

Hypocrisy as Two-Faced

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I. Introduction

Hypocrisy has lately attracted the attention of numerous moral philosophers, who have noted the hodge-podge of ordinary uses of the term and queried the commonsense idea that hypocrisy is wrong. The hypocrite has variously been accused of, among other things: deceitfulness, unseriousness about morality, a mismatch between her judgments and her actions, and practical disregard for the equal standing of persons.¹ But all of these proposals face serious objections. The elusiveness of the wrong of hypocrisy, and the ragbag of behaviors and attitudes assembled under the heading “hypocritical,” lead some philosophers to conclude that hypocrisy is not an interestingly unified kind, and others that hypocrisy is never wrong *per se*.² But these proposals, too, are misguided. I argue that there *is* a distinctive vice of hypocrisy, which is Janus-faced. The vice of hypocrisy is the self-excepting avoidance of a particular pain: the pain associated with being an object of blame one believes deserved. This avoidance can take two forms, one ‘inward-facing’ and attitudinal, the other ‘outward-facing’ and behavioral, and these are incongruous – which helps explain why it has proven so difficult to characterize the nature of the vice.

The idea that hypocrisy has something to do with self-exceptionalism and blame is familiar. It is implicit in our kneejerk rejoinder to hypocritical criticism (“you’re one to talk!”) and its Matthean predecessor (“Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye...”). Self-exceptionalism

¹ A chronological sampling: McKinnon (1991), Crisp & Cowton (1994), Statman (1997), Szabados & Soifer (1998, 1999), Wallace (2010), Bell (2013), Isserow & Klein (2017), Frick (2017), Fritz & Miller (2018, 2019), Roadevin (2018), Rossi (2018), Todd (2019), Herstein (2017, 2020).

² Bartel (2019), Dover (2019).

and blame figure in many recent philosophical accounts of hypocrisy. Yet the precise connection between self-exceptionalism, blame, vicious hypocrisy, and the variety of attitudes and behaviors called ‘hypocritical’ in ordinary language, has been overlooked. Identifying the vice of hypocrisy requires that we first distinguish three apparently similar types of cases, all of which can occasion accusations of hypocrisy. These accusations are typically triggered by the observation of a behavioral pattern which includes ‘the hypocritical conjunction’: a person φ ’s and blames others for φ -ing.³ In ordinary life and language, a person’s satisfying this conjunction is often enough to earn them the name ‘hypocrite.’ In one type of case, an agent exhibits this conjunction without being morally vicious, as when an alcoholic father reprimands his children for their heavy drinking.⁴ In a second type of case, an agent exhibits this conjunction and is morally vicious, but the former fact does not explain the latter. Instead, the hypocritical conjunction co-occurs with a familiar vice, which is itself the moral offense – for example, insincerity, as when a person φ -s, blames others for φ -ing, and does not really believe that φ -ing is blameworthy.⁵ It is only in a *third* type of case that the agent is guilty of the distinctive vice of hypocrisy: those cases in which the hypocritical conjunction is a critical component of the wrong at hand. The vice of hypocrisy manifests *non-contingently* in the hypocritical conjunction. The object of my discussion

³The term is owed to Dover (2019).

⁴ Such cases of “noble hypocrisy” (Crisp & Cowton (1994), Szabados (1979), Isserow & Klein (2017)) have been thought puzzling, because they evoke warring intuitions: on the one hand, “noble hypocrites” strike us as hypocritical in some familiar sense (*cf.* Bloomfield (2018: 217)); on the other, we think of hypocrisy as offensive, and “noble hypocrites” fail to offend us. My distinction between ordinary-language hypocrisy and the vice of hypocrisy dissolves this tension: “noble hypocrites” are hypocrites in the thin, ordinary language sense (they exhibit the hypocritical conjunction), but not in the morally interesting sense.

⁵ On Rossi’s (2021) disjunctive account, an agent’s behavior is hypocritical if and only if it “instantiates an inconsistent pair that expresses [her] values or purported values” and this pair “reflects badly on [her] in virtue of its manifesting” one of four familiar vices (pretentiousness, self-righteousness, complacency, partiality). On Bartel’s (2019) disjunctive account, “the moral status of all instances of hypocrisy [reduces] either to the moral blameworthiness of deception or to the moral blameworthiness of akrasia.”

Unlike Rossi and Bartel, I seek to *separate* cases in which an ordinary-language hypocrite’s offensiveness traces back to some other vice, from those in which it reflects the distinctively hypocritical vice.

is this narrower range of cases, where the fact that an agent both φ -s and blames others for φ -ing partly grounds her moral offense.^{6, 7, 8,}

With this narrower range in view, let me restate, then elaborate, my proposal. These are cases of self-excepting avoidance of a particular pain: the pain associated with being an object of blame one believes deserved. Being the object of blame is painful, both when one believes the blame to be deserved, and when one does not. Yet, the two scenarios are phenomenologically distinct: fair and unfair reproofs both hurt, but they hurt differently. Just as there is a felt difference between being the object of blame one believes is deserved and being the object of blame one does not believe is deserved, so there is a moral difference between seeking to avoid the one and seeking to avoid the other.⁹ Seeking to avoid being the object of blame one does not believe deserved is often unobjectionable: we do not hasten to criticize a person in a highly homophobic society who conceals her homosexuality. By contrast, seeking to avoid being the object of blame one believes deserved is

⁶ Except where noted, subsequent uses of “hypocrisy” and “hypocrites” refer to this phenomenon.

