth objection claims that the Senecan Attitude is overly demanding as an ideal, or at least as a universal ideal for how we should strive to hold wrongdoers to account.

§4.1 The Senecan Attitude as Incoherent

The first set of objections to the Senecan Attitude that I will consider claim that we cannot coherently demand proper regard from wrongdoers to foster their proper regard for others in part out of a concern for them for their own sake.

§4.1.1 The Perfectibility of Others as Our Aim or Duty

I begin with an objection from Kant, which is not specifically to our holding wrongdoers to account for their own sake but to our coherently having among our aims and duties the perfection of others' rational and moral agency at all. Kant claims:

> [I]t is a contradiction for me to make another's *perfection* my end and consider myself under obligation to promote this. For the *perfection* of another man, as a person, consists just in this: that he *himself* is able to set his end in accordance with his own concepts of duty; and it is self-contradictory to require that I do (make it my duty to do) something that only the other himself can do. (1797: 6:386)

As Derek Parfit (2011, I) remarks, "Kant claims implausibly, that no one can affect how virtuous other people are" (245). The kernel of truth in Kant's claims is that we cannot directly make others virtuous. Just as others cannot succeed in making me virtuous without my becoming virtuous,

I cannot succeed in making others virtuous without their becoming virtuous. But this does not mean that others cannot help us, or that we cannot help them, become virtuous. Nor does this mean that we cannot have duties to help one another become virtuous.

Consider an apparent implication of Kant's claims: that math teachers cannot have as an end the improvement of their students' mathematical abilities, because for their students to improve at math is for them to be able to do math better on their own, by their own mathematical abilities. But, of course, math teachers can, and should, have as an end the improvement of their students' mathematical abilities. And so, just as we can have the cultivation of our own abilities among our ends, we can also, I believe, have the cultivation of others' abilities among our ends, and we can even have the cultivation of their abilities among our duties.[25]

In some passages, Kant himself seems to suggest that we have such a duty:

> From a moral point of view it is, of course, a duty for one of the friends to point out the other's faults to him; this is in the other's best interests and is therefore a duty of love. (1797: 6:470)

> [T]he greatest anger may very well consort with the utmost love towards the other, and even presupposes love for him. Thus it is from real love that parents are angry at their children for bad behaviour, or a man is angry at the conduct of a friend who, in his opinion, is wantonly turning away a benefit, or a patriot is angry when he considers acts of government to be detrimental to his country; this could not occur if he did not presuppose that the opposite conduct would be beneficial to the other, and thus was concerned for the latter's welfare. (*Lectures on Ethics*, 27:687-688)[26]

In such passages, Kant seems to come close to affirming the Senecan Attitude. But, as I discussed in Chapter Two, Kant elsewhere seems to deny the Platonic Claim. He seems to affirm a dualism of practical reason, such that moral considerations do not appeal to our own good, but rather to the good

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[25] That the perfection of others can be, and is, among our proper ethical concerns and ends, is affirmed by prominent philosophers influenced by Kant, including his contemporary Fichte and later by T. H. Green (1883, §332). On Fichte, see Allen Wood (2018: 170-171, 219-224). On Green, see David Brink (2003). I should note that Sidgwick (1907: 240) and W. D. Ross (1930: 26) also object to Kant on this point.

[26] As I noted in Chapter One, Kant, in his *Lectures on Ethics*, is reported by his student Vigilantius to affirm duties that seem close to duties to morally perfect others: "it is quite certain that duties of right to oneself are distinguished from duties of love, and that the latter are called duties of virtue when their aim is to promote moral goodness in other men, and thereby to extend the underlying duty of right" (27:607).

of others, whereas prudential considerations appeal to our own good, and our virtue and our happiness are independent of one another.

As I proposed in Chapter Two, Kant's claims might be reconcilable with the Platonic Claim. The Platonic Claim is not the claim that ethical considerations are grounded in our own good, worth, or dignity, rather than in the good, worth, or dignity of others. The Platonic Claim is the claim that our fulfilling our ethical obligations, and our not failing to fulfill them, is an essential and supremely important part of our good. Kant's understanding of our highest good seems consistent with that. He suggests that our highest good consists in our being both happy and worthy of happiness, and what makes us worthy of happiness is our virtue. If we identify our own good as our highest good, rather than as our happiness, then Kant's claims would be consistent with the Platonic Claim.

Kant also makes a related point, which can clarify how we can and should aim to morally perfect others. Kant claims that "It is the *shamefulness* of vice, not its *harmfulness* (to the agent himself), that must be emphasized above all" (1797: 6:483). On my view, in aiming to bring wrongdoers to have proper regard for others, directing them to consider their own good in properly regarding others directs them to the wrong sort of reason. For them to properly regard others, they need to come to regard others as worthy of and owed sympathetic concern and recognition respect. Directing them to consider their own good—independently of the worth and dignity of others—cannot bring them to properly regard others.

§4.1.2 Demands and Other Forms of Directives

I now turn to consider the objection that we cannot specifically *demand* proper regard from wrongdoers out of concern for them. To elaborate and reply to this objection, I will need to clarify the differences among distinct sorts of directives.

As I noted Chapter One, many contemporary philosophers focus on recognition respect to the neglect of sympathetic concern, and many contemporary philosophers either do not affirm the Platonic Claim or do not affirm the Platonic Claim as central to how we should respond to wrongdoers. The tendency to neglect or deny the possibility—and pervasiveness—of our making ethical demands of others for their own good seems to follow, at least in part, from those other tendencies.

Here I will consider another possible source of neglect and denial of that possibility and pervasiveness, which is the distinction between *commanding* and *counseling*, which became prominent in the natural law tradition.[27]

In *Leviathan* (1651), Hobbes articulates the distinction between commanding and counseling as follows:

> COMMAND is where a man saith *do this*, or *do not do this*, without expecting other reason than the will of him that says it. From this it followeth manifestly that he that commandeth pretendeth thereby his own benefit; for the reason of his command is his own will only, and the proper object of every man's will is some good to himself. (II, xxv, 2)

> COUNSEL is where a man saith *do*, or *do not this*, and deduceth his reasons from the benefit that arriveth by it to him to whom he saith it. And from this it is evident that he that giveth counsel pretendeth only (whatsoever he intendeth) the good of him to whom he giveth it. (II, xxv, 3)

For Hobbes, commands and counsels are distinct in at least three aspects: the perspective of the director, the perspective of the directed, and the normativity of the directive. Commanders command for their own good, not for the good of the commanded, whereas counselors counsel for the good of the counseled, or at least pretend to (II, xxv, 4). Commanders expect the commanded to act as commanded in light of being commanded, and not only in light of independent considerations regarding their own good. Counselors, however, expect the counseled to act as counseled in light of such independent considerations. Commands are normative, or specifically obliging, in virtue of the legitimate authority of the commander to command, whereas counsels are normative, but not obliging, in virtue of considerations that are normative independently of the counselor's counseling. For commands to be obliging is for the commanded to be punishable for non-compliance (II, xxv, 5). Counsels are non-obliging in that the counseled are not punishable for non-compliance. Commanders take themselves to have the authority to punish and expect the commanded to acknowledge that, whereas counselors do not take themselves to have, or represent themselves as having, that authority.

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[27] The original distinction, present in Aquinas, was between "commands of necessity," which specify obligations that we all are subject to, and "counsels of perfection," which specify special obligations that only some of us are subject to, namely those who are capable of a certain form of religious life. See Terence Irwin (2007, §340) and Sidgwick (1902: 146).

There is a tradition in modern Western ethics that follows Hobbes's distinction between commands and counsels. Views in this tradition claim that holding wrongdoers to account is a matter of commanding them to render respect, not a matter of counseling them to render respect. Darwall (2006), for example, follows Hobbes in claiming that commands aim to direct the will of the commanded directly, whereas counsels aim to direct the counseled to independent normative considerations (12-13). Holding wrongdoers to account consists in commanding them to render the respect that they owe those whom they have wronged. Holding wrongdoers to account is not a matter of counseling them or being concerned for them. Concern could call for counseling them to render such respect, but not commanding them (126-130). Merely counseling wrongdoers to render respect would not, however, be a way of holding them to account.[28]

There are two crucial problems with such Hobbesian views. The first problem is the extreme contrast between commands and counsels and between respect and concern. The second problem is that neither commands nor counsels are *demands* in the relevant sense. That is, neither *pure commands* nor *mere counsels* are the sorts of demands for acknowledgment and proper regard that are directed toward wrongdoers in holding them to account.

Consider how Hobbes begins his discussion of commands and counsels:

> How fallacious it is to judge of the nature of things by the ordinary and inconstant use of words, appeareth in nothing more than in the confusion of counsels and commands, arising from the imperative manner of speaking in both of them (and in many other occasions besides). For the words *do this* are the words not only of him that commandeth, but also of him that giveth counsel, and of him that exhorteth; and yet there are but few that see not that these are very different things, or that cannot distinguish between them. (II, xxv, 1)

As Hobbes acknowledges, commands and counsels can commonly be addressed in the same words. But he seems to deny that we can at once both command and counsel with those words.[29]

There is another natural law tradition, which includes Francisco Suárez and Christian Thomasius—and perhaps even Hobbes—which affirms the possibility of directives that are at once

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[28] Note that, for Hobbes, repentance can be counseled for the sake of the counseled (II, xxv, 10).

[29] Hobbes provides the following Biblical directives as examples: "Have no other Gods but me, make to thyself no graven image, take not God's name in vain, sanctify the sabbath, honor thy parents, kill not, steal not" (II, xxv, 10). According to Hobbes, those are commands by God, which we are obliged to God to follow just because they are God's commands. But "Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus," is a counsel, according to Hobbes, because such a counsel is to our benefit, not to God's (II, xxv, 10).

both commands and counsels. For Thomasius, for example, God commands us out of a concern for our good.[30] In this, God's commands are akin to the commands of parents to their children to act in ways that are for their children's own good. Such commands are not counsels in Hobbes's sense, in that the commanded are not necessarily directed to act in light of considerations that are normative independently of the command. But such commands have a feature of counsels that Hobbes seems to deny of commands, which is that commanders can command for the good of the commanded.[31]

But Hobbes himself comes close to affirming the possibility of such *commanding counsels*, or *counseling commands*, in regard to God. For Hobbes, God obliges us to follow natural law by commanding us to follow the Laws of Nature. But, according to Hobbes, following the Laws of Nature is good for us independently of God's commands. In this, God commands us to conduct ourselves in ways that are for our own good.

For Suárez, the enforcement of commands through sanctions, if not commands themselves, can be for the good of those sanctioned. Such sanctions can be for the good of those sanctioned not only by bringing them to comply with external standards of conduct but also by bringing them to hold proper attitudes toward ethical considerations. Sanctions can direct those sanctioned to attend to certain ethical considerations, and by attending to those considerations, those sanctioned can come to properly respond to them.[32]

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[30] On Thomasius, see J. B. Schneewind (1999: 161-162).

[31] The roots of this tradition seem as old as the Old Testament. Consider Deuteronomy 6:24: "Then the LORD commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our lasting good, so as to keep us alive, as is now the case" (NRSV). Consider also the following passages by Clement of Alexandria: "Great is the wisdom displayed in His instruction, and manifold the modes of His dealing in order to salvation. For the Instructor testifies to the good, and summons forth to better things those that are called; dissuades those that are hastening to do wrong from the attempt, and exhorts them to turn to a better life. For the one is not without testimony, when the other has been testified to; and the grace which proceeds from the testimony is very great. Besides, the feeling of anger (if it is proper to call His admonition anger) is full of love to man, God condescending to emotion on man's account; for whose sake also the Word of God became man" (*The Instructor*, I.8); "With all His power, therefore, the Instructor of humanity, the Divine Word, using all the resources of wisdom, devotes Himself to the saving of the children, admonishing, upbraiding, blaming, chiding, reproving, threatening, healing, promising, favouring; and as it were, by many reins, curbing the irrational impulses of humanity. To speak briefly, therefore, the Lord acts towards us as we do towards our children. *"Do you have children? Correct them,"* is the exhortation of the book of Wisdom, *"and bend them from their youth. Do you have daughters? Attend to their body, and let not your face brighten towards them,"* Sirach 7:23-24—although we love our children exceedingly, both sons and daughters, above anything else whatever. For those who speak with a man merely to please him, have little love for him, seeing they do not pain him; while those that speak for his good, though they inflict pain for the time, do him good for ever after. It is not immediate pleasure, but future enjoyment, that the Lord has in view" (*The Instructor*, I.10).

[32] On Suárez, see Thomas Pink (2019). I should note that Augustine seems to hold a similar view. He holds that coercing heretics can direct them to reconsider and, in turn, change their beliefs. And he holds that such coercion is properly motivated by love for them. On Augustine, see Wogaman (1993: 58).

Now consider the following ways in which we might hold wrongdoers to account. The ways in which we might admonish others can appear indistinguishable from how we hold them to account without admonishing concern. "How could you have done that?!" "What were you thinking?!" "They didn't deserve to be treated that way!" "How could you think of them like that?!" "You treated them disrespectfully and need to apologize." "Can't you understand what you're doing to them?!" Such verbal expressions can, I propose, be demands for acknowledgment that simultaneously express both blaming anger and our concern for the good of those at whom they are directed, especially concern for their proper regard for others, understood as part of their own good. Considering such verbal expressions in the course of an extended conversation, and against the background of an ongoing relationship, makes this even more apparent.

In holding wrongdoers to account, we demand that they acknowledge and fulfill what I will call an *ethical demand*—specifically an ethical obligation—that they are already subject to prior to our demanding its fulfillment. Their obligation is to render proper regard to those whom they have wronged. To demand such regard from wrongdoers is to claim from them what is already owed by them. The normativity of an ethical demand is not, therefore, grounded in will of the demander, or in their legitimate authority to make the demand or to sanction non-compliance with the demand. Nor is its normativity grounded in the good of the demanded. Rather, its normativity is grounded in the obligation of the demanded to properly regard others, an obligation that the demanded is already subject to.[33] In this, holding wrongdoers to account is not merely to counsel them. We do not merely inform them or remind them of their ethical obligations for their own good. We demand their fulfillment of those obligations.

To clarify further, the ethical demands involved in holding one another to account are neither *pure commands* nor *mere commands*. Pure commands are those whose normativity is grounded only in the will of the commander. On extreme theological voluntarist views, or extreme divine command views, God's commands are normative, or obligating, simply because God has commanded them, and there are no independent normative considerations that constrain what God can command. We are obligated to conduct ourselves in ways that are not right or wrong, or good or bad, independently of God's commands. On less extreme theological voluntarist views, or less extreme divine command views, there are independent constraints on what God can authoritatively command of us. On such views, God commands that we conduct ourselves in ways that are right or wrong, good or bad,

[33] As Wallace (2007) notes, the concept of an ethical demand is not clearly, or is at least not consistently, present in Darwall (2006).

independently of God's commands. Or at least, God commands us to conduct ourselves in ways that are not independently wrong or bad. But on these views, our being obligated, in the sense of being liable to sanction for non-compliance, is dependent on God commanding us.

On views that are more non-voluntarist, or more intellectualist, we are subject to ethical demands independently of God's commands. But such demands can also be commanded by God, which grounds a further practical requirement on us to fulfill those demands. Under their aspect *as demanded*, these practical requirements are placed on us by reason or nature, whereas under their aspect *as commanded*, these practical requirements are placed on us by God. On such views, God's commands are not *mere commands*. Mere commands are what we perhaps most commonly consider as commands in our ordinary lives. Those with the authority to command in this way have discretion and can give commands that oblige those commanded to conduct themselves in ways in which they were not under independent demands to conduct themselves. Those with such authority can command and oblige others to act in certain ways, but not in just any way. The scope of such authority, or power, is limited. Such authority is not grounded only in the will of the commander. Independent normative considerations constrain their authority.

To clarify, in commanding, what is commanded is compliance with external standards of conduct—that is, certain acts or omissions—not attitudes. To comply with a command is just to comply with certain external standards. We can therefore comply with commands without acknowledging the legitimate authority of the commanders. We can, for example, comply in light of the threat of sanction that the command implies or in light of independent prudential interests that we might have in conducting ourselves as commanded.

But as I noted in Section One, to fulfill the demand to render acknowledgment and proper regard to those whom we have wronged requires us to respond to that demand with the understanding that what is demanded is already owed by us independently of the demand. And what is owed by us are certain attitudes, including the recognition that others are worthy of and owed those attitudes.

I suppose many wrongdoers lack the attitudes that we demand of them in holding them to account. The respect they owe therefore needs to be fostered in them so that they can render that respect. Holding them to account can be part of facilitating or cultivating that respect in them, whether we aim to facilitate or cultivate that respect or not. In admonishing others, we hold them to account with the sense that their proper regard for others might need to be fostered in them. That is, we aim to bring about the attitudes in them that we demand from them, if that is needed. We can also have

this aim even if we do not hold wrongdoers to account with the Senecan Attitude. That is, we can aim to bring about their proper regard for others without being concerned for their good in that.

Many wrongdoers whom we hold to account might already, however, regard their conduct as wrongful and have rendered acknowledgment of their wrongful conduct to others. They can thereby render such acknowledgment on demand, with our demand of them only occasioning its rendering. I suppose that the more we sense that their acknowledgment is forthcoming—either because we sense that they have already acknowledged their conduct as wrongful, or would be disposed to acknowledge their conduct as wrongful on reflection—the less angrily and demandingly we are disposed to express our demand for their acknowledgment.

§4.2 The Senecan Attitude as Disrespectful

I turn now to consider a set of objections that claim that holding wrongdoers to account with the Senecan Attitude is, or can be, disrespectful.

There are various ways in which holding others to account with the Senecan Attitude—that is, admonishing others—might be objected to as disrespectful. The grounds of our concern for them might be objected to as disrespectful, our concern for them itself might be objected to as disrespectful, and the conduct that our concern for them motivates might be objected to as disrespectful.

Before I articulate these objections further, I will briefly note what I consider holding others to account *with respect* for them consists in. In demanding of wrongdoers their rendering of acknowledgment and proper regard, we respect them by regarding them as ethically responsible, as people who have ethical obligations toward others and who can be appropriately held to account for their wrongful conduct. In this, we acknowledge their ethical abilities, capacities, and competencies.

My general reply to these objections will be that although there are various ways in which we can disrespect others in admonishing them, admonishing them need not involve disrespect. Admonishing others is consistent with respecting them. In admonishing others, we can hold them to account with respect for their dignity, demanding that they fulfill the demands that they are already subject to, and we can aim to bring them to acknowledge these demands in part for their own sake, as part of their good, by facilitating or cultivating their proper regard for others if needed. Such concern for them does not preclude proper respect for them.

I now turn to consider in greater depth the ways in which the Senecan Attitude might be objected to as disrespectful.

Some philosophers might object that if our concern for those whom we admonish is grounded in our holding the Socratic Attitude toward them, we might thereby disrespectfully excuse or exempt them from ethical responsibility or accountability. But that is an objection to the Socratic Attitude. And I replied to that objection in Chapter Four. In brief, I replied that we can regard others with the Socratic Attitude without excusing or exempting them. And in holding others to account—whether with the Senecan Attitude or not—we are clearly not excusing or exempting them.

Some philosophers might also object that if our concern for those whom we admonish is grounded in our holding the Socratic Attitude toward them, our concern in admonishing wrongdoers might be condescending. But that is another objection to the Socratic Attitude that I replied to in Chapter Four. Regarding wrongdoers as lacking normative integrity in their wrongful conduct with the Socratic Attitude is only to regard them as lacking normative integrity in their wrongful conduct, just as we should regard ourselves in light of our own wrongful conduct. In holding the Socratic Attitude toward others, we do not suppose that we are ethically superior to them in general. Similarly, in holding the Senecan Attitude toward wrongdoers in holding them to account, we only suppose that their proper regard for others might need to be fostered in regard to their wrongful conduct.[34] In admonishing others, we are also not necessarily closed to genuine dialogue with them or to being corrected in our own attitudes.[35]

Some philosophers might also object that the Senecan Attitude is objectionably paternalistic, or encroaches on the autonomy of wrongdoers. But if demanding that others fulfill their obligations is not objectionably paternalistic, then neither, I believe, is demanding that others fulfill their obligations with the recognition that their fulfilling their obligations is also for their own good. Presuming to understand what the good of others consists in can be objectionably paternalistic. But not in this case, because the Platonic Attitude is not objectionably paternalistic. The Senecan Attitude is also not objectionable in terms of encroaching on the autonomy of wrongdoers. Holding them to account with the Senecan Attitude no more constrains their actions, or imposes on their will, than holding them to account without the Senecan Attitude.

In sum, if respect calls for us to ignore our imperfect ethical agency and our ongoing dependence on one another for our ethical development or reform, then I do not believe we owe one

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34 Cf. Aquinas: "one man can correct another in so far as he has a sane judgment in a matter wherein the other sins, though he is not his superior simply" (*ST*, II, II, Q33 A3).

35 As Stern (1974) notes, being open to genuine dialogue and to being corrected in our own attitudes is important in holding others to account.

another such respect. If respect instead calls for a realistic appreciation of our ethical abilities, capacities, and competencies, including a realistic appreciation of their limitations, then admonition seems to me to reflect a serious respect for those whom we appropriately admonish.

Again, to clarify, I do not deny that our concern for wrongdoers in responding to their wrongful conduct can reflect our excusing or exempting them from responsibility or our being condescending or objectionably paternalistic toward them. As I discussed in Chapters Three and Four, our attitudes toward one another can be immensely complex. There are many ways in which our concern for them can more or less correctly or incorrectly construe what matters and can more or less properly or improperly move us to act or not act. We should therefore strive to be aware of and keep in mind the ways in which our ways of holding others to account can be imperfect, and we should strive to perfect them.[36] This brings us to the following objection.

§4.3 The Senecan Attitude as Non-Voluntary

The next objection to the Senecan Attitude that I will consider claims that because such concern is non-voluntary, and because we can only be subject to demands regarding what is voluntary, we therefore cannot be subject to a demand to hold one another to account with such concern.

In reply to this objection, I would begin by noting that all of our obligations of regard are non-voluntary in that way, including our rendering others recognition respect and sympathetic concern. If we can owe others recognition respect, we can owe others sympathetic concern. And if we can owe others sympathetic concern, we can also be subject to an ethical demand, or at least to an ethical ideal, of holding wrongdoers account with the sort of concern called for by the Senecan Attitude.

Just as there are ways in which we can cultivate our own recognition respect and sympathetic concern for others, we can also cultivate the Senecan Attitude toward them, even if these attitudes cannot be directly willed by us. As Robert Adams (1985) notes, "If a state of mind is not directly within our voluntary control, it might still be *indirectly* within our voluntary control. That is, there might be (directly) voluntary steps we could take that would predictably, over time, affect our state of mind in ways that we would choose" (11).[37] Adams concludes that not only can we improve our motives by

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[36] As Karen Jones (1996) notes, our awareness of our tendencies to trust or distrust too readily can affect whether and how we should revise our levels of trust. This offers a general lesson for whether and how we should consider our attitudes toward wrongdoers. We need to prepare ourselves for and respond to various imperfections in our attitudes.

[37] Cf. Jones (1996): "While trust cannot be willed, it can be cultivated. We cultivate trust by a selective focus of attention toward the grounds for trust and away from the grounds for distrust" (13).

voluntary action, for example, but that "we ought to try to improve our motives by voluntary action. We ought to cultivate good motives and try to root out bad ones" (12).

In this, Adams follows Kant and many other philosophers, especially in Christian traditions. For Kant, for example, we have a duty of virtue to cultivate practical love for our neighbors, and works of love can bring us to become loving:

> Beneficence is a duty. If someone practices it often and succeeds in realizing his beneficent intention, he eventually comes to actually love the person he has helped. So the saying "you ought to love your neighbor as yourself" does not mean that you ought immediately (first) to love him and (afterwards) by means of this love do good to him. It means, rather, do good to your fellow human beings, and your beneficence will produce love of them in you (as an aptitude of the inclination to beneficence in general). (1797: 6:402)

Kant proposes that we should act in beneficent ways, aiming to benefit others, in the consciousness of being obliged to benefit them, and that we can, by such practice, acquire a disposition to respond to others to benefit them not only from a sense of duty, or respect, but gladly, with concern for them:

> If […] we do well by someone from duty, we get used to this, so that we subsequently do it from love and inclination as well. If we speak well of someone, simply because we see that he deserves it, we get used to this, so that we afterwards intone his merits in everything. Thus even love from inclination is a moral virtue, and might be commanded to this extent, that one should first practice well-doing as a duty, and later, through habituation, out of inclination as well. (*Lectures on Ethics*, 27:417)

I believe that we can cultivate in ourselves the sort of concern for others that is called by for the Senecan Attitude. And even though bringing ourselves to have such concern for others might take time, and be extremely difficult, I believe cultivating such concern is, in general, worthwhile.[38]

[38] See Rebecca Stangl (2020, Chs. 4-6) for discussion of what she calls "the virtue of self-cultivation."

§4.4 The Senecan Attitude as Overly Demanding

The last objection to the Senecan Attitude that I will consider claims that the concern that the Senecan Attitude calls for from us is not, or is at least not universally, called for, and so its demand that we be concerned for the good of wrongdoers in holding them to account is overly demanding.

Some philosophers would claim that some wrongdoers—because they are especially vicious or evil, or because we are not in a certain special relation with them—do not deserve or are not even worthy of our concern. The Senecan Attitude can thereby misdirect our focus from those who are worthy or deserving of our concern, such as those who have been wronged. The ideal of the Senecan Attitude can also be oppressive, especially to those who have been seriously wronged, if this ideal is regarded as something that they are failing to achieve. Holding the Senecan Attitude toward wrongdoers, at least toward all wrongdoers, is overly demanding in these various ways.

In reply to this objection, I would begin by noting that our concern for wrongdoers in our holding them to account with the Senecan Attitude could be extremely minimal. I would also note that although many people would have no right or claim on us for such concern, they could still be worthy of our concern in the sense that our concern for them would be appropriate or even admirable.

But we are also, I acknowledge, beings of limited capacities for attention and concern, and in many circumstances our attention and concern would not be best focused on the good of wrongdoers. That is not, however, to deny the significance of their good or to deny that being concerned for their good in holding them to account could be appropriate and admirable. Nor is it to deny that when we have time to reflect—once certain exigencies in responding to their conduct, such as protecting those whom they have wronged, have been met—we should affirm that their wrongful conduct constitutes a harm to them, and possibly a great harm, which could even be worthy of our sorrow or pity.

To clarify, the ideal of the Senecan Attitude that I am proposing does not demand that those who are wronged, especially those who are seriously wronged, make the good of those who have wronged them their primary aim in holding them to account, or even an aim at all. I am also not claiming that we should always strive to attend to the good of wrongdoers in holding them to account regardless of the other goods that might claim our attention. Rather, I am proposing that we should, when appropriate, strive to attend to their good. And we should, when appropriate, strive to cultivate our ethical sensibility to be attuned to the Senecan Claim, just as we should in regard to the Platonic, Spinozan, and Socratic Claims. Ideally we would have more opportunity for such cultivation. But the world is not ideal, and we often need to put aside cultivating ethically ideal attitudes.

Again, the Senecan Attitude is an ethically ideal attitude for us to have, not an attitude that we necessarily owe wrongdoers. Our not holding the Senecan Attitude toward wrongdoers is not necessarily wrongful or blameworthy. But as Pamela Hieronymi (2020) proposes, if certain standards of regard become commonly fulfilled, the standards of regard that we can reasonably expect and demand of one another might become higher (32, 82). We might, for example, come to have a culture in which the Senecan Attitude is commonplace and can be reasonably expected and demanded from at least certain others, in certain instances. I suppose that parents, for example, might come to have an ethical obligation to hold the Senecan Attitude toward their children, at least in certain instances. As I noted in Section Two, if parents lack concern for the ethical character of their children in holding them to account, they can already seem blameworthy to us.

As I noted in Chapter One, there is also an important distinction between an ethical ideal itself and advocating that ideal to others. Just as there are various considerations that bear on how we should respond to our own non-ideal attitudes, there are various considerations that bear on how we should engage with others regarding their non-ideal attitudes. Whether and how we should call on others to hold the Senecan Attitude, such as by discussing the Platonic and Senecan Claims with them, or by discussing the Spinozan or Socratic Claims with them, is a complicated matter.

As with any ideal, the ideal of the Senecan Attitude can also be misused and abused. Just as holding the Senecan Attitude can move us to disrespect and condescend to wrongdoers, our holding the Senecan Attitude can also move us to disrespect or harm those wronged. But that does not make the ideal itself objectionable. Just as we need various virtues to perfect our attitudes in regard to the Senecan Attitude, so as to not disrespect or condescend to wrongdoers, we also need various virtues so that we do not appeal to the ideal of the Senecan Attitude in ways that disrespect or harm others.

Section Five. Beyond the Senecan Attitude

> The blame system, most of the time, closely concentrates on the conditions of the particular act; and it is able to do this because it does not operate on its own. It is surrounded by other practices of encouragement and discouragement, acceptance and rejection, which work on desire and character to shape them into the requirements and possibilities of ethical life.
>
> — Bernard Williams, *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy* (1985: 216)

In this chapter, I have proposed an ideal of holding wrongdoers to account. I have proposed that we should ideally hold wrongdoers to account with the Senecan Attitude. In other words, I have proposed that when we hold wrongdoers to account, we should ideally be admonishing them.

As I noted in Section Two, the Senecan Attitude is only part of an ideal of benevolent concern for wrongdoers, which, in turn, is only a part of an ideal of sympathetic concern for wrongdoers. In Chapter Four, I focused on other aspects of such an ideal of sympathetic concern, namely attitudes of sympathetic understanding. As I discussed in Chapters Three and Four, an ideal of sympathetic concern for wrongdoers is also only part of a complete ideal of ethical responsiveness to wrongs and wrongdoers. And a complete ideal of ethical responsiveness to wrongs and wrongdoers is, in turn, only part of a complete ideal of ethical responsiveness to one another's ethical character and conduct. To conclude this chapter, I will consider just a few other aspects of that last, most complete ideal.

To begin, I should clarify that the Senecan Claim that the good of wrongdoers is among our proper concerns and ends in holding them to account does not imply that we should always hold wrongdoers to account—that is, in the sense of demanding their acknowledgment and proper regard. The Senecan Claim is that, when we hold wrongdoers to account, we should ideally hold them to account in part for their own sake. We should ideally admonish them.

But whether and how we should admonish others—or otherwise hold them to account—depends, for example, on our specific relations to them. We might be appropriately placed to hold our children, friends, or students to account for certain instances of their wrongful conduct, without being appropriately placed to hold a mere acquaintance or stranger for similar conduct.

Holding wrongdoers to account in certain situations might not be appropriate or best in other ways as well. Holding a wrongdoer to account in a specific instance might be counterproductive, or

even dangerous. And even if holding them to account would not be counterproductive or dangerous, other ways of responding to their wrongful conduct, including other ways to hold them responsible, might be better, not only for the sake of those whom they have wronged, but also for their own sake.

We might, for example, call on them to acknowledge their wrongful conduct and properly regard those whom they have wronged—without *demanding* that acknowledgment and regard. We could, for example, begin to respond to their apparently wrongful conduct just by conversing with them and listening to what they have to say, especially if their conduct is not seriously wrongful. We might ask about their ethical views, and we might affirm the appropriate aspects of their views. But we might then try to persuade them to change the inappropriate aspects of their views. We might remind them of certain matters of ethical importance that they seem to have forgotten. Or we might inform them of how those whom they have wronged felt, and encourage them to consider how they would have felt to be treated that way. Or we might caution them that we think their conduct might have been wrongful, rather than insist upon its wrongfulness. Or we might be even more indirect, exemplifying what we consider proper regard for others, and praising such regard in others, while disapproving of what we consider improper regard for others, perhaps admitting our own wrongful conduct in the past, and discussing how we came to understand such conduct as wrongful.

As I discussed in Chapter Three, responding well or excellently to wrongs and wrongdoers calls for various virtues. Understanding whether and how to admonish others, or hold them responsible, or otherwise respond to their wrongful conduct, in order to best pursue and fulfill our ultimate ends in responding to their wrongful conduct, calls for *phronesis*, or practical wisdom.[39] Making apologies and amends, forgiving, and reconciling with others similarly call for practical wisdom.[40]

Sometimes communicating to those whom we admonish that we are not merely blaming them but specifically admonishing them is important and should be communicated explicitly. This is perhaps especially so with children. Other times, communicating this concern could be regarded by those whom we admonish as condescending, and so we should not make our concern explicit. But I believe we should at least commonly aim to communicate that our blame is accompanied by concern for them and our common good together, and is not hostile or retributive. There could be some

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[39] In *On Frank Criticism*, Philodemus discusses how the Epicurean ideal of friendship, which involves our being concerned for the ethical character of our friends and our being responsible for correcting them, in part for their own sake, calls for us to be "adaptable" in how we correct them. The Epicurean ideal of friendship calls for us to be receptive to being corrected by our friends as well.

[40] For further discussion of such issues, see Charles Griswold (2007), Derk Pereboom (2014), Glen Pettigrove (2012), Linda Radzik (2009; 2020), Nick Smith (2008), and Margaret Walker (2006).

circumstances, however, in which being apparently hostile or retributive might be needed to enforce external standards of conduct, or to bring others to understand the wrongfulness of their conduct. In such cases, communicating our concern could be counterproductive, or even dangerous.

I suppose that greater communal awareness of admonition as a way of responding to one another in light of our wrongful conduct would help us to better foster relations of proper regard. Such awareness could allow for us to be less defensive in response to being held to account for our wrongful conduct, or to being otherwise regarded or held responsible for such conduct. Our greater willingness to accept expressions of blame from others could be accompanied by our greater willingness to feel and express appropriate guilt and shame, as well as gratitude for those who properly admonish us. Such awareness and willingness are aspects of how we should, I believe, ideally accept and take responsibility for our conduct, and how we should otherwise ideally respond to being blamed and being blameworthy. Fostering such awareness and willingness are among our proper concerns and ends in regard to the ethical character and conduct of others, which go beyond simply admonishing wrongdoers.

To bring about the Beloved Community that I proposed in Chapter One, our benevolent concern for one another to live and fare well should ideally move us to foster our proper regard for one another throughout our lives, and not only in response to one another's wrongful conduct.

As I discussed in Chapter Four, we also need to better understand the conditions that support relations of proper regard, and those which do not. We need to better understand how we come to improperly regard one another. And we need to better understand the ways in which we come to accord one another proper regard. In turn, we need to better understand how to best hold one another to account, hold one another responsible, or otherwise foster our proper regard for one another.

Again, these are only some among the many considerations that I believe bear on how we should ideally respond to one another's ethical character and conduct, beyond holding the Senecan Attitude and admonishing wrongdoers. But at this point, I must put aside further developing and defending a complete ideal of such responsiveness. I hope, however, that the views I have offered in this chapter, and throughout this dissertation, provide a compelling outline of such an ideal.

Conclusion

> I have sometimes criticized the views of other philosophers, dead or living. Such adverse criticism is a form of compliment. It is only the very best with whom it is worth while to differ.
>
> — P. F. Strawson, "Intellectual Autobiography" (2011: 247)

> I am of a conciliatory temper—which sometimes extends, in philosophy, into an attempt to reconcile views which appear to be sharply opposed to each other. I am very little, perhaps too little, prone to anger.
>
> — P. F. Strawson, "Intellectual Autobiography" (2011: 246-247)

> This lecture is intended as a move towards reconciliation; so is likely to seem wrongheaded to everyone.
>
> — P. F. Strawson, "Freedom and Resentment" (1962: §1)

In "Freedom and Resentment" (1962), Strawson proposed to reconcile certain traditional views of freedom and responsibility. He suggested, if only in jest, that his proposed reconciliation was "likely to seem wrongheaded to everyone." But such a reconciliation has not seemed wrongheaded to everyone.

In the wake of Strawson's proposal, contemporary Strawsonians and skeptics about certain pervasive conceptions of freedom and responsibility have been converging in their views. Whereas Strawsonians have tended to place emphasis on what we can and should preserve in our present attitudes and practices, skeptics have tended to place emphasis on what we should not preserve in those attitudes and practices. Strawsonians are increasingly skeptical of the same culturally and philosophically pervasive conceptions of responsibility as skeptics, and skeptics increasingly affirm the same conceptions of responsibility as Strawsonians. The blaming attitudes that Strawsonians affirm as fitting are increasingly indistinguishable from those that skeptics affirm, and vice versa. The goods and ends that Strawsonians and skeptics propose we should act for the sake of in response to wrongs are also increasingly indistinguishable. And attitudes of understanding that skeptics affirm as called for in recognition of the limits of our freedom—such as our lack of ultimacy and our lack of normative integrity in wronging others—are increasingly affirmed as called for by Strawsonians as well.

In this dissertation, I offered a view of interpersonal ethical life and responsibility that clarifies and deepens the recent convergence between Strawsonians and skeptics. The view of our fundamental obligations of regard and the ideals of ethical community that I offered in Chapter One; the view of what is at stake for us in properly regarding others and not wronging them that I offered in Chapter Two; the framework for assessing the ethical quality of our attitudes that I offered in Chapter Three; the framework that I offered for understanding human freedom and its limits in Chapter Four; and the ideal of admonition that I offered in Chapter Five—all of these views, frameworks, and ideals clarify and deepen the convergence among Strawsonians and skeptics.

