A Comprehensive Account of Blame

Self-Blame, Non-Moral Blame, and Blame for the Non-Voluntary

Douglas W. Portmore

Arizona State University
dwportmore@gmail.com

Blame is multifarious. It can be heated or sedate. It can be expressed or kept private. We blame both the living and the dead. And we blame ourselves as well as others. What's more, we blame ourselves, not only for our moral failings, but also for our non-moral failings: for our aesthetic bad taste, gustatory self-indulgence, or poor athletic performance. And we blame ourselves both for things over which we exerted voluntary control (e.g., our voluntary acts) and for things over which we lacked such control (e.g., our fallacious beliefs, malicious desires, and irrational intentions).

Unfortunately, though, many extant accounts of blame fail to do justice to the manifest diversity in our blaming practices. For instance, T. M. Scanlon holds that "to blame a person is…to take your relationship with him or her to be modified" (2008, 128–9) and, as a consequence, "to alter or withhold intentions and expectations that that relationship would normally involve" (2013, 89). Yet, it seems clear that we can blame the dead without either taking our relationship with them to have been modified or altering our intentions with respect to them. Others—e.g., Miranda Fricker (2016)—acknowledge blame's manifest diversity but hold that, given this diversity, there can be no hope of providing illuminating necessary and sufficient conditions for blame. These philosophers hold that just as there's nothing common to all instances of the word 'game', there's nothing common to all instances of the word 'blame'. They believe that the best that we can hope for is an account that specifies the extension of 'blame' in terms of sufficient resemblance to some paradigm, or in terms of what Ludwig Wittgenstein (1953) called *family resemblances*. Still others—e.g., Angela Smith (2013)—think that

although the diversity in our blaming practices shouldn't lead us to give up on the prospect of providing illuminating necessary and sufficient conditions, we should give up on trying to specify those conditions in terms of what's *constitutive* of blame. For, as these functionalists see things, the only thing that unites all instances of blame is that they all play the same functional role.[1]

I'm more optimistic about the possibility of providing an illuminating set of necessary and sufficient conditions that specifies blame's extension in terms of its constitution as opposed to its function. In what follows, I'll propose just such an analysis. This proposal is stated and then clarified in section 1. On this proposal, there are two conditions for blaming someone that are individually necessary and jointly sufficient. So, in sections 2 and 3, I defend the necessity of each. And, in section 4, I defend their joint sufficiency. In section 5, I go through all the disparate forms of blame and how my proposal can account for each of them. I, then, conclude in section 6 with a summary of results along with an explanation of their importance.

1. My Proposal for a Comprehensive Account of Blame

To be blamed or praised for something is to be held responsible for it. But there are at least two ways of being responsible for something. One is to be the cause of it. This is *causal responsibility*. Another is to be accountable for it. And if one is accountable for something, then one can appropriately be held liable to reward or sanction for it. The reward or sanction needn't come from the law, society, or common opinion, but it must at least come from the approval or disapproval of one's own conscience—see Mill (1991, chap. 5). And, to distinguish this from

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[1] Functionalists hold that blame is, in a certain respect, more like a mousetrap than a diamond (Polger 2019). What makes something a mousetrap is not that it's constituted in a certain way but that it has a certain function: that of trapping a mouse. By contrast, what makes something a diamond is not that it has a certain function but that it is constituted by carbon crystals with a certain molecular lattice structure. On functionalist accounts, then, blame is just whatever has some particular function. But, like Dana Kay Nelkin (2017, 816), I doubt that our concept of blame is at bottom a functionalist one. For it seems to me that some instances of blame have absolutely no function. Consider, for instance, someone who privately blames herself for some long-past misdeed only to die seconds later. I doubt that such instances of blame have any function, even an unfulfilled one. Indeed, it seems a category mistake to suppose that such instances of blame are idle in the way that a mousetrap in a world of no mice is.

causal responsibility, I'll call it *normative responsibility*.[2] It's important to distinguish these two, because one can be causally responsible for something without being normatively responsible for it. I can, for instance, be causally responsible for spreading a virus at work even if I'm not normatively responsible for doing so given that I had no idea that I was infected.

My aim in this paper is to provide an account of *normative* as opposed to *causal* blame.[3] In the remainder, though, I'll leave the 'normative' qualifier implicit.

> *My Proposal:* For any action φ, any subject S, and any potential target T (where T may or may not be identical to S), S blames T for having seemingly φ-ed if and only if both of the following conditions are met:
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> - (Condition 1) S has some set of mental states that represents T (a) as having φ-ed, (b) as having violated a legitimate demand in φ-ing, and (c) as not having suffered all the guilt, regret, and remorse that she deserves to suffer in the recognition that she has violated this legitimate demand, and
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> - (Condition 2) S feels, as a result of these representations, disapproval of, or disappointment in, T for having seemingly φ-ed.
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> Additionally, the greater the amount of guilt, regret, and remorse that S represents T as still deserving to suffer, the greater the extent to which S blames T.[4]

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[2] The type of responsibility that contrasts with causal responsibility is more often called *moral responsibility*, but given that we can (or so I'll argue) have this sort of responsibility with respect to violations of non-moral demands, the 'moral' qualifier can be quite misleading. For this reason, I've chosen to borrow Rik Peels more apt phrase *normative responsibility* (2017, 16). For someone who shares my worry about the more common phrase but adopts it anyway, see Hilary Bok (1998, 123n.1). Also, as I see it, the relevant sort of responsibility is the one that's conceptually tied to the desert of reward or sanction—that is, accountability as opposed to answerability or attributability. (See David Shoemaker (2015) for more on how these three differ.)

[3] Praising or blaming a person for having φ-ed is just one way of holding her to account. Another way is to reward or punish her for having φ-ed.

[4] Although I won't discuss the positive analogue of blame in detail, it's an advantage of my account that it suggests the following symmetrical account: For any action φ, any subject S, and any potential target T (where T may or may not be identical to S), S feels gratitude—or whatever the positive analogue of blame is—toward T for having seemingly φ-ed if and only if both of the following conditions are met: (Condition 1) S has some set of mental states

This proposal is meant to be an account of what it is, in fact, to blame someone for having φ-ed. It isn't meant to be revisionary. So, I'm not trying to figure out what blame would need to be for our blaming practices to be justified. Indeed, I'm interested in the correct account of blame partly because I'm interested in exploring in future work whether our blaming practices are justified even if it turns out that all our actions are causally determined. And depending on what the correct account of blame is, it will be more or less plausible to think that people can be blameworthy for acts that they were causally determined to perform. For if, on the one hand, blaming people involves merely evaluating them, then, given that evaluations can be accurate—and, thus, appropriate—regardless of whether the people being evaluated had control over the properties that make those evaluations accurate, there would be nothing problematic about blaming people for actions that they were causally determined to perform. But if, on the other hand, blaming people entails deliberately causing them to suffer, then, given that no one deserves to suffer in virtue of things over which they lacked control, it would be problematic to blame people for acts that they were causally determined to perform—at least, it would if we're to assume that causal determinism rules out the sort of control that's required for being deserving of suffering.

Fortunately, on my proposal, blame lies somewhere between these two extremes, such that blame goes beyond mere evaluative judgment but falls well short of necessitating the deliberate infliction of suffering.[5] On my proposal, blame must go beyond mere evaluative judgment in that it necessitates feeling disapproval of, or disappointment in, its target. Thus, it requires a change in one's attitude toward the target. And, so, there is, on my proposal, a

that represents T (a) as having φ-ed, (b) as having done what she ought to have done in φ-ing, and (c) as not having felt all the pride that she deserves to feel in the recognition that she has done what she ought to have done, and (Condition 2) S feels, as a result of these representations, approval of T for having seemingly φ-ed.

[5] Most agree with me in thinking that the correct account of blame must lie somewhere between these two extremes. See, for instance, Coates & Tognazzini (2013), Darwall (2010), Scanlon (2008; 2013), Sher (2006), and Smith (2013).

distinction between blaming someone and merely making some set of judgments about her.[6]

But my proposal stops well short of insisting that blame must involve the deliberate infliction of suffering. Thus, there is, on my proposal, also a distinction between blaming someone and punishing her. Since my proposal denies that blame requires taking any deliberate action, and since the deliberate infliction of suffering necessitates deliberate action, my proposal allows that one can blame someone without punishing her. Indeed, on my proposal, blame essentially involves only two things: (1) a set of mental states that represent its target in various ways and (2) a feeling of disapproval of, or disappointment in, that target. And these are mental states, not deliberate actions.

Beyond the fact that my account lies between the extremes of mere evaluative judgment and punishment, there are several other aspects of my proposal that need clarifying.

First, the variable 'φ' ranges over non-voluntary actions as well as voluntary actions. For I'm using the term 'action' broadly to cover anything that's "done" in response to reasons. This includes not only those things that we do at will (e.g., raising one's hand to ask a question), but also some things that we do non-voluntarily, such as forming a belief, desire, or intention in response to reasons. Moreover, 'φ' ranges over omissions as well as actions. Indeed, the only things that 'φ' doesn't range over are those things that are not done in response to reasons: e.g., fainting, digesting, and perspiring. And this is important because it seems that we can be blamed for things that we do non-voluntarily. For instance, it seems that I can appropriately be blamed for non-voluntarily forming the belief that taking vitamins causes an increase in longevity if I do so in response merely to learning that there's a correlation between the two.