⁷ Thus, my project is not one of ordinary-language analysis – an attempt to find patterns across every instantiation of the hypocritical conjunction – but a study of this narrower range of cases, where the fact that an agent φ -s and blames others for φ -ing partly grounds her moral offense. My distinction between the vice of hypocrisy and mere occurrences of the hypocritical conjunction should be of use even to those who reject the substantive account of the vice I propose, and to those who seek to analyze a broader range of phenomena – beyond the hypocritical conjunction – for which we use the word “hypocrisy” (Crisp & Cowton (1994), Szabados & Soifer (1998, 1999), Bloomfield (2018), Rossi (2021)).

⁸ *Cf.* Dover (2019), who denies that the hypocritical conjunction ever sources a moral complaint.

⁹ *See* pp. 13-15

objectionable – a particular kind of cowardice.¹⁰ Insofar as we are pain-averse, we desire to avoid this. But this interest is not morally legitimate.¹¹

Merely avoiding the pain associated with being an object of blame which one believes deserved is insufficient for hypocrisy. To commit the vice of hypocrisy is *self-exceptingly* to avoid this pain. One can self-exceptingly avoid it *attitudinally* or *behaviorally*. In cases of “attitudinal” hypocrisy, a person spares herself at the level of her *beliefs*: she avoids forming the belief that she is blameworthy for some act, while sincerely blaming others for their comparable acts.¹² In cases of “behavioral” hypocrisy, by contrast, a person spares herself at the level of her *behavior*. She shields herself from enduring the blame she believes her acts to merit – typically, by hiding what she has done – while blaming others for their comparable acts. The attitudinal hypocrite “reasons” her way out of blameworthiness by distinguishing her conduct from others’, whereas the behavioral hypocrite believes that her conduct is blameworthy, and ducks opprobrium by denying others the chance to blame her.¹³ As a convenient short-hand, the attitudinal hypocrite deceives herself,¹⁴ while the behavioral hypocrite deceives others.

¹⁰ More precisely: seeking to avoid being the object of blame (i) for some act one has performed, (ii) where one believes acts of that kind deserve blame, and (iii) where it is available to one that one’s act is of that kind, is objectionable. For short, I refer to this as seeking to avoid ‘being the object of blame one believes deserved.’ Seeking to avoid being the object of blame one believes deserved is, as I characterize it, *backward-looking* (concerned with acts one has already performed), and second-personal (concerned with blame from others).

Clause (i) serves to distinguish the hypocrite’s characteristic motivation from a forward-looking, non-hypocritical counterpart. We can imagine a person who always does the right thing in order to avoid becoming an object of blame which she believes deserved. She is not a hypocrite, but, on my account, has something important in common with hypocrites. This marks an intriguing intersection of the literatures on the moral worth of actions and on hypocrisy. Clauses (ii) and (iii) reflect the fact (discussed below) that attitudinal hypocrites avoid forming the belief that they are blameworthy.

¹¹ Of course, in any particular case, the sum of reasons might support a person’s being spared blame for some act she has performed, which she believes deserves blame (as when her belief is mistaken). My point is that her psychological interest in avoiding this blame is not itself a reason.

¹² But *see* n. 20.

¹³ The terms ‘attitudinal hypocrite’ and ‘behavioral hypocrite’ simply refer to agents who exhibit attitudinal or behavioral hypocrisy, respectively, on a given occasion.

¹⁴ Statman (1997), Bell (2013), and Fritz & Miller (2018, 2019) associate hypocrisy with self-deception (§VI).

Indeed, though both forms of hypocrisy selectively spare the hypocrite the same pain, they require broadly incompatible moral-psychological states: the attitudinal hypocrite avoids blaming herself, while the behavioral hypocrite proceeds on the assumption she is blameworthy. While the idea that hypocrisy takes various forms appears in the literature,¹⁵ my account of the hypocritical vice, and my proposal that it is associated with two discrete moral-psychological structures, are novel. In what follows, I argue that each form of hypocrisy is objectionable in its own right, and then explain how the two forms of hypocrisy are in tension, such that a given instance of the vice will, generally, involve only one or the other. Along the way, I point out some advantages my account holds over other available theories. In closing, I take up the conceptually unifying feature of the vice of hypocrisy: vicious hypocrites self-exceptingly avoid the pain associated with being an object of blame which they believe deserved. This view of the vice suggests new paths of inquiry into hypocrisy's moral dimensions.

II. Attitudinal Hypocrisy

Our pre-theorized conception of hypocrisy mixes together two accusations, both involving self-exceptionalism. The first accusation is that the hypocrite sees himself as *superior* – he fails to appreciate that the same rules which he invokes in criticizing others apply to him, too. (An example in the popular imagination is Donald Trump, who appears to find no fault with himself while lambasting others for comparable shortcomings.) This accusation is captured by my notion of *attitudinal* hypocrisy. The second accusation is that the hypocrite shields himself from the social tolls associated with his bad acts, even as he eagerly exacts these tolls from others. (An example in the popular imagination is Newt Gingrich, who lambasted Bill Clinton for his infidelity while carrying on

¹⁵ Crisp & Cowton (1994), Bell (2013), Isserow & Klein (2017), Isserow (2020), Fritz & Miller (2018, 2019).

an affair.)¹⁶ Consider the familiar idea that hypocrites conceal their conduct, and their true selves, from public view; as R. Jay Wallace (2010: 308) reminds us, the word “derives (*via* ecclesiastical Latin) from a Greek root referring to the acting of some part in a play.” Shielding and concