

Abstract: Evolutionary debunking arguments, whether defended by Street (2006), Joyce (2006), or others against moral realism, or by Plantinga (1993, 2011) and others against atheism, seek to determine the implications of the still-dominant worldview of naturalism. Examining them is thus a critical component of any defense of a theistic philosophy of nature. Recently, several authors have explored the connection between evolutionary debunking arguments against moral realism (hence: EDAs) and Plantinga’s evolutionary argument against naturalistic atheism (hence: EAAN). Typically, responses in this vein have been critical of EDAs, arguing that they are in some way self-undermining. Different critics have argued that, in the course of defending the EAAN, the theist loses her best response to the probabilistic argument from evil for atheism. Here, I provide the first systematic comparison of all three arguments—EDAs, the EAAN, and the problem of evil—and suggest that the first charge succeeds while the second fails.

§1 *Evolutionary debunking arguments against moral realism* (hence: EDAs) challenge the plausibility of moral realism, and thus the rationality of our moral judgments, in light of evolutionary biology.¹ *Evolutionary arguments against naturalistic atheism* (hence: EAAN) challenge the rationality of belief in naturalistic atheism, also in light of evolutionary biology. Perhaps surprisingly, given their structural similarities, only recently have a number of authors sought to clarify the relationship between EDAs and EAANs, usually in ways that are critical of EDAs.² An opposing line of criticism has alleged that theist defenders of the EAAN cannot defend their evolutionary argument against atheism without undermining their own responses to the problem of evil.³

I propose to put all three arguments in conversation here, abstracting in part from specific epistemological debates by looking at all three in light of the naturalist's philosophy of mind. It turns out, I think, that both the naturalist and the non-theist moral realist face significant pressure to revise their positions, and that especially as regards both EDAs and the problem of evil, the theist moral realist's position is, or should be, quite strong.⁴ Whatever weakness theism does seem to have, in both philosophical debates and public discussion, is thus due, I think, to its defenders' failure to articulate a unified, compelling philosophy of nature to challenge the still ascendant naturalism. Formulating this theistic philosophy of nature should be the central aim of Catholic philosophy.

§2 *Evolutionary debunking arguments against moral realism* are a varied lot, so I will offer several approximate characterizations of prominent EDAs, before focusing my

¹ See, to name a few of many, Street (2006), Joyce (2006), Kahane (2011), Clark-Doane (2012).

² These authors include, at least, Crow (2016), Moon (2017a), Bogardus, (2016), Wielenberg (2016).

³ See first Roeber (2009) and more recently, Moon (2017b).

⁴ Nowhere in this paper do I address naturalists who are comfortable nihilists about morality.

attention on criticisms of EDAs that relate directly to the EAAN. One recent review of prominent EDAs, such as those defended by Street (2006) and Joyce (2006), sees them as composed of two empirical prongs plus two philosophical claims.⁵ Empirically, defenders of the EDA assert that (1) “our *evolutionary ancestors*’ basic (moral) evaluative tendencies were significantly influenced by evolutionary forces” and second, that (2) “the content of our (moral) evaluative judgments has been heavily influenced by the basic evaluative tendencies of our evolutionary ancestors.” Philosophically, they argue that (3) “evolutionary forces shaped our ancestors’ basic evaluative tendencies to such a degree that we can explain the content of our (moral) evaluative judgments without appealing to the truth of any of those judgments,” and that therefore, (4) “with no grounds for positing an explanatory connection from (moral) evaluative truths to our (moral) evaluative beliefs, ‘the forces of natural selection must be viewed as a purely distorting influence on our (moral) evaluative judgments (Street, 2006: 121).’” The underlying intuition, common to all prominent EDAs, is that evolutionarily influenced evaluative attitudes bear *enough* responsibility for our present moral judgments that they are at best accidentally true and at worst hopelessly distorted by natural selective pressures.

Other presentations of EDAs are more straightforwardly epistemic. Bogardus, for instance, presents three structurally similar EDAs classified on the basis of their commitment to one or another epistemological principle. Their shared first premise asserts that our moral faculties were selected to produce adaptive, rather than true, moral beliefs. Their second and third premises invoke the relevant principle—sensitivity, safety,

⁵ Wielenberg (2016: 504); the four quoted claims that follow are Wielenberg’s presentation of Street’s argument, with the exception of the (moral) qualification that appears in parentheses.

or non-accidentality—and argue that it does not apply to our moral beliefs. Each argument therefore concludes that our moral beliefs do not constitute knowledge.⁶

Critics of EDAs have pursued diverse strategies to undermine particular formulations of arguments embodying this general set of intuitions, arguing, for instance, that some ‘third factor’ correlates with both our moral beliefs and the moral truths and explains their connection, or that moral truths *do explain* our moral beliefs, or that evolutionary influences are weaker than supposed.⁷ But the most powerful responses, to my mind, cluster around the thought that EDAs are somehow self-undermining. A subset of this group of responses tries to cash out this charge by demonstrating the structural similarities between EDAs and Plantinga’s EAAN. I’ll focus my attention here; however, I want to extend this argument by abstracting from some of the epistemological debates and focusing instead on how the EDA defender’s position is caught between the EAAN and naturalism’s own philosophy of mind, on one prominent interpretation.

In “A Plantingian Pickle for a Darwinian Dilemma,” Daniel Crow argues that the common core of prominent EDAs is virtually identical to Plantinga’s EAAN. This core similarity drives the charge that EDAs are self-undermining, Crow thinks, because the arguments’ similar structures imply that the same considerations in favor of, and objections to, each argument applies equally well to the other. But since Street’s EDA, in light of its naturalism, presupposes atheism, if one starts by intending to debunk moral realism, but one’s argument equally supports Plantinga’s EAAN, and thus *theism*, then the EDA’s defense has been self-undermining. As Crow puts the point:

Because there is no way to reject the Evolutionary Argument Against Atheism that does not have some implausible implication for the Reconstructed Darwinian

⁶ Bogardus (2016: 640, 647, 653) gives the argument framed in terms of each of the three named principles.

⁷ Wielenberg (2016: 505-508) adroitly discusses all these sorts of responses.

Dilemma, *we should conclude that the success of the latter argument implies the success of the former*. If evolutionary considerations support normative anti-realism, then they also support theism, and if they support theism, then they do not support normative anti-realism. Therefore, evolutionary considerations—of the sort Street identifies at least—do not support normative anti-realism.⁸

Crow's dilemma for the Darwinian EDA is a *prima facie* powerful one. Of course, Street can respond that Crow's reconstruction of her argument, the core of which I'll present below, either misrepresents her position or is defensible on grounds not supportive of the EAAN, such that the success of her argument in no way implies the success of the EAAN. Moreover, as we will see in the next section, a more holistic worry is that Crow's same strategy can be applied against the EAAN itself, using Plantinga's own response to the problem of evil against the EAAN to form a similarly self-undermining dyad of arguments. In that case, one might reasonably conclude that neither evolutionary argument—against moral realism or against atheism—succeeds. Before confronting that *tu quoque* response, however, I want to deepen the challenge for Street, by moving from epistemology to the naturalist's philosophy of mind, and by more carefully considering the dialectical context of this debate.

A crucial hint of the relevant dialectical context comes during Crow's summary of Plantinga's reasons for holding what Crow calls The Probability Thesis. A probability claim of this sort forms the first premise, on Crow's reconstruction, of both the EAAN and the Reconstructed EDA. It states that, assuming both atheism (A) and the claims of evolutionary biology (E), the probability that our cognitive faculties are reliable (R) is either *low or inscrutable*.⁹ The core of the EAAN is thus:

⁸ Crow (2016: 148)

⁹ Crow (2016: 132) actually just uses low, rather than low or inscrutable, for the probability he discusses. However, 'low or inscrutable' both better matches how Plantinga (1993: Ch. 12) actually discusses the

- (1) The Probability Thesis: $\Pr(R/A\&E)$ is low or inscrutable.
- (2) If the Probability Thesis is true, then the Reflective Atheist has an undefeated defeater for R.
- (3) Therefore, the Reflective Atheist has an undefeated defeater for R.¹⁰

Crow goes on to argue that Street's EDA has the same core, with an initial probability thesis claiming that the probability that our normative faculties are reliable (NR), given normative realism and evolution (E), is either low or inscrutable. Thus:

- (4) The Coincidence Thesis: $\Pr(NR/\text{normative realism} \ \& \ E)$ is low or inscrutable.
- (5) If the Coincidence Thesis is true, then the Reflective Normative Realist has an undefeated defeater for NR.
- (6) Therefore, the Reflective Normative Realist has an undefeated defeater for NR.¹¹

Before seeing how these arguments are supposed to work together to undermine the EDA defender's position, I want to consider Crow's summary of Plantinga's defense of the Probability Thesis. Crow writes:

To defend the Probability Thesis, Plantinga begins by distinguishing between a belief's neurological properties and its content. *According to physicalism, a belief's content is grounded in its neurological properties.* Plantinga argues that, given physicalist assumptions, it is beliefs' neurological properties and not their contents that influence behavior and thus would have been favored by evolution. But there is no reason for thinking that the contents that supervene on the adaptive neurological arrangements are true.¹²

Notably, both Plantinga's argument and Crow's summary of it concede too much. Above, Plantinga grants his opponent a standard physicalist distinction between neurological and content properties of a belief, before arguing that only the former face natural selective pressures. But in the dialectical context of both this paper and Plantinga's original work,

issue, and more neatly parallels the arguments to come in the section on the EAAN and the problem of evil. Adding 'inscrutable' does not affect Crow's overall argument, since it only weakens the premise.

¹⁰ Crow (2016: 134); the argument continues by noting that an undefeated defeater for R gives the atheist a defeater for all of her beliefs, since they have all been formed by her cognitive faculties, presumed reliable, including therefore her belief in both atheism and the claims of evolutionary biology. The first three premises of the EAAN and the reconstructed EDA are all that is needed for my purposes.

¹¹ Crow (2016: 138); again, I add 'low or inscrutable' to Crow's presentation but it is otherwise unchanged.

¹² Crow (2016: 132)

naturalism, rather than physicalism, is the relevant opposing view. But a prominent line of argument in the philosophy of mind, defended by naturalists like the Churchlands, Rosenberg, and others, holds that naturalism entails the absence of intentional content, thus vitiating the physicalist's standard distinction! Here is Rosenberg on the view:

'Original intentionality' is John Searle's useful way of designating the fact that for anything else in nature to be a symbol, to be about stuff, there have to be brain states—sets of neural circuits wired together—that confer intentionality on it: that is, there have to be clumps of matter, presumably in the brain, that, just in virtue of their composition, are *about* clumps of matter outside the brain [. . .] But physics fixes all the facts, and it assures us that there cannot be clumps of matter—combinations of fermions and bosons—that just are, in virtue of their constitution, about other clumps of matter. So no original intentionality.¹³

The relevance of the inference—naturalism entails a lack of intentional content—to the foregoing dialectic might not be immediately clear. I now want to make that explicit.

Crow's argument goes as follows: start as a defender of Street's EDA, that is, with a defense of (4)-(6) above. This is the core of Street's argument, which she hopes allows her to undermine moral realism in favor of her preferred Humean constructivist position in metaethics: "The truth of a normative claim consists in that claim's being entailed from within the practical point of view...[which is the position in which] a creature values something—or, as I will also put it, when he or she *takes* or *judges* this, that, or the other thing to be valuable."¹⁴ Here, the only feature of Street's moral constructivist view I need to invoke is its intentional character. Moral agents, on Street's telling, are not responsive to mind-independent normative reasons, but they do *take* or *judge* certain things or states of affairs to be valuable. Their valuing attitudes are *intentionally* directed at certain states or objects.

This feature of her view puts Street in a more global bind, creating a dilemma that

¹³ Rosenberg (2013: 35)

¹⁴ Street (2010: 367, 366)

encompasses the one Crow focuses on and provides two additional routes for substantiating the charge that the EDA defender's position is self-undermining.¹⁵ When starting from naturalist premises and confronting a moral realist like Plantinga who defends the EAAN, Street faces the following dilemma. If naturalism is true, on the Rosenberg-Churchland interpretation, then beliefs lack intentional properties. Thus, if the EDA is an argument against moral realism and for moral constructivism, *an alternative that makes claims with intentional character*, it fails. For naturalism rules out the moral constructivist's intentional valuing attitudes (for instance, desires) just as much as the realist's true moral beliefs (that is, moral beliefs intentionally directed at the truth). So, if naturalism is true, then (1) the conclusion of the EDA, the denial of moral realism and the affirmation of moral constructivism, is false. Indeed, (2) the premises of Street's original EDA, read as claims with content, are empty. These two new routes for showing that Street's EDA is self-undermining come from *within naturalism itself*, from naturalism's own defenders! They complement Crow's contention that the success of the EDA implies the success of the EAAN, and thus that atheistic premises (in the EDA) ultimately entail theistic conclusions (from the EAAN).

To be clear, the issue is not that the Rosenberg-Churchland interpretation of naturalism is incontestable; of course it is. The EDA defender's failure is rather that, dialectically speaking, she cannot *simply* help herself to a favorable interpretation of naturalism, lacking the problematic, anti-intentional consequences, without argument. This seems right regardless of one's views on peer disagreement.¹⁶ And this failure must be kept in mind as my discussion moves to the comparison of the EAAN and the problem

¹⁵ Of course, if Rosenberg's argument succeeds, naturalists will have problems defending whole hosts of views in many areas of philosophy. Here, I restrict focus to issues specific to Street's view.

¹⁶ For an excellent discussion, see Feldman and Warfield (2010)

of evil, for it recurs there too. To restate the dilemma: if naturalism has the Rosenberg-Churchland implications, Street's EDA fails. If naturalism lacks the Rosenberg-Churchland implications, Crow's comparison with the EAAN and his charge that the EDA is self-undermining sticks, modulo some additional argument from Street that defends her position *while not undermining* her argument against the Rosenberg-Churchland position. Dialectically, Street has the obligation to argue that her naturalism avoids the Rosenberg-Churchland implications, especially since her critics share her basic premises. Her argument cannot get started without addressing this worry. Since she does not discharge this obligation, and since even if she did she would then face Crow's dilemma, it is not rational to accept the EDA's conclusion. Evolutionary debunking arguments of this sort do not threaten moral realism.

§3 Bolstering the self-undermining charge against EDAs with the EAAN might seem a boon for theist moral realists. Unfortunately, critics have argued that Plantinga, the EAAN's main defender, undermines his own response to the problem of evil in defending the EAAN.¹⁷ If this is right, evolutionary debunking arguments, against moral realism *or* against atheism, are on shaky ground.

Before detailing the structural parallels between the EAAN and Plantinga's skeptical theist response to the problem of evil, I'll sketch the critics' basic intuition, which is powerful and straightforward. Then, after describing the structural parallels, I will argue that these critics have misunderstood the dialectical context, as in section 2, such that their objection fails. This failure shows something critical about the burden of proof in arguments from evil for atheism.

¹⁷ As cited above, see first Roeber (2009) and then Moon (2017b).

The objection's guiding idea is as follows: the EAAN only works if some feature of theism raises the probability that our cognitive faculties are reliable. But to respond to the problem of evil, the skeptical theist must decrease our confidence in God's plans and intentions (to show His good reason for permitting some evil). The theist cannot do so *selectively enough* to ensure that (a) we remain confident that theism significantly raises the probability that our cognitive faculties are reliable while (b) ignorant enough of God's plans and intentions that we render plausible his permission of horrendous evils.

Roeber's rich discussion of the EAAN and the problem of evil most closely mirrors the arguments of the last section, so I'll focus on his presentation. To make the objection precise, then, start with the first premise of the core of the EAAN; namely, the Probability Thesis: $\Pr(R/A\&E)$ is low or inscrutable. To avoid the Roeber-Moon worry, the EAAN's defender must block the parallel Inscrutability Argument Against Theism (IAAT):

- (1) The Probability Thesis against Theism: $\Pr(R/T\&I)$ is low or inscrutable.¹⁸
- (2) If the Probability Thesis is true, then the Reflective Theist has an undefeated defeater for R.
- (3) Therefore, the Reflective Theist has an undefeated defeater for R.

Here, T is theism, and I is what Roeber calls the Inscrutability Maxim:

For every possible world W and possible evil E—where the actualization of E isn't ruled out by the truth of the Scriptures—the occurrence of E in W does not give us a reason to think that God probably does not exist in W. Similarly, God's existence in W does not give us a reason to think that E probably does not occur in W.¹⁹

Roeber cleverly connects the EAAN to the problem of evil by arguing that many possible evils E feature agents with unreliable cognitive faculties who are also ignorant that their faculties are unreliable. His twist on a typical Cartesian evil demon scenario is called

¹⁸ Roeber (2009: 317-318); I follow Roeber in labeling this parallel argument the IAAT.

¹⁹ Roeber (2009: 315)

Terrorist Activity. Terrorists poison the water supply with a chemical, which, rather than killing its victims, causes coma-like states with vivid dreams that precisely mimic ordinary human activities,. As Roeber rightly notes, the victims of Terrorist Activity might be *originally* made in the image of God to know, love, and serve him, they might be members of a religion with “doxastically valuable” relationships with God, etc.²⁰ These facts don’t seem to protect them from ending up with contingently unreliable faculties of whose unreliability they remain ignorant.

Roeber’s overly skeptical case obscures issues that Moon’s presentation makes clear.²² Moon first defines *skeptical theism* as the conjunction of theism with ST1-ST3:

ST1: We have no good reason for thinking that the possible goods we know of are representative of the possible goods there are.

ST2: We have no good reason for thinking that the possible evils we know of are representative of the possible evils there are.

ST3: We have no good reason for thinking that the entailment relations we know of between possible goods and the permission of possible evils are representative of the entailment relations there are between possible goods and the permission of possible evils.²³

How, Moon then asks, can we be sure, given this skeptical theism, that *our having reliable cognitive faculties* (ignoring any specific radical skeptical scenarios like Terrorist

²⁰ Moon (2017b: 467) gives the religion-based response that he thinks succeeds where Plantinga’s “bare theism” response fails. But, as Roeber’s arguments make clear, this is not enough to avoid the objection.

²² The upshot of Roeber’s specific Terrorist Activity case depends greatly on how skeptically it’s interpreted. Maximally skeptically, the victims remain suspended for their entire lives in the coma-like state, all their beliefs are formed in that state, they have no memories of their previous lives, etc. In that case, I am inclined to follow David Chalmers, who argues in “The Matrix as Metaphysics” that Matrix-like scenarios should not be interpreted as skeptical scenarios, but simply as unexpected metaphysical hypotheses. That is, if the Matrix hypothesis is true, the fundamental nature of reality is not quarks and leptons but bits in the Matrix program, but skepticism does not thereby result (Chalmers, 2009: 36) Similarly, if Terrorist Activity gives rise to sufficiently pervasive, unified, coma-centered experiences, perhaps it qualifies as a surprising, non-skeptical hypothesis about the actual world. If Terrorist Activity is interpreted less skeptically, such that not all agents are affected, possibilities remain for discerning one’s state as a victim of the poisoning, etc., then I might be inclined to bite the bullet. That is, I might argue that we do not know that our cognitive faculties are *currently* reliable, even if theism *does* give us reason to think that Pr (R/T&I) is higher for agents in general, albeit not at any given point in time. This might be enough to draw a disanalogy between the first premise of the EAAN and the Probability Thesis against Theism that the EAAN’s defender must reject.

²³ Moon (2017b: 452)

Activity) is among the possible goods God would pursue? How, that is, can the theist avoid The Probability Thesis against Theism: $\Pr(R/T\&I)$ is low or inscrutable?

Once again, close attention to the dialectic of the argument shows how the theist defender of the EAAN should respond. The key mistaken premise is that, as Roeber puts it, “*If the reflective theist is to be reflective in her theism, she needs an answer to probabilistic arguments from evil such as Rowe’s.*”²⁴ This premise motivates the introduction of the Inscrutability Maxim (I), allows for the construction of the IAAT that parallels, and thereby undermines the EAAN, but it is not, *in general*, true.

To see why not, imagine that naturalism is true and that Street’s moral constructivism is correct. In that world, is the probabilistic argument from evil sound? I think not, for the probabilistic argument from evil includes the premise that there are some *horrendous evils* that God could have prevented without sacrificing a greater good or permitting some greater evil. But the constructivist’s notion of evil is not robust enough to entail metaphysical conclusions about God’s existence. The key thought, one that some contemporary naturalists like Rosenberg seem to have accepted and that early naturalists like Spinoza surely believed, is that *a moral realist notion of evil is required for the truth of the premises of any argument from evil*. For naturalists like Street, by contrast, their naturalism, rather than the argument from evil, entails that God does not exist. Of course, they accept that many putative horrendous evils are ‘evil,’ but this evil is constructed, grounded in the evaluative attitudes of their community and bereft of metaphysical implications for God’s existence. For the naturalist, *that battle* has already been won. If this is right, then the reflective theist does not, *in general*, require a response to probabilistic arguments from evil to be rational in her theism. Rather, the reflective

²⁴ Roeber (2009: 322, 317), my emphasis

theist requires a response in certain dialectical contexts but not others; in particular, she requires one in debates with a moral realist, on whose view the premises of the probabilistic arguments from evil are true.

But now we can see where this is going. Street helped herself, without argument, to an interpretation of naturalism (i.e. the denial of the Rosenberg-Churchland interpretation) favorable to her view. Similarly, in Roeber's construction of the IAAT, he helps himself, without argument, to the moral realism required for the truth of the premises of the probabilistic argument from evil. This move is not, in general, licit. Suppose first that Roeber means to embody a naturalist position like Street's. Then the assumption of moral realism conflicts with his other commitments. This possibility is unlikely, however, since Roeber never indicates that he means to embrace Street's moral constructivism. More plausibly, Roeber should be read as taking moral realism as common ground between the theist defender of the EAAN and her opponent.

Theists should deny that this ground is common. If this reading is right, this imagined Atheist Moral Realist opponent of the EAAN faces an imposing dialectical situation.²⁵ First, the Atheist Moral Realist must respond to the EDAs defended by Street, Joyce, and others in the previous section. For it was their contention that naturalist atheism entailed the denial of moral realism, and thus the rejection of the truth of the premises of the probabilistic argument that assert some horrendous evil's existence. These EDAs cannot be rejected without argument. Moreover, the strategy taken in the

²⁵ Recall that we have been considering the problem of evil *as an argument for atheism*. If the Moral Realist is also a theist, the response is more complicated. What I reject is the move to take moral realism as common ground that can be mutually assumed, even among theists who just disagree about morality's grounds.

previous section will not work, for that strategy undermined the EDAs by showing that they entailed theism, something the Atheist Moral Realist already rejects.

So, in order to launch the IAAT to undermine the theist's EAAN, the Atheist Moral Realist first needs to show either how his moral realism can be reconciled with naturalism, or to defend moral non-naturalism. Even if one grants moral non-naturalism for the sake of argument, however, it's unclear that the Atheist Moral Realist's position is *non-natural enough* to escape the first premise of the EAAN. If not, the Atheist Moral Realist has an undefeated defeater for her belief in Atheist Moral Realism, which prevents her from defending the probabilistic argument from evil required to get the IAAT going. That last point is subtle, and bears repeating. Consider the Atheist Moral Realist's position, granting for the moment that moral non-naturalism is true. If the Atheist Moral Realist would like to retain a great deal of the naturalistic worldview defended by Street, then it does not seem that her isolated moral non-naturalism differs sufficiently from the naturalism invoked in the Probability Thesis that begins the EAAN.²⁶ That is, the EAAN's Probability Thesis would simply be replaced by The Probability Thesis*: $\Pr(R/A\&E\&\text{Moral Non-naturalism})$ is low or inscrutable. In particular, in the context of a naturalistic, atheistic worldview, isolated moral non-naturalism seemingly does nothing to render R, a thesis about our cognitive abilities in general, any more likely. So the dialectic is such that the Atheist Moral Realist's belief in her own atheist moral realism is defeated by the EAAN before the problematically

²⁶ There is a large caveat here, one I cannot discuss at the length it deserves. Presumably an old-school Platonic Moral Realism, especially in the context of a more general Platonism, would happily reject naturalism on any interpretation, whether Street's or Rosenberg's. This position would evade my criticism as I've phrased it, though I would wonder how the Platonic Moral Realist arrived at *atheism*, as opposed to *agnosticism* or some more *impersonal form of theism* (in the latter case, of course, this view would not differ from the one defended here in any respects relevant to the foregoing discussion).

parallel IAAT can be defended. Moreover, to the extent that the Atheist Moral Realist retains a broadly naturalistic picture, she faces a charge identical to that against Street; namely, that Atheist Moral Realism cannot assume a version of naturalism compatible with its view, rather than a naturalism that undermines all intentional content, and thus moral realism, without showing how the Rosenberg-Churchland arguments go wrong.

§4 The theist defender of the EAAN can put her point another way, one that brings us finally back to the importance of a renewed Catholic philosophy of nature. A theist who blocks Roeber's IAAT as I suggest can be seen as defending a version of what I'll call the *Karamazov Intuition*. In Dostoevsky's *Brothers Karamazov*, Dimitri describes his brother Ivan's worldview as one where, "Without God, everything is permitted." In logically clearer language, if God does not exist, then everything is permitted. The contrapositive states the *Karamazov Intuition*: if it is not the case that everything is permitted, then God exists. How does the Karamazov intuition tie into the foregoing?

The thought is simply that while the naturalist defender of the EDA is undermined as in section 2, one cannot play the same game against the EAAN. For any attempt to undermine the EAAN with the problem of evil must be interpreted in light of the standing of the EAAN's opponent. If the EAAN's opponent is a naturalist who accepts moral constructivism, her notion of evil is not robust enough to motivate the problem of evil; she must argue for atheism from naturalism directly. And even if contingent features of the basic evaluative tendencies of our community do not, in fact, permit everything, in a deeper sense everything is permitted; nothing is absolutely, mind-independently wrong. By contrast, if the EAAN's opponent is an Atheist Moral Realist, she occupies the following unstable position. To whatever extent she retains a commitment to naturalism,

to that extent she must both respond to Street's EDA, *and* show how her position avoids the EAAN's Probability Premise or Probability Premise*, which would defeat her position before it could be used to construct the IAAT against the EAAN.²⁷

Finally, her defense of her moral realism must include, as a precondition of using the IAAT to undermine the EAAN, an argument that rejects the Karamazov Intuition by showing how not everything is permitted (that is, how moral realism is true), yet God does not exist. In sum, opponents of the theist in possession of the EAAN, whether naturalists or atheist moral realists, have a great deal of work to do, work it seems unlikely they can complete, Independent arguments rejecting both the Rosenberg-Churchland interpretation of naturalism and the Karamazov intuition, both plausible, well-defended views, are *prerequisites* for naturalists like Street or Roeber's imagined Atheist Moral Realist, after which those views still face serious challenges. Arguments like Street's EDA or the probabilistic argument from evil are thus extremely weak against theists who defend the EAAN while accepting the Karamazov intuition. This prompts the question: why is this form of theism not more widely accepted? The answer, I suggest, lies in the failure of theists of this stripe *to evangelize*, and in particular to bring the good news of a genuine theistic philosophy of nature to those still enthralled by the glitter of naturalism.

²⁷ The same caveat as in the previous footnote applies here: technically, Platonic Atheist Moral Realism has not been discussed sufficiently to rule it out. But whether such a position could employ the probabilistic argument from evil without undermining the rationality of belief in the Platonic Good seems like at least as steep a challenge for this view as the argument from evil is for the traditional theist. Indeed, that is why many traditional theists have identified God with the Platonic Good, albeit with the addition of further properties.

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