Second, as I understand things, emotions such as guilt, regret, and remorse are inherently unpleasant. For, in feeling these emotions, we represent ourselves as having violated a legitimate demand while painfully appreciating the awful significance of our having done so. So, if what we're feeling is not painful, it can't be guilt, regret, or remorse that we're feeling.

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[6] Thus, I concur with David Shoemaker in thinking that "blame involves attitude adjustment (and not mere deployment of judgments)" (2013, 101).

Third, when I speak of a 'demand', I'm speaking of a requirement as opposed to a mere expectation. Consequently, my account, as stated above, rules out the possibility of someone's being appropriately blamed for performing a 'suberogatory act' (Driver 1992)—that is, a permissible act that's worse than some permissible alternative.[7] Suberogatory acts may violate expectations but not requirements. To illustrate, my neighbor may not be required to refrain from mowing her lawn before 9 AM but it seems legitimate for me to expect her to so refrain. Now, some philosophers think that it's appropriate for me to resent (and, thus, to blame) my neighbor for mowing her lawn before 9 AM even if she doesn't violate any requirement in doing so.[8] Personally, I find this implausible, but there's little point in debating the matter here. So, those who think it's appropriate to blame people for performing suberogatory acts should just substitute 'expectation' for 'demand' throughout the above formulation.

Fourth, as I see it, what makes a demand (or expectation) *legitimate* is just that it is rationally authoritative such that there is decisive reason to comply with it. Thus, if we're to assume that morality is rationally authoritative and that act utilitarianism is the correct moral theory, it will be legitimate to demand that agents act always so as to maximize aggregate utility. And, of course, it could be legitimate to demand that an agent acts so as to maximize aggregate utility even if she wouldn't be blameworthy for failing to do so. For she may have an adequate excuse, such as that her evidence misleadingly suggests that some other act would maximize aggregate utility. So, the sense of 'legitimate' at issue here is not one that necessitates that one would be blameworthy if one violated a legitimate demand, and this allows my proposal to avoid circularity. Also, I believe that it's not just morality that can give rise to

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[7] Another worry along these lines, suggested to me by Philip Swenson, is that someone can be blameworthy for always doing no more than the bare minimum. But I don't think that this is an instance of someone's being blameworthy for performing a suberogatory set of acts. Rather, I think that it's an instance of someone's violating the legitimate demand to do more than just the bare minimum required to fulfill all of one's perfect duties. For it's legitimate to demand that people also fulfill their imperfect duties (e.g., the duty of beneficence), and these duties require us to do more than just the bare minimum needed to fulfill our perfect duties.

[8] See, for instance, Macnamara (2013, 45). Others are less sure about whether resentment is appropriate and are confident only that anger is appropriate—see, for instance, Shoemaker (2015, 95). I concede that anger can be an appropriate response to the suberogatory, but whereas I accept that resentment is sufficient for blame, I deny that generic anger (as opposed to resentment or indignation) is.

rationally authoritative demands. I believe that prudence can as well. And, perhaps, even athletic, aesthetic, and intellectual demands can become rationally authoritative if one makes these demands of oneself.

Fifth, someone deserves something (say, X) if and only if, as a matter of justice and in virtue of her prior activities or possessed characteristics, she merits X in the sense that entails that the world in which she gets X and merits X in this sense is, other things being equal, non-instrumentally better than the world in which she gets X but doesn't merit X in this sense (cf. Feinberg 1970, 58). Note, then, that the relevant sense of 'merit' is not the one in which, say, Southwest Airlines merits a five-star customer-approval rating given its exceptional customer satisfaction. For even if Southwest Airlines does, in some sense, merit a five-star rating, it's not in the sense that entails that the world in which Southwest Airlines gets a five-star rating and merits such a rating in this sense is, other things being equal, non-instrumentally better than the world in which Southwest Airlines gets a five-star rating but doesn't merit such a rating in this sense. For if it's at all good that Southwest Airlines gets a five-star rating, it's only *instrumentally* good in that in helps customers find an airline with which they'll be satisfied. After all, there is nothing inherently good about Southwest Airlines getting a customer-approval rating that accurately reflects its degree of customer satisfaction. By contrast, there is, it seems, something inherently good about someone's getting what she deserves.

Sixth, to have a mental state that represents its object as having a certain feature, one need not have the occurrent belief or thought that it has (or even that it seems to have) this feature. For imagine that while walking through the woods I have the perception of something slithering underfoot and immediately fear it, reflexively jumping up and out of its way. In this case, my mental state—specifically, my fear—represents its object as a danger to me. And this is true even if there wasn't enough time for this thought to enter into my consciousness. In this regard, I'm in complete agreement with Justin D'Arms and Dan Jacobson (2017; 2019a; 2019b). For we agree that to determine how a mental state of a certain kind represents its object we must first do some empirical work to discover such things as what typically elicits mental states of this kind, what normally attenuates them, what their phenomenology is like, what

interpretation of their representational content rings true to those who possess them, and what sorts of act tendencies and patterns of attention are generally associated with them. Then, in light of this empirical data, we are to give an interpretation into natural language of how someone who possesses this kind of state represents its intentional object. This articulation of the representation will be propositional in its content such that a state of this kind will count as accurate in its representations if and only if the associated proposition (i.e., the proposition that its object has the given features) is true. To illustrate, take fear. Fear is, I believe, best interpreted as the kind of mental state that represents its object as being a danger to its subject, for this is what makes most sense of the empirical data: (1) that those in the grip of fear dread what they fear, (2) that fear tends to focus one's attention both on its object and on the means of avoiding or getting away from it, (3) that fear is typically elicited by objects that are perceived to be a danger to its subject, (4) that fear tends to result in urgent action aimed at avoiding or getting away from its object—or, at the very least, it results in physiological changes that readies one to take such action, and (5) that those under the grip of fear—including self-aware phobics who know that what they fear isn't dangerous—accept the interpretation that fear represents its object as a danger to oneself.[9] And, if we accept this interpretation of how fear represents its object, a given instance of fear will count as accurate in its representations if and only if its object does indeed constitute a danger to its subject. So, on my proposal, a subject can count as blaming some target for having seemingly φ-ed even if she doesn't have the occurrent belief or thought that this target meets sub-conditions a–c of condition 1. Rather, what needs to be true is only that the relevant empirical data suggests that the kinds of mental states that constitute blaming are best interpreted as representing their targets as meeting sub-conditions a–c.

Seventh, a subject's mental state can represent an object as having a certain feature even if she believes that it doesn't have this feature. In other words, a mental state can be *recalcitrant* in that it stubbornly persists even in the face of an occurrent belief that its representations are

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[9] We should also appeal to such things in determining the intensity of the given mental state. Thus, one's fear counts as more intense the greater one's sense of dread, the more it tends to focus one's attention both on its object and on ways of getting away from it, the greater one's tendency toward urgent action aimed at getting away from its object, and the more dangerous that one takes that fear as representing its object as being.

inaccurate. To illustrate, consider the recalcitrant fear of flying. This is where someone fears flying despite judging that it poses no significant danger to herself or others. This is possible, because although the fear of flying necessitates representing flying as a danger to oneself, it is compatible with the occurrent belief that this is inaccurate. And, given that a mental state can be compatible with the belief that its representations are inaccurate, it's also possible for blame to be recalcitrant.[10] That is, it's possible for a subject to blame someone while simultaneously believing that the mental states constituting this are inaccurate in their representations of the target. To illustrate, consider the following real-life example. One morning early in our marriage, I noticed that my wife's manner and behavior indicated that she was angry with me. Yet, when I pressed her, she denied it. But her strange manner continued and so my inquiries grew more insistent. Eventually, she admitted that she was feeling resentful toward me. As she explained, she had just woken up from a very vivid and seemingly real dream in which she had non-veridical perceptions of my cheating on her. And although she now realized that it was all just a dream, she still felt the same resentment that she had felt in her dream. For she still had the very vivid perceptual memories of my having seemingly cheated on her. And this made her feel like lashing out at me. Indeed, it seemed to her as if I deserved to suffer for what I had seemingly done. And this persisted despite her believing that I had done nothing to deserve to suffer. Thus, her mental states represented me as having violated a legitimate demand and as deserving to suffer guilt, regret, and remorse in the recognition of this despite her believing that none of these representations were accurate. Her blame of me was, then, recalcitrant in the same way that many people's fear of flying is recalcitrant.

2. The Necessity of Condition 1

Having both stated and clarified my proposal, I now need to defend it. For one, I need to defend the necessity of each of its two conditions. I'll start with condition 1, which holds that a

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[10] Proponents of the possibility of recalcitrant blame—or, at least, recalcitrant guilt, indignation, or resentment— include Brady (2009), Carlsson (2019a), D'Arms & Jacobson (2003), Gibbard (1990), McKenna (2012, 67), Menges (2017, 261), Pickard (2013), and Wallace (1994).

necessary condition for a subject's blaming a target for having seemingly φ-ed is that she has some set of mental states that represents that target (a) as having φ-ed, (b) as having violated a legitimate demand in φ-ing, and (c) as not having suffered all the guilt, regret, and remorse that she deserves to suffer in virtue of her having violated this legitimate demand.[11] There are, I believe, at least four reasons for thinking that this is a necessary condition for blame.

2.1 The Empirical Data: One reason to think that blame must consist in a set of mental states that represents its target as meeting sub-conditions a–c is that this seems to offer the best interpretation of the empirical data concerning the blaming emotions: guilt (where I blame myself), resentment (where I blame some other for transgressing me), and indignation (where I blame some other for transgressing a third-party). I take these three emotions to be paradigm instances of blaming, and, so, I take what's true of them to be true of blaming in general.

Let's start, then, with the first of the three: guilt. According to the psychological literature, what typically elicits feelings of guilt are self-perceptions of responsibility for an act that constitutes a transgression (Ortony et al. 1988; Tangney & Dearing 2002), or what I'm referring to as the violation of a legitimate demand. And people who feel guilty typically believe that they could and should have acted differently (Niedenthal et al. 1994). In this respect, guilt is unlike shame. For whereas guilt is typically elicited by unstable, controllable aspects of the self (i.e., transgressive acts), shame is typically elicited by stable, uncontrollable aspects of the self (specifically, those that fall below some standard and that could, consequently, result in a loss of honor, respect, or esteem).[12] Similarly, when it comes to resentment and indignation, we find that what typically elicits such emotions is the judgment

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[11] A close cousin to my view is Brendan Dill and Stephen Darwall's *accountability theory* (2014). On their view, blame represents its target (oneself or some other) as having violated a legitimate moral demand without excuse. Their view will be especially close to my own if we assume, as I think we should, that all and only those who have violated a legitimate demand without excuse deserve to suffer guilt, regret, or remorse in the recognition of having violated that demand. But, unlike them, I don't think that the demand in question needs to be a moral one. And, unlike them, I think that blame represents its target not only as having violated a legitimate demand without excuse, but also as deserving to suffer guilt, regret, or remorse in the recognition of having violated that demand given that there was no adequate excuse.

[12] See H. B. Lewis (1971, 30); Niedenthal et al. (1994); M. Lewis (2000); Tangney & Dearing (2002); and Tracy & Robins (2006).

that someone has been treated unjustly or otherwise wrongly (Mikula 1986; Shaver et al. 1987; Prinz & Nichols 2010, 125). So, given that the blaming emotions are typically elicited by transgressive acts, my proposal interprets the blaming emotions as representing their targets as having performed an act that violates a legitimate demand.

Admittedly, some of the empirical data may initially seem problematic for my proposal. For, as Baumeister et al. (1994) point out, feelings of guilt can be elicited by the belief that one has undeservedly fared better than others, and these feelings arise even when one knows that one bears no responsibility for this unfairness. For instance, people often experience what's known as survivor's guilt when, by pure chance, they survive in a situation in which most others perished. But I think that we should understand survivor's guilt either (disjunct₁) as inaccurately representing surviving as something both that one "does" and that violates the seemingly legitimate demand not to enjoy inequitable benefits or (disjunct₂) as an entirely different form of guilt that has nothing to do with blame. Indeed, some suggest that there are two distinct types of guilt: one that isn't tied to blame and is elicited by the possession of inequitable benefits and another that is tied to blame and is elicited by feelings of responsibility for a transgressive act (see, e.g., Prinz & Nichols 2010, 134). In either case, my proposal fits the data concerning the *blaming* emotions, which may or may not include survivor's guilt depending on which of the above two disjuncts is correct.

Of course, my proposal also requires that blame (and, thus, the blaming emotions) involve(s) representing its target as not having suffered all the guilt, regret, and remorse that she deserves to suffer. But this too is supported by the empirical data—specifically, by the data concerning the act tendencies associated with the blaming emotions as well as their palliators. Again, let's start with guilt. Guilt is inherently unpleasant, yet we do not react to it as we do most other unpleasant experiences. When it comes to bodily aches, for instance, we're typically motivated to take a pill to get rid of it. Or if there's nothing we can do to get rid of it, we look to distract ourselves from it by taking our minds off it. Yet, guilt typically motivates us to focus our attention on it and its source (i.e., on our transgression and those who were adversely affected by it) and to act in ways that will—at least, initially—aggravate it. Indeed, we're often motivated

to wallow in our guilt. Additionally, guilt motivates us to seek out those who we've transgressed so as to atone, apologize, and make amends. And this, typically, only inflames our feelings of guilt, regret, and remorse. Thus, guilty feelings tend to motivate us to act in ways that will, at least in the short term, perpetuate rather than alleviate them.

What's more, we find the idea of just taking a pill to rid ourselves of our guilt morally problematic. Admittedly, some do turn to drugs or the bottle to palliate their guilt. But this is not, we think, the best way to deal with our guilt. For this doesn't so much rid ourselves of our guilt as merely momentarily dull it. To get rid of it, we must atone, repent, apologize, and make amends. Of course, sometimes transgressors don't have the opportunity to make amends, express remorse, or even apologize. And, in such instances, the psychological research shows that those who feel guilty for a transgression are motivated to self-punish by inflicting physical pain or economic loss on themselves (Nelissen & Zeelenberg 2009; Bastian et al. 2011; Watanabe & Inbar et al. 2013; Ohtsubo et al. 2014; Tanaka et al. 2015).[13] As Herbert Morris puts it, "the man who feels guilty often seeks pain and somehow sees it as appropriate because of his guilt. …When we think of what it is to feel guilty then, we think…of something that is owed; and pain is somehow connected with paying what one owes" (1976, 89–90). And it's been shown that the guiltier one feels, the more severe the punishment one is likely to inflict upon oneself (Gintis et al. 2001; Nelissen 2012; Watanabe & Ohtsubo 2012; Nelissen & Zeelenberg 2009; Tanaka et al. 2015). Likewise, resentment and indignation over a transgression motivates people to punish the transgressor. Indeed, people are willing to pay to punish a transgressor even if they know that they will never again interact with her and so will never recoup that cost (Fehr & Gächter 2002).[14] And, as Gollwitzer and Denzler (2009) have shown, people's aim in inflicting such

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[13] The tendency that people who feel guilty have to punish themselves when they don't have the opportunity to compensate the victims of their transgressions is what Nelissen and Zeelenberg (2009) have labeled the "Dobby Effect." Ingar et al. also report that "a sizable experimental literature indicates that people often deal with their guilt over a bad deed by doing a good deed for someone else or for society in general" (2013, 17). And, arguably, doing good deeds can help atone for one's past bad deeds, making it such that one deserves to suffer less guilt, regret, and remorse than one once did.

[14] As Dill and Darwall point out, "several studies have shown that people are willing to punish at cost to themselves even in totally anonymous conditions, which offer no opportunity for reputational gain or loss" (2014, 47).

punishment is not solely to ensure that the transgressor suffers, for their research shows that people also want the transgressor to recognize that she's been made to suffer *because* of her transgression. I believe that this is because they want the transgressor to recognize that they disapprove of what she has done and hope that she will come to share in their disapproval by feeling guilt, regret, and remorse. So, we find both that guilt motivates punishment of the self and that resentment and indignation motivates punishment of the relevant other: the transgressor. Given this and the fact that the ultimate aim seems to be to induce guilt, regret, and remorse, it makes sense to interpret the blaming emotions as representing their targets as not having suffered all the guilt, regret, and remorse that they deserve to suffer.

Further support for this interpretation comes from the fact that self-punishment palliates the blaming emotions. For instance, psychological research shows that self-punishment palliates feelings of guilt and that the more severe the self-punishment, the greater the palliative effect (Bastian et al. 2011; Inbar et al. 2013). As Morris observes, "feelings of guilt may disappear and the man [who used to feel guilty] may connect their disappearance with the pain he has experienced" (1976, 90). Moreover, self-punishment palliates feelings of resentment and indignation in others, signaling to them that one is remorseful (Nelissen 2012). And this in turn encourages them to forgive (Zhu et al. 2017). And the more painful the punishment that one inflicts upon oneself, the stronger the effect it has on the tendency of others to forgive (Zhu et al. 2017). In general, it seems that what best palliates feelings of resentment and indignation is the judgment the transgressor has got her comeuppance (Prinz & Nichols 2010, 126; Haidt et al. 2010). Indeed, the psychological research suggests that what palliates these feelings is not rehabilitation or other happy endings, but only the transgressor's suffering what she deserves to suffer (Prinz & Nichols 2010, 128; Haidt et al. 2010).[15] And, here, I strongly suspect that the reason that the transgressor's self-punishment palliates people's resentment and indignation

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[15] See Dill & Darwall (2014, 46–52) for citations to numerous studies showing that what motivates us to reproach, sanction, or punish someone for violating a legitimate demand is not the hope of that this will bring about some happy result such as deterrence or self-benefit. Rather, we reproach transgressors in order to get them to hold themselves accountable for their transgressions, and they do this by feeling guilt, regret, or remorse in the recognition that they have violated a legitimate demand.

toward her is because they see her self-punishment as a sign of her guilt, regret, and remorse. For, in many of these experiments the transgressor self-punishes by leaving her hand in an ice-water bath for a painfully long time. But I very much doubt that her doing so would palliate people's resentment and indignation toward her if they believed that she was doing so only to prove how tough she is rather than doing so as a result of her feelings of guilt, regret, and remorse. Indeed, as Brendan Dill and Stephen Darwall have pointed out, "one of the most robust findings from [the psychological] research on forgiveness is that forgiveness usually occurs when and only when the perpetrator has adequately demonstrated remorse by acknowledging guilt, apologizing, and/or offering compensation" (2014, 40).

Given all the empirical data showing that the blaming emotions motivate people to punish with the aim of getting the transgressor to hold herself accountable and to punish in proportion to the felt intensity of these emotions, and given all the empirical data suggesting that the transgressor's suffering guilt, regret, and remorse both palliates these blaming emotions and promotes forgiveness, it seems best to interpret the blaming emotions as representing their targets as not having suffered all the guilt, regret, and remorse that they deserve to suffer. And this along with the empirical data concerning the elicitors of these emotions suggests that blame represents its target as meeting sub-conditions a–c of condition 1.

2.2 The Pro Tanto Permissibility of Deliberately Guilting the Blameworthy: Another reason to think that condition 1 is necessary for blame is that it provides the most plausible explanation for why it is *pro tanto* morally permissible to express our blame of the blameworthy with the aim of getting them to feel guilt, regret, or remorse. As A. P. Duggan (2018, 296) notes, expressed "blame is a form of 'guilting' in that blamers intend their blame to result in the blamed feeling guilty for doing wrong."[16] That is, we often express our blame of transgressors

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[16] See also Carlsson (2019a), Dill & Darwall (2014, 43), Fricker (2016, 167), Macnamara (2015, 559), McKenna (2012, 139–40), and Wolf (2011, 338).

in the hopes that they will both come to recognize that we disapprove of what they've done and come to share in our disapproval by feeling guilt, regret, and remorse for what they've done.[17]

Of course, we recognize that it will be unpleasant for them to feel this way. So, in expressing our blame with the aim of getting them to feel guilt, regret, and remorse, we are deliberately causing them to suffer.[18] And this is potentially morally problematic, for it's wrong to deliberately cause suffering unless either those thereby made to suffer deserve to so suffer or our causing them to so suffer is the only way to ensure a fair distribution of undeserved burdens overall. But despite this, expressions of blame actually seem to be *pro tanto* morally permissible—at least, when the targets are blameworthy (Carlsson 2017, 95).[19] This means that either the blameworthy must deserve to suffer guilt, regret, and remorse or having them so suffer must be the only way for us to ensure a fair distribution of undeserved burdens overall. Yet it's unclear why either would be the case. After all, to be blameworthy is just to be someone whom it is fitting to blame, where its fittingness is purely a matter of the accuracy of its representations.[20] In this respect, the blaming emotions seem to be no different from other intentional attitudes—such as fear, envy, belief, desire, shame, grief, disgust, and admiration. In

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[17] As Hannah Tierney and others have pointed out, another reason we're often motivated to express our blame to those who have transgressed us is as a means of standing up for ourselves by expressing our sense of dignity and self-respect. See Tierney (forthcoming), Murphy (2005, 19), and Reis-Dennis (2019).

[18] I concede that one can express one's blame with only the aim of getting the transgressor to rectify, repent, or reconcile and that this needn't involve deliberately causing her to suffer. That is, the associated suffering could be merely a foreseen but unintended side-effect of one's aim of getting her to rectify, repent, or reconcile. But I don't see how one can express one's blame with the aim of getting the transgressor to feel guilty (that is, to feel the painful appreciation of the awful significance of what one has done) without deliberately causing her to suffer. And this is often something we aim to do, which is why we are appropriately frustrated when we express our blame with the aim of guilting our target and our target responds with no hint of guilt or remorse but only an acknowledgment of having done wrong and a sincere promise to do better. We get frustrated, because, as Prinz and Nichols (2010, 126) point out, our goal is not merely to secure some happy result but also to ensure that our target experiences feelings of guilt, regret, and remorse so as to come to painfully appreciate the awful significance of what she's done.

[19] To say that it is *pro tanto* morally permissible for us to express our blame of the blameworthy is not to say that it is always morally permissible to do so. It's just to say that there is a significant moral reason to do so such that, absent countervailing reasons or undermining considerations, it will be permissible to do so.

[20] The idea that to be blameworthy is just to be fittingly blamed is not entirely uncontroversial, but I'll address the relevant controversy below. Also, it may be that not everyone uses the term 'fitting' to mean 'accurate in its representations', but this is how I'll use the term.

each case, the attitude is fitting just in case it is accurate in its representations of the intentional object.[21] For instance, belief is fitting just in case it's correct in representing its object as being true. Envy is fitting just in case it's correct in representing its object as something good that one's rival possesses but that one lacks. And shame is fitting just in case it's correct in representing its object as some sub-standard aspect of oneself that could potentially lead to a loss of honor, respect, or esteem. So, someone is fittingly blamed—that is, blameworthy—if and only if that blame is accurate in its representations. But why think that the accuracy of these representations depends either on its target deserving to suffer or on its being fair to make her suffer? After all, it's fitting to distrust those who are untrustworthy regardless of whether they deserve to suffer the burden of being distrusted, and regardless of whether inflicting this suffering upon them would result in a fair distribution of undeserved burdens overall.

The problem arises because blameworthiness concerns the fittingness of blame, and it can be fitting for you to adopt an attitude toward someone even if she doesn't deserve to suffer the burdens associated with your adopting that attitude toward her. For instance, it is, as Pamela Hieronymi (2004, 119–20) has pointed out, fitting to distrust the untrustworthy even if they don't deserve to suffer the burdens associated with being distrusted, and even if there's nothing fair about their having to suffer these burdens. But we can solve this (apparent?) puzzle so long as we keep separate the issue of whether it's unjust to distrust the untrustworthy (or to blame the blameworthy) and the issue of whether it's unjust to *express* distrust of the untrustworthy (or to *express* blame of the blameworthy) with *the aim* of making them feel some inherently unpleasant emotion. These are importantly different issues, because, for one, the burdens associated with *expressing* distrust (or blame) can go far beyond those associated with merely distrusting (or blaming) in private. For another, one can distrust (or blame) someone without deliberately causing them to suffer, but one cannot express one's distrust (or blame) of someone with *the aim* of making her feel, say, shame (or guilt) without deliberately causing her

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[21] For my purposes, an intentional attitude is to be understood as any mental state that has an intentional object that it represents as being a certain way. Thus, examples of intentional attitudes include hope, fear, envy, guilt, shame, desire, belief, intention, and resentment. But they exclude mental states such as pain and hunger, which don't have intentional objects.

to suffer. Thus, although it's unproblematic for us to distrust the untrustworthy, it is—at least, potentially—problematic for us to express our distrust of some untrustworthy person with the aim of, say, shaming her. For she won't deserve to suffer for her untrustworthiness if she came to be this way due entirely to formative circumstances outside of her control. And, so, we still need to explain why it is *pro tanto* morally *permissible* to express our blame of the blameworthy with the aim of guilting them when it is *pro tanto* morally *impermissible* to express our distrust of the untrustworthy with the aim of shaming them.

Fortunately, my proposal explains this, for my account entails that, even though the untrustworthy don't necessarily deserve to suffer shame, the blameworthy do necessarily deserve to suffer guilt.[22] On my account, blaming a target for having φ-ed entails representing her as deserving to suffer guilt, regret, or remorse in the recognition that she has violated a legitimate demand in φ-ing. Thus, she is worthy of being blamed if and only if this representation is accurate. And it's accurate if and only if she deserves to suffer these unpleasant feelings. Thus, on my account, the blameworthy are just those who have the normative property of deserving to suffer guilt, regret, or remorse. By contrast, Hieronymi (2004) holds that the blameworthy are simply those who have the descriptive property of having acted out of ill will. And, so, she thinks that a subject is blameworthy just in case she has in fact acted out of ill will. But given that someone can act out of ill will without deserving to suffer (for she may have come to possess this ill will due entirely to formative circumstances

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[22] Many philosophers agree that the blameworthy deserve to suffer guilt, regret, or remorse—see, for instance, Carlsson (2017, 89) and Duggan (2018, 297). But, of course, some disagree. For instance, Nelkin (2019) has argued that there is no *pro tanto* reason to induce feelings of guilt in the blameworthy. To convince us, she poses the following thought experiment. Imagine that someone has culpably wronged another and that you have the power of "The Look," whereby you can, simply by giving this someone a certain look, induce her to feel guilty in the recognition that what she has done is wrong. But we are to imagine that she is already reformed and, so, will never do this sort of thing again. Moreover, we're to imagine either that her relationship with the relevant others has been irreparably damaged or that all has been forgiven. Thus, we're to imagine that inducing her to feel guilt isn't a means to any good. Nevertheless, Nelkin maintains that you would not be "making a mistake, or leaving a reason on the table, so to speak, by taking a pass on inducing this painful feeling." I disagree. You may not be required to give her "The Look," but you certainly have a reason to do so. Randy Clarke and Piers Rawling agree with me (see their 2019), and much of the psychological research cited above suggests that most people want the blameworthy to feel guilty, not as a means to reform or any other instrumental good, but simply because they think that the blameworthy deserve to suffer guilty feelings.

outside of her control), Hieronymi can't explain why it is *pro tanto* morally permissible to express blame with the aim of getting the target to suffer guilt, regret, and remorse.[23] So, my account has an advantage over accounts such as Hieronymi's in that it explains why we expect even morally good people to be motivated to express their blame of the blameworthy with the aim of getting them to suffer guilt, regret, and remorse in the recognition that they've violated a legitimate demand.

Now, the only other way to account both for this expectation and for the *pro tanto* moral permissibility of deliberately guilting the blameworthy is to adopt Andreas Brekke Carlsson's view (2017). On his view, the blameworthy are not, as on my view, those for whom it is *fitting* to feel guilty, but rather are those who *deserve* to feel guilty. His view, like mine, ensures that the blameworthy necessarily deserve to suffer guilty feelings, which is what we must hold if we're to account for the *pro tanto* moral permissibility of deliberately guilting the blameworthy and, consequently, for the expectation that even morally good people will be motivated to express their blame of the blameworthy with the aim of guilting them. But I believe that we should reject Carlsson's view for the following two reasons. First, it leaves unexplained why the blaming emotions (e.g., guilt, resentment, and indignation) are unlike all other intentional attitudes (e.g., pride, fear, belief, shame, disgust, and admiration), which are all appropriate just in case they are accurate in their representations.[24] Second, it faces the following unattractive dilemma.[25] Carlsson must either accept or reject what I'll call the Deserves-Only-Fitting-Guilt Claim: someone deserves to suffer guilt only if that guilt would be fitting. And it seems that either way his view will be problematic. If, on the one hand, he accepts the Deserves-Only-Fitting-Guilt Claim, then he must, it seems, hold that what makes someone deserve to suffer fitting guilt is simply the fact that it's fitting. After all, on his view (2019a), what makes it fitting for one to feel guilt for having φ-ed is not whether it represents one as deserving to suffer in this way, but rather something such as whether guilt represents one as having manifested ill will in

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[23] I borrow this point from Carlsson (2017, 96).

[24] For more on this point, see Portmore (2019c) and D'Arms & Jacobson (2019a).

[25] This is objection comes from D'Arms & Jacobson (2019a), but I put a slightly different spin on it.

φ-ing. So, what makes fitting guilt deserved is not the nature of guilt's representations, but simply its fittingness.[26] The problem, though, is that it's implausible to suppose that what, in general, makes someone deserve to suffer some unpleasant emotion is simply that it's fitting. After all, it can be fitting for someone to feel fear (or grief) without her deserving to suffer it. So, on this horn of the dilemma, Carlsson needs to explain why it's only guilt (and not also fear and grief) that's deserved simply in virtue of its fittingness. And there just doesn't seem to be any plausible way for him to account for this.

On the other hand, if Carlsson rejects the Deserves-Only-Fitting-Guilt Claim, then his view will imply that someone could deserve to suffer unfitting guilt. But this is highly implausible. I can see how someone might deserve to suffer in general, and I can see how someone might deserve to suffer the specific sort of unpleasantness associated with a fittingly felt emotion. But I can't see how someone could deserve to suffer the specific unpleasantness associated with an unfittingly felt emotion. To illustrate the problem, let's suppose that, contrary to what I've suggested and in accordance with what Carlsson has himself suggested (2017, 107), guilt for having φ-ed represents one as having manifested ill will in φ-ing. Now, if we thought it possible for someone to deserve to feel unfitting guilt, then we would have to hold that it's possible for someone to deserve to feel the unpleasantness in recognizing that her actions manifested ill will even though, in fact, her actions didn't manifest ill will (which is what accounts for its unfittingness). But it's just implausible to suppose that someone who didn't manifest ill will could deserve to suffer the specific unpleasantness associated with representing oneself as having manifested ill will.

So, for these two reasons, I think that we should reject Carlsson's explanation for why the blameworthy necessarily deserve to suffer. Instead, we should take the explanation to be, as

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[26] Carlsson might resist this by claiming that he can account for the Deserves-Only-Fitting-Guilt Claim by holding that one's manifesting ill will necessitates one's deserving to suffer. But, in that case, he should just admit that, given both that guilt represents one as manifesting ill will and that one's manifesting ill will necessitates one's deserving to suffer guilt, guilt for φ-ing represents one as deserving to suffer guilt; it's just that it does so via representing one as having a feature that necessitates one's deserving to suffer guilt. And, in that case, Carlsson's view would be a version of, not an alternative to, my own proposal. For his view would, then, be one that holds that the blameworthy are those for whom it is fitting to feel guilty.

I've supposed, both that the blameworthy are those who are fittingly blamed and that it's fitting to blame someone only if she deserves to suffer the unpleasantness of guilt, regret, or remorse given the nature of blame's representations.

2.3 The Conditions for Blameworthiness: Another merit of my proposal is that it can account for the fact that there are certain necessary conditions for being blameworthy (e.g., the control condition and the epistemic condition) as well as certain necessary conditions for being blameworthy to a certain degree (e.g., the proportionality condition). Take, for instance, the control condition (sometimes called *the freedom condition*). It holds that someone can be blameworthy for having φ-ed only if she had the relevant sort of control over whether she was to φ. My proposal can explain this so long as we assume, as seems plausible, that someone deserves to suffer some inherently unpleasant emotion for having φ-ed only if she had the relevant sort of control over whether she was to φ. Thus, we get the following argument for the control condition.

(P1)   Someone is blameworthy for having φ-ed if and only if blaming her for having φ-ed is accurate in its representations. [Assumption]

(P2)   Blaming someone for having φ-ed is accurate in its representations only if she deserves to suffer guilt, regret, or remorse for having φ-ed. [From Condition 1 of my proposal]

(C1)   Thus, someone is blameworthy for having φ-ed only if she deserves to suffer guilt, regret, or remorse for having φ-ed. [From P1–P2]

(P3)   Someone deserves to suffer guilt, regret, or remorse for having φ-ed only if she had the relevant sort of control over whether she was to φ. [Assumption]

(C2)   Therefore, someone is blameworthy for having φ-ed only if she had the relevant sort of control over whether she was to φ. [From C1 and P3]

We can similarly argue for the epistemic condition (sometimes called *the knowledge condition*). It holds that someone is blameworthy for having φ-ed only if she could have reasonably been expected to have known that her φ-ing would entail violating a legitimate demand. To get this argument, we simply need to replace "she had the relevant sort of control over whether she was to φ" with "she could have reasonably been expected to have known that her φ-ing would entail violating a legitimate demand" throughout the above argument, while replacing "control condition" with "epistemic condition" in C2.

What's more, we can offer the following argument for the proportionality condition, which holds that someone is worthy of being blamed to extent E for having φ-ed only if E is proportionate to the stringency of the demand that she violated in φ-ing (see, e.g., Fricker 2016, 168).

(P1*)   Someone is worthy of being blamed to extent E for having φ-ed if and only if blaming her to extent E for having φ-ed is accurate in its representations. [Assumption]

(P2*)   Blaming someone to extent E for having φ-ed is accurate in its representations only if the amount of guilt, regret, and remorse that she deserves to suffer for having φ-ed is proportionate to E. [From my proposal]

(C1*)   Thus, someone is worthy of being blamed to extent E for having φ-ed only if the amount of guilt, regret, and remorse that she deserves to suffer for having φ-ed is proportionate to E. [From P1*–P2*]

(P3*)   The amount of guilt, regret, and remorse that she deserves to suffer for having φ-ed must be proportionate to the stringency of the demand that she violated in φ-ing. [Assumption]

(C2*)   Therefore, someone is worthy of being blamed to extent E for having φ-ed only if E is proportionate to the stringency of the demand that she violated in φ-ing. [From C1* and P3*]

We need to appeal to all three conditions in order to account for our judgments about when it is appropriate to blame people and in what degree.[27] And accounting for such judgments is, I believe, crucial. As Scanlon has pointed out, "a satisfactory account of blame should be as faithful as possible to the phenomenology of blaming and to our judgments about when it is appropriate to blame people and in what degree" (2013, 84). So, consider that without the proportionality condition we have no way of accounting for the fact that it would, other things being equal, be inappropriate for us to blame someone who has violated a less stringent demand more harshly than we blame someone who has violated a more stringent demand. For instance, it would, other things being equal, be inappropriate for us to blame someone who has told a self-serving but relatively harmless lie more harshly than we blame someone who has committed murder.

We need the epistemic condition to explain why non-culpable ignorance can excuse one from being blameworthy for having violated a legitimate demand. For instance, even if it's legitimate to demand that I not come into the office while contagious, it's inappropriate to blame me for doing so if I couldn't have been reasonably expected to have known that I was infected, let alone contagious.

Lastly, we need to appeal to the control condition to explain both why the only subjects that we can appropriately blame are those who possess the relevant sort of control over the things that we blame them for and why the only things that we can appropriately *directly* blame them for are those things over which they directly exerted such control.[28] Thus, the control

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[27] I readily concede that there may be other conditions for being blameworthy. For instance, it may be that the person-stage who is now to be blamed must be, in certain relevant ways, psychologically similar to (or contiguous with) the person-stage who committed the given transgression. But I won't explore the possibility of such other conditions here. In any case, it seems that these other proposed conditions will be plausible only insofar as they're plausible conditions for a target's deserving to suffer guilt, regret, or remorse in virtue of something that some earlier person-stage did.

[28] Note, then, that I deny what's known as resultant moral luck (Zimmerman 1987): the idea that one's degree of accountability for φ-ing can be affected by the uncontrolled events that determine the results of one's φ-ing. For some compelling arguments against resultant moral luck, see Khoury (2018). And for some experimental evidence suggesting that what most affects our judgments about an agent's degree of accountability for some act is not

condition explains why newborns and primitive animals—both of which lack the relevant sort of control—are exempt from blame. And it explains why normal adult human beings cannot appropriately be blamed for their reflex actions, muscle twitches, or heart palpitations. After all, they lack the relevant sort of control over these bodily movements. What's more, it explains why a drunk driver can be held directly responsible, not for her impaired motor skills, but only for that which led to her impaired motor skills—assuming that that was something over which she did exert the relevant sort of control. Perhaps, then, the only thing that we can appropriately hold her directly responsible for is her having started to drink without having first arranged for a designated driver.

Of course, some cite the fact that we often take ourselves to be (normatively) responsible for our non-voluntary "actions"—e.g., for desiring what's bad, believing what's contrary to the evidence, and intending to do what's incompatible with our ultimate ends—as reason for being skeptical of the control condition. But the fact that we can be responsible for such things doesn't give us any reason to doubt the control condition, but only reason to doubt that the relevant sort of control is as narrow as voluntary control. To understand why, we must understand what voluntary control consists in and why we must exert it over our actions to be responsible for them.

For a subject to have *voluntary control* over an action is for her to have volitional control over whether she performs it while having rational control over whether she forms the volitions that would result in her performing it. She has *volitional control* over whether she performs the act so long as, holding everything else fixed, whether she performs it just depends on whether she forms the relevant volitions (e.g., the intention to perform it), and she has *rational control* over whether she forms the relevant volitions so long as, holding everything else fixed, whether she forms them just depends on whether and how she responds to the relevant reasons. Note, then, that volitional control over our actions is insufficient to ground responsibility for them.

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whether, by luck, the act had a bad result but whether we judge that the agent was unjustified in believing that her act had little chance of having that bad result, see Young, Nichols, & Saxe (2010). Also, some take Frankfurt-style cases as evidence against the control condition, but see Portmore (2019a) and Portmore (2019b) for a rebuttal.

After all, just as I have volitional control over whether I raise my hand, a cat presumably has volitional control over whether it will swat at the mouse that scurries by. Yet, presumably, a cat is not responsible for swatting at the mouse because whether it forms the volition to swat isn't under its rational control. That is, whether it forms this volition is just a matter of some non–reasons-responsive mechanism, such as pure instinct—or so I'll assume. By contrast, I can be responsible for raising my hand given that (or insofar as) whether I form the volition to do so is reasons-responsive and, thus, under my rational control. This, as I've argued elsewhere (Portmore 2019b), suggests that what really matters for responsibility is rational control. Indeed, it seems that the only reason that we need to have volitional control over our actions to be responsible for them is that it's only by having volitional control over our actions that we come to have rational control over them.[29] For we cannot *act* directly in response to our reasons. Indeed, we act in response to our reasons only by being guided by our reasons to form the volitions that will, if the world cooperates, result in our performing the act in question.

It seems, then, that we need the control condition in conjunction with the idea that the relevant sort of control is rational control to adequately distinguish between those things for which we can be held responsible—e.g., our beliefs, intentions, and voluntary actions—and those things for which we can't be held responsible—e.g., our sensations, pangs of hunger, and involuntary actions. The former are those things over which we exert rational control and the latter are those things over which we lack such control. So, I admit that many of the things that we hold each other responsible for are non-voluntary and, thus, are things over which we lack voluntary control. But this shows, not that we should reject the control condition, but only that we should accept that the relevant sort of control is rational control. And, so, it's a merit of my proposal that it allows us to account for the fact that we can be blameworthy for the non-voluntary.

This is important, because it seems that we can be responsible for our voluntary actions and their effects only if we can be responsible for our non-voluntary "actions"—specifically, for both our belief formations and our volition formations. For as I've just shown, we can be

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[29] See also McHugh (2017, 2,749).

responsible for the actions that stem from our volitions only if we're responsible for the formations of the volitions that gave rise to them. And, as both Nikolaj Nottlemann (2007) and Rik Peels (2017) have shown, we can be responsible for the effects of our voluntary actions only if we're responsible for the formations of our beliefs about their effects. This is because of the epistemic condition. According to the epistemic condition, one can be responsible for acting in violation of a legitimate demand only if one could have been reasonably expected to have known that so acting would constitute the violation of such a demand. To illustrate, it seems that I can be responsible for infecting my co-workers with a virus by coming into the office only if I could have been reasonably expected to have known (and, thus, to have believed) that my doing so would infect them. So, given the epistemic condition, it seems that I can be responsible for the effects of my actions only if I'm responsible for my beliefs about their effects. And, so, if we're going to be blameworthy for anything, including our voluntary actions and their effects, the correct account of blame better allow, as mine does, for the possibility that we can be fittingly blamed for the non-voluntary.

Of course, many will concede that we can be blameworthy for the non-voluntary but claim that this responsibility for the non-voluntary must be indirect. That is, they'll appeal to the well-known tracing strategy (i.e., the strategy of claiming that our responsibility for something non-voluntary must ultimately trace back to something that was under our voluntary control) to account for our responsibility for our forming the relevant beliefs and volitions. Now, there are, I believe, several problems with this strategy when it comes to accounting for our responsibility for such attitudes—not the least of which is that it can lead to an infinite regress. But because many of these problems have been elucidated elsewhere, I'll mention just one below.[30]

Those who employ the tracing strategy hold that someone can be responsible for, say, forming the belief that p even if this was never under her voluntary control. For they hold her responsible for forming this belief in virtue of her having had voluntary control over some prior

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[30] For criticisms of the tracing strategy (where only indirect blame is appropriate for the non-voluntary), see Smith (2015), Vargas (2005), McKenna (2008), and Portmore (2019a).

deliberate act such that she wouldn't have formed this belief had she performed (or refrained from performing) this act. So, for instance, if someone fallaciously forms the belief that taking vitamins causes an increase in longevity solely on the basis of an established correlation between the two, the tracing strategist would claim that she's responsible (although only indirectly) for forming this fallacious belief only in virtue of her having been directly responsible for, say, voluntarily skipping the relevant critical thinking class—that is, the class that, had she attended, would have prevented her from making this fallacious inference. But the problem with this strategy is that it holds that what she's directly responsible for is skipping class rather than making a fallacious inference. That is, on this strategy, the demand that she is ultimately accountable for violating is, not the epistemic demand that she not infer causation on the basis of mere correlation, but the practical demand that she attend useful classes. But, intuitively, it seems that what she's ultimately accountable for is violating an epistemic demand. And this is why, when we interact with her, we're much more likely to exhort her for failing to respond appropriately to her epistemic reasons than we are to exhort her for failing to respond appropriately to her practical reasons. And this suggests that what we actually hold her accountable for is violating an epistemic demand and not a practical demand, as the tracing strategist insists.

2.4 How What a Transgressor Has Done and Experienced Subsequent to Her Wrongdoing Can Affect the Extent to which She Is Presently Blameworthy for that Wrongdoing: A fourth and final reason to accept the necessity of condition 1 is that it allows us to plausibly account for the fact that what a transgressor has done and experienced subsequent to her wrongdoing can affect the extent to which she is presently blameworthy for that wrongdoing. I'm not saying that it affects the extent to which she is responsible for having committed that wrongdoing in the first place, but it does, I believe, affect the extent to which she should continue to feel guilt, regret, and remorse as well as the extent to which others should continue to feel resentment and indignation toward her. To illustrate, suppose that Alexa has wrongly harmed Alex and that Berta has wrongly harmed Bert. And assume that everything else is equal but for the following two facts. First, whereas Alexa has subsequently experienced much guilt, regret, and remorse

for what she has done, Berta has experienced none.[31] Second, whereas Alexa has done much to make amends (apologizing profusely and even paying reparations to Alex), Berta has done nothing to atone for her wrongdoing. It seems, then, that the extent to which it is appropriate for Alexa to continue to feel guilty and for Alex to continue to feel resentment is much less than that to which it is appropriate for Berta to continue to feel guilty and for Bert to continue to feel resentment.[32]

To take a different sort of case, imagine that two U.S. Army soldiers stationed in Afghanistan—Roberta and Roberto—each abandon their post.[33] As a result, both put the soldiers who must then go out searching for them in danger. And some of these soldiers are injured as a result. Now, Roberto is abducted by allies of the Taliban and is held captive by them for five long years until he is returned to the U.S. in a prisoner swap. During his captivity, he was often beaten and tortured, and, at all other times, he was kept locked up in a metal cage in utter darkness and isolation. Roberta, by contrast, makes it across the border into Pakistan and with the help of American expats crosses into India, where she then lives comfortably for five years before returning to the U.S. Once back in the U.S., they each stand trial for desertion, facing possible life sentences. And assume that everything else is equal. Now, it seems that the

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[31] This is relevant, for feelings of guilt are *self-consuming* (Na'aman forthcoming) with respect to their fittingness such that it becomes unfitting to continue to have such feelings—or, at least, to continue to have them with the same intensity—if you've already experienced them quite a bit. In this respect, guilt differs from grief. For no matter how much grief you have already experienced, it never ceases to be fitting to feel further grief, nor does it cease to be fitting to grieve with the same intensity as before. After all, grief over X represents X as a significant loss, and the more intense your grief, the more significant a loss it represents it as being. Yet, a loss doesn't become any less significant just because you've already grieved a lot over it. So, if your present circumstances make vivid to you the true significance of your loss, it will be entirely fitting for you to feel the same intense grief that you initially felt when you first came to grips with that loss. By contrast, guilt for having φ-ed represents you as someone who has not suffered all that you deserve to suffer in virtue of your having φ-ed, and the more intense your guilt, the greater the amount of guilt it represents you as still deserving to suffer. So, guilt, unlike grief, is self-consuming with respect to its fittingness given that you can come to deserve to suffer less (or, even, not at all) as a result of your having already suffered a lot. (I acknowledge that it can be inappropriate to regularly feel the same intense grief that you initially felt over some loss when it's now been several years since that loss occurred. But I think that it's inappropriate, not in the sense of being unfitting, but in some other sense and that we can, therefore, account for this without thinking that grief is self-consuming with respect to its fittingness—see Portmore 2019c.)

[32] For more on this, see Carlsson (2019b) and Portmore (2019c).

[33] These are loosely based off the real-life case of Robert "Bowe" Bergdahl.

fact that Roberta hasn't suffered at all in virtue her wrongdoing and that Roberto has already suffered a great deal in virtue of his wrongdoing is relevant to how much we should blame and punish each of them for their wrongdoings. Indeed, it seems that the extent to which we should blame and punish Roberto is a lot less than the extent to which we should blame and punish Roberta.[34]

My proposal explains why, in both cases, the agents in each pair differ in their degrees of blameworthiness. Given that Alexa, unlike Berta, has done much to atone for her wrongdoing and has already suffered a tremendous amount of guilt, regret, and remorse, she doesn't deserve to suffer as much further guilt, regret, and remorse as Berta does. And given that Roberto, unlike Roberta, has already suffered a great deal as a result of his wrongdoing, he doesn't deserve to suffer as much guilt, regret, and remorse as Roberta does. And, on my proposal, those who deserve to suffer less guilt, regret, and remorse are less blameworthy, because, on my proposal, the greater the amount of guilt, regret, and remorse that one represents some target as still deserving to suffer, the greater the extent to which one blames that target. And, thus, it is fitting to blame someone to extent E if and only if E is proportionate to the amount of guilt, regret, and remorse that she still deserves to suffer. So, Alexa and Roberto are less blameworthy than Berta and Roberta given that the amount of guilt, regret, and remorse that Alexa and Roberto still deserve to suffer is less than the amount of guilt, regret, and remorse that Berta and Roberta still deserve to suffer.

This gives my proposal a distinct advantage over most other views of blame, for most other views of blame are unable to account for the fact that what a transgressor has done and experienced subsequent to her wrongdoing can affect the extent to which she is presently blameworthy for that wrongdoing. For although what someone has done and experienced

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[34] In the real-life case of Robert "Bowe" Bergdahl, the judge ended up giving him no prison time precisely because he felt that Bergdahl had already suffered enough. On my own view, though, it's not enough simply that Bergdahl suffers a certain amount. It's also important that he suffers in a specific way—particularly, that he suffers guilt, regret, or remorse in the painful appreciation of the awful significance of what he has done. Indeed, much of the psychological research suggests that this is so—see Dill & Darwall (2014, 48–52). I would allow, though, that Bergdahl may deserve to suffer less guilt, regret, and remorse given that he has, as a result of his wrongdoing, suffered so much in various other ways.

subsequent to her wrongdoing can affect the extent to which she still deserves to suffer guilt, regret, and remorse for that wrongdoing, most other views about blame deny that blaming someone for having φ-ed represents her as not having suffered all that she deserves to suffer for having φ-ed. Instead, they hold that this represents her as having "violated a moral requirement of respect" in φ-ing (Graham 2014, 408) or as having manifested ill will in φ-ing (Hieronymi 2004), or as presently possessing the same flaw that led to her φ-ing (Khoury & Matheson 2018). And the correctness of these representations does not depend on what she has done or experienced subsequent to her φ-ing. So, unlike my proposal, these views cannot account for the fact that what a transgressor has done or experienced subsequent to her transgression can affect the extent to which she is presently blameworthy for that transgression.

Indeed, the only view of blame besides my own that can account for this fact is Carlsson's view. For like my view, his view implies that the extent to which someone is presently blameworthy for having φ-ed depends on the extent to which she still deserves to suffer guilt, regret, and remorse for having φ-ed. But, as we saw above, Carlsson's view faces an unattractive dilemma. So, it seems that the only plausible way to account for this fact is to accept my proposal.

3. The Necessity of Condition 2

On my proposal, condition 2 is also necessary for blame. That is, a subject blames someone for having seemingly φ-ed only if she feels disapproval of, or disappointment in, that someone for having seemingly φ-ed. We should accept this, because, as everyone seems to agree, blame requires more than mere evaluative judgment.[35] To blame someone, you must do more than simply judge, say, that she shouldn't have φ-ed. You must feel disapproval of, or disappointment in, her for having φ-ed. This, I take it, is uncontroversial. The controversy is not about whether such disapproval is required, but is only about what, if anything, else is

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[35] See, for instance, Coates & Tognazzini (2013), Darwall (2010), Scanlon (2008; 2013), Sher (2006), Shoemaker (2013, 101), and Smith (2013).

required. And, as I'll now argue, the only other thing that's required is condition 1. Thus, conditions 1 and 2 are, I believe, jointly sufficient.

4. The Joint Sufficiency of these Two Conditions

In defense of their joint sufficiency, I hope to show that no other proposed condition is necessary. Take, first, the proposal that blame must involve resentment, indignation, or some other kind of hostile emotion (Wallace 1994, 75). We should reject this proposal, for, as George Sher (2006) and several others have noted, blame need not involve any anger, hostility, or resentment.[36] As Sher notes, "we may, for example, feel no hostility toward the loved one whom we blame for failing to tell a sensitive acquaintance a hard truth, the criminal whom we blame for a burglary we read about in the newspaper, or the historical figure whom we blame for the misdeeds he performed long ago" (Sher 2006, 88). Of course, on my proposal, blame must involve disapproval or disappointment, but neither need be heated or hostile; these attitudes can, instead, be quite calm and sedate.

Second, Scanlon has proposed that blaming someone involves taking "your relationship with him or her to be modified" (2008, 128–9). But, as Susan Wolf has noted, this isn't a necessary condition for blame. Sometimes when we blame someone there is a lot of screaming and remonstration but no relationship modification (2011, 334). Indeed, when it comes to certain close family members, we are often resigned to continuing on with the relationship as always despite everything. Of course, this doesn't prevent us from blaming them by both disapproving of their behavior and representing them as deserving of guilt, regret, or remorse. Indeed, this may just be part of our relationship's normal pattern in which they wrong us and then we blame them, but, despite this, we both just continue on with the relationship as always.

Third, some propose that blaming someone necessitates some belief or judgment about her, such as that she is blameworthy (Sher 2006) or has displayed ill will (Hieronymi 2004), or has been diminished in her moral standing (Zimmerman 1988). But not only do we not need to

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[36] See Brown (forthcoming), Smith (2013, 32), and Shoemaker & Vargas (forthcoming).

assent to such things, we can even deny such things while blaming. For, as I noted above, blame can be recalcitrant. My wife can blame me for having seemingly cheated on her while denying that I am blameworthy or that I have cheated on her, or even that I have manifested ill will toward her. Indeed, it seems that if there are any beliefs or judgments that are necessitated in blaming someone it is only those that are constitutive of disapproving of, or being disappointed in, her.