But I also offered those views, frameworks, and ideals in response to what I believe are serious limitations of the prevailing philosophical views of ethical life and responsibility. In responding to those limitations, I retrieved aspects of older traditions of ethical thought—especially Platonic, Stoic, and Christian traditions—which take attitudes of concern and understanding to be central in our ethical relations, including our relations with mere acquaintances and strangers.[1]

I articulated a set of attitudes that those older traditions affirm as ethical ideals. I called these *the Platonic Attitude*, *the Spinozan Attitude*, *the Socratic Attitude*, and *the Senecan Attitude*. I noted that these attitudes, with the exception of the Spinozan Attitude, also remain common—if not fully articulated—in our relations with our loved ones. And I proposed that these attitudes constitute ideals not only for how we should respond to our loved ones but also for how we should respond to any of our fellow human beings.

With those ideals, I offered what I called *the Beloved Community* as an ideal of ethical community. In the Beloved Community, we would regard our fellow human beings not only with attitudes of recognition respect but also with attitudes of deepened sympathetic concern and understanding. We would regard and respond to one another with the Platonic, Spinozan, Socratic, and Senecan Attitudes, along with other deepened attitudes of recognition respect, sympathetic concern, and understanding. I believe that the Beloved Community provides a more complete and compelling ideal of ethical community than contemporary Strawsonians or skeptics—or other contemporary philosophers—have yet offered.

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[1] I did not focus on reconstructing the historical views of these traditions, or tracing their origins or influence, in depth. I hope to return to that project in the future. I also hope to extend that project to other ethical traditions, including Buddhist, Confucian, Hindu, Islamic, and Jewish traditions. See Owen Flanagan (2016; 2021) for discussion of the importance of historical and comparative philosophy for our understanding of the "varieties of moral possibility." See also the introductions of Talbot Brewer (2009), Terence Irwin (2007), Alasdair MacIntyre (1981), J. B. Schneewind (1998), and Bernard Williams (1993).

Gregory Vlastos (1991) once remarked that the distinction between punishment and revenge "must be regarded as one of the most momentous of the conceptual discoveries ever made by humanity in the course of its slow, tortuous, precarious, emergence from barbaric tribalism" (187). The ideals of ethical responsiveness that I proposed in this dissertation, which are prominent in many ethical traditions and in our relations with our loved ones, but which are neglected in much of contemporary moral philosophy and in our broader culture—these ideals are also, I believe, part of that slow, torturous, and precarious emergence.

I hope that humanity will someday come to live by them.

Glossary

Admonition: To admonish others is to **hold others to account** with **the Senecan Attitude**—that is, to demand, in response to their wrongful conduct, that they acknowledge its wrongfulness and properly regard those whom they have wronged, and to demand that they render such acknowledgment and regard in part for their own sake, from **sympathetic concern** for them.

Agential Humility: Humility regarding the limits of our agency and freedom, especially regarding how our character and conduct are subject to luck and dependent on others.

Attitudes of Recognition Respect: Attitudes that reflect our **recognition respect** for ourselves or for others—that is, that reflect our recognition of one another's **dignity** and our claims against one another.

Attitudes of Sympathetic Concern: Attitudes that reflect our **sympathetic concern** for ourselves or for others—that is, that reflect our appreciation of one another's **individual good** and **individual worth**.

Attitudes of Sympathetic Understanding (for wrongdoers): Attitudes, such as regret, compassion, pity, and grief, that reflect our **sympathetic concern** for one another in recognition of the harm that wrongful conduct constitutes for wrongdoers. See **the Platonic Attitude**.

Attitudes of Understanding (toward wrongdoers): Such attitudes include desires to understand the nature and causes of one another's wrongful conduct and beliefs about the nature and causes of such conduct. See **the Spinozan and Socratic Attitudes**.

Blaming Anger: A certain affective attitude toward those who have apparently wronged us or others. See **the Minimalist Conception** and **the Virtue Conception** for different conceptions of what blaming anger and its fittingness consist in.

Blameworthiness: For Strawsonians, our being blameworthy for wronging others is primarily for us to be the **fitting** object of blaming attitudes—that is, for blaming attitudes, such as **blaming anger**, to be fitting toward us in response to our **wrongful conduct**.

The Beloved Community: An ideal of ethical community in which we regard one another with deepened forms of **recognition respect** and **sympathetic concern**, in which we extend our ideals for how we should regard our loved ones toward all of our fellow human beings.

The Community of Respect: The ideal of moral community affirmed by many prominent Strawsonians, which consists in our according one another **recognition respect**.

Dignity: Our status as having claims against one another and being owed **recognition respect**.

Epistemic Humility: Humility in regard to the correctness of our construals and our warrant for them, including the correctness and our warrant for our beliefs, desires, emotions, and other intentional attitudes.

Ethical Demands: Demands of one another to fulfill our **ethical obligations**, which we are subject to prior to being demanded to fulfill them; also, our ethical obligations under the aspect of being expected and demanded of one another. See **Holding Others to Account**.

Ethical Obligations: See **Obligations of Regard**.

Ethical Wrongs: See **Wrongful Conduct**.

Ethically Responsible Agency: The form of agency that makes us ethically responsible for our conduct—that is, that makes us have **ethical obligations** and makes us **blameworthy** for failing to fulfill those obligations, or for wronging others. See **Wrongful Conduct**.

Eudaimonism (or Traditional Eudaimonism): The view that **the Platonic Claim** is true.

Experientialism (about our individual good): The view that our individual good is only a matter of our experiences, or lack of experiences.

External Obligations: Acts and omissions that we owe one another, which are specifiable independently of the attitudes that our acts or omissions reflect.

External Standards of Conduct: Standards regarding our acts and omissions, which are specifiable independently of the attitudes that our acts or omissions reflect. Among such standards are **external obligations**.

Fittingness: For an attitude to be fitting is for that attitude to be appropriate with respect to the norms that are internal to its nature, specifically to its construals of its object, or its objects. See **the Minimalist Conception** and **the Virtue Conception**.

Full Fittingness: See **the Virtue Conception**.

Holding Others to Account: To hold others to account is to demand, in response to their wrongful conduct, that they acknowledge its wrongfulness and properly regard those whom they have wronged. See **Ethical Demands**.

Humility: See **Agential Humility** and **Epistemic Humility**.

Improper Regard: To improperly regard one another is to fail to render one another the forms of regard that we owe one another—that is, to fail to fulfill our **obligations of regard** toward one another. See **Wrongful Conduct**.

Individual Good: Our individual good, or *eudaimonia*, is our living and faring well, or our living and having a good life, for our own sake.

Individual Worth: Our individual worth is that which makes our **individual good** significant—that is, that makes us worthy of and owed **sympathetic concern**.

King's Ideal: Martin Luther King, Jr.'s ideal of ethical responsiveness to wrongdoers, which consists in having deepened **recognition respect** and **sympathetic concern** for all of our fellow human beings, and in holding **the Platonic**, **Socratic**, **and Senecan Attitudes**.

Minimal Fittingness: See **the Minimalist Conception**.

The Minimalist Conception (of blaming anger and its fittingness): The conception of what blaming anger and its fittingness consist in that is held by many Strawsonians. For comparison, see **the Virtue Conception** that I offer.

The Minimalist Conception of Blaming Anger: Blaming anger essentially consists in a certain construal and a certain aim. In blaming anger, we construe the blamed as wronging us or others, or as disregarding or deficiently regard us or others, and we aim to hold the blamed to account for their wrongs. That is, we desire and are motivated to demand their acknowledgment of those wrongs and their proper regard for those whom they have wronged.

The Minimalist Conception of Fittingness (Minimal Fittingness): Blaming anger is fitting if and only if, and insofar as, its construal is correct and its aim is proper.

Normative Integrity: The freedom we have in conducting ourselves in accord with our fundamental desire for the good, which includes our properly regarding others and not wronging them. (The specific form of normative integrity, or the specific aspect of normative integrity, that I focus on is the freedom of properly regarding others and not wronging them.)

Objectivism (about our individual good): The view that our individual good is not only a matter of our experiences, the satisfaction of our desires, or our perfecting our nature.

Obligations of Regard: Forms of regard for one another, such as attitudes of recognition respect and sympathetic concern, that we owe one another.

Qualifying Attitudes: Attitudes that **qualifying considerations** for an attitude call for us to hold, which should inform, qualify, or even supersede that attitude, so that we more correctly construe and properly aim to respond to the object of that attitude as a whole.

Qualifying Considerations: Considerations that bear on the **full fittingness** of our attitudes without bearing on their **minimal fittingness** by calling for us to hold **qualifying attitudes**. See **the Minimalist Conception** and **the Virtue Conception**.

Perfectionism (about our individual good): The view that our individual good consists in perfecting our nature—that is, in fulfilling our natural function, or functions, or our natural capacities or potentials, which are not themselves irreducibly normative or evaluative.

The Platonic Attitude: To hold the Platonic Attitude toward one another is to regard one another in light of **the Platonic Claim**.

The Platonic Claim: The Platonic Claim has three main parts, and the third part itself has four parts. See **Eudaimonism** and **Individual Good**.

The First Part: Properly regarding others is in itself good for us.

The Second Part: Wronging others is in itself bad for us.

The Third Part: Properly regarding others, and not wronging them, is an essential and supremely important part of our good.

The Priority Claim: Properly regarding others is a condition on which other goods are genuinely or fully available to us.

The Necessity Claim: Properly regarding others is necessary for *eudaimonia*.

The Non-Sufficiency Claim: Properly regarding others is not sufficient for *eudaimonia*.

The Supremacy Claim: Properly regarding others is a supreme, or immensely important, good for us.

Proper Regard: To properly regard one another is to render one another the forms of regard that we owe one another—that is, to fulfill our **obligations of regard** toward one another.

Recognition Respect: The attitude that constitutes a recognition of one another's **dignity** and our claims against one another.

The Senecan Attitude: To hold the Senecan Attitude toward one another is to regard one another in light of **the Senecan Claim**.

The Senecan Claim: The claim that among our proper ends and concerns in **holding others to account** is their own good. See **the Platonic Claim**.

The Socratic Attitude: To hold the Socratic Attitude toward one another is to regard one another in light of **the Socratic Claim**.

The Socratic Claim: The claim that in wronging others, we lack either ethical understanding or integrity in our agency, or both.

The Spinozan Attitude: To hold the Spinozan Attitude toward one another is to regard one another in light of **the Spinozan Claim**.

The Spinozan Claim: The claim that we lack **ultimacy**—our character and conduct are ultimately subject to luck.

Subjectivism (about our individual good): The view that our individual good is a matter of our desires, or preferences, and their satisfaction, or fulfillment.

Supererogatory Regard: Forms of regard that we or others are worthy of but are not owed.

Sympathetic Concern: The attitude that constitutes a recognition, or appreciation, of one another's **individual good** and **individual worth**.

Sympathetic Understanding (toward wrongdoers): The attitude that constitutes an appreciation of the harms that wrongful conduct constitutes for wrongdoers. See **the Platonic Attitude**.

Ultimacy: The freedom of being in ultimate control of, and not ultimately subject to luck in, our character and conduct. (Such freedom is also commonly called "libertarian free will.")

The Virtue Conception (of blaming anger and its fittingness): The conception of what blaming anger and its fittingness consist in that I offer to extend **the Minimalist Conception**.

> **The Virtue Conception of Blaming Anger:** Blaming anger consists not only in a construal of the blamed as wronging us or others and in an aim to hold them account for their wrongful conduct. Blaming anger also consists in construing certain considerations, which blaming anger makes salient to us, as worthy of salience for us in certain characteristic ways.
>
> **The Virtue Conception of Fittingness (Full Fittingness):** The full fittingness of blaming anger depends not only on whether and to what extent the blamed have wronged us or others and on whether and to what extent we properly aim, in blaming anger, to hold them to account for their wrongful conduct. Its full fittingness also depends on whether and to what extent the considerations that seem to us worthy of salience in blaming anger are genuinely worthy of such salience.

Warrant: For an attitude to be warranted is for us to be (epistemically) justified in holding that attitude.

Worthiness (for an attitude): For us to be worthy of an attitude is for us to be a fitting object of that attitude, or for that attitude to be fitting toward us. That we are worthy of an attitude is distinct from whether we are owed that attitude. See **Obligations of Regard**.

Wrongful Conduct: Conduct by which we **improperly regard** one another—that is, by which we fail to fulfill our **obligations of regard** toward one another. See **Blameworthiness**.

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