Fourth, someone might claim that blame must involve some overt act—perhaps, one that communicates some protest or a demand for respect. But, even those who hold that blame's function is communicative allow that blame need not actually be communicated. For they hold that one's blame, like one's unsent email, can count as communicative in nature even if it is never in fact communicated (e.g., Macnamara 2015). Therefore, we should deny that blame must involve some overt act. Indeed, blame seems to be something that one can do in the privacy of one's own study (Coates & Tognazzini 2013, 8).

Of course, these four don't exhaust the possibilities for potential necessary conditions for blame. But I believe that they constitute the most plausible proposals, and, what's more, they're the ones that have been most central in the existing literature. So, I think we should—at least, tentatively—conclude that there are no other necessary conditions besides those stated in my proposal.

5. How My Proposal Accounts for All the Disparate Forms of Blame

Another advantage of my proposal is that it can account for blame in all its disparate forms. First, as we've already seen, it allows that blame can be recalcitrant.

Second, it allows that blame can be either intrapersonal or interpersonal. For on my proposal the target of blame may or may not be identical to the one doing the blaming. Thus, the target of blame can be either oneself (and, thus, intrapersonal) or some other (and, thus, interpersonal).

Third, it allows that the target of blame can be alive or dead. For, on my proposal,

blaming need involve only both a feeling of disapproval and a representation of desert. And we can have both attitudes toward the dead as well as the living. For just as we can disapprove of what the living have done, we can disapprove of what the dead have done. And just as we can represent the living as not having suffered all the guilt, regret, and remorse that they deserve to suffer, we can represent the dead as not having suffered all the guilt, regret, and remorse that they deserve to suffer. Or if you think that it makes no sense to talk of the dead *deserving* (present tense) to suffer, we can just add the following parenthetical remark to the above account to get the following: "not having suffered all that she deserves *(or deserved)* to suffer."

Fourth, it allows that blame need not be heated or hostile. Although it is quite common for us to feel anger and hostility toward those we blame, my proposal allows that blame need not involve such hostility, for we can feel disapproval without feeling any anger or hostility. Thus, when we blame some historical figure for some long past misdeed, we may be quite calm and sedate. For we may just calmly disapprove of what that figure has done while believing both that she did thereby violate a legitimate demand and that she did not suffer all the guilt, regret, and remorse that she deserved to suffer for having done so.

Fifth, my proposal allows that blame can be either expressed and made public or unexpressed and kept private. For, again, my proposal holds that blame need only involve both a feeling of disapproval and a representation of desert. And one can possess such attitudes without expressing them.

Sixth, my proposal allows that we can be blamed both for the voluntary and for the non-voluntary. On my proposal, the variable 'φ' ranges over all the things that a target can do in response to reasons and not just those things that are under her voluntary control. And I've concluded, therefore, that 'φ' ranges over such things as the formation of a reasons-responsive attitude (e.g., a belief, desire, or intention). Thus, we can, on my proposal, be accountable for such things as desiring what's bad, believing what's contrary to the evidence, and intending to do what's incompatible with our ultimate ends—and this is so despite the fact that we don't (at least, not typically) have voluntary control over whether we form such attitudes.

Seventh, my proposal allows that blame need not be specifically moral. For, on my proposal, blame requires representing the target as having violated a legitimate demand, but that demand needn't be a moral one. And this is important, because we often blame ourselves for our non-moral failings: for our aesthetic bad taste, gustatory self-indulgence, or poor athletic or intellectual performance. As David Shoemaker and Manuel Vargas (forthcoming) have noted, we often blame ourselves for failing to live up to the ideals that we set for ourselves. And, as J. David Velleman (2003) notes, we blame ourselves for failing to fulfill our commitments to ourselves—e.g., our commitment to maintain a certain diet or exercise regimen. What's more, we even blame *others* for their non-moral failings. For instance, "a Mafioso can be said to blame an associate for violating the code of omertà" (by, say, ratting him out to the FBI) even if he admits that his associate hasn't thereby violated any moral demand and has, in fact, done what he was morally required to do (Scanlon 2013, 88).[37]

My proposal accounts for such non-moral blame, both because the demands that my proposal refer to need not be moral demands and because my proposal allows that in blaming someone we need not represent her as deserving to suffer some unpleasant *moral* emotion (such as *moral* guilt) but could instead represent her as deserving to suffer some unpleasant *non-moral* emotion (such as regret or *non-moral* guilt).[38] Of course, you may question whether there is such a thing as non-moral guilt. But consider that we feel guilty for such things as skipping the gym, drinking too much, overindulging at the buffet, and making some impulsive and ill-advised purchase. We even have special names for some of these kinds of guilt: e.g., "food guilt" and "consumer guilt." And these kinds of guilt don't seem to be particularly moral.

But even if you insist that guilt must concern morality, my account allows that when we blame someone we may represent her as deserving only regret, and regret needn't concern morality. To illustrate, consider the following. I've just given a talk, and it's now time for the

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[37] Other proponents of the view that we can be blamed for our perceived non-moral failings include Björnsson (2017) and Matheson & Milam (2019).

[38] Also, the demands need not be legitimate ones. On my proposal, blaming the Mafioso requires only representing him as having violated a legitimate demand. And one can make this representation without the code of omertà actually being a legitimate demand.

Q&A. Someone in the audience raises an objection to my view. Sometimes, it's an objection that I've anticipated. Other times, it's an objection that I never would have thought of myself. But, occasionally, it's an obvious objection and, thus, something that I should have anticipated and preempted. In these instances, I blame myself for not having anticipated the objection. I get angry with myself. Indeed, I could just kick myself. Perhaps, what I'm feeling is better characterized as regret than as guilt. But such regret seems to share with guilt what are, for our purposes, the same relevant features. My regret, like my guilt, is elicited by a transgression. It's just that, in this case, the standards that I've transgressed are the intellectual standards to which I've committed myself. My regret, like my guilt, is unpleasant in its affect. And yet, like my guilt, my regret focuses my attention on the mistake and its adverse effects, thereby inflaming its unpleasantness. Thus, like my guilt, my regret motivates me to self-punish. Instead of trying to distract myself from it by focusing my attention elsewhere, I wallow in its associated pain. Indeed, it strikes me as if I deserve to suffer in this way. For it's not that I'm thinking that it's instrumentally good for me to suffer this way. That is, I'm not thinking that I need to suffer like this so that I'll remember next time to think long and hard about such possible objections. After all, I did think long and hard this time around. And this is what makes my failure all the more frustrating: this objection should have occurred to me because it should have occurred to anyone who had dedicated even a quarter of the time that I did to thinking of possible objections.

Perhaps, you might think that I'm idiosyncratic in my propensity for self-flagellation. But athletes react in the same way to their failures (Shoemaker 2019). Some will even pound their heads or pull their hair. What's more, psychological research suggests that guilt and regret are very similar in the ways that I'm suggesting. As Zeelenberg and Breugelmans (2008, 594) found in their research, "both emotions involved thoughts about having done something wrong, having done damage to oneself, and being responsible for what happened, feeling angry with yourself, feeling like kicking yourself, wanting to undo what happened, and wanting to improve yourself" (Zeelenberg & Breugelmans 2008, 594). So, I believe that it's a merit of my proposal that it allows that there can be non-moral blame and that such blame may involve representing its target as deserving to suffer only regret or non-moral guilt (and not some moral

emotion) in the recognition that one has, say, failed to live up to the non-moral ideals that one is committed to.

6. Conclusion

I've argued that there are two individually necessary and jointly sufficient conditions for one's blaming someone for having seemingly φ-ed: (Condition 1) one has some set of mental states that represents that target (a) as having φ-ed, (b) as having violated a legitimate demand in φ-ing, and (c) as not having suffered all the guilt, regret, and remorse that she deserves to suffer in the recognition of having violated this legitimate demand and (Condition 2) one feels, as a result of these representations, disapproval of, or disappointment in, that someone for having seemingly φ-ed.

This proposal accounts for: (1) the empirical data concerning both what elicits and what palliates the blaming emotions as well as the empirical data concerning what sorts of act-tendencies are typically associated with these emotions; (2) the fact that it's *pro tanto* morally *permissible* to express one's blame of the blameworthy with the aim of guilting them even though it is *pro tanto* morally *impermissible* to express one's distrust of the untrustworthy with the aim of shaming them; (3) the fact that there are certain necessary conditions both for being blameworthy (e.g., the control condition and the epistemic condition) and for being blameworthy to a certain extent (e.g., the proportionality condition); and (4) the fact that what a transgressor has done and experienced subsequent to her wrongdoing can affect the extent to which she is presently blameworthy for that wrongdoing. And I've shown that this proposal allows us to account for blame in all its disparate forms.

Given all that this proposal accounts for, I believe that we should accept it. And whether we should accept it is important, not only because the current literature seems to lack a comprehensive account of blame, but also because it tells us something very important about the nature of blame: it represents its target as being someone who deserves to suffer guilt, regret, or remorse in the recognition that she has violated a legitimate demand. This is important because it may turn out both that all our actions are causally determined and that no

one ever deserves to suffer in virtue of an action that she was causally determined to perform.[39]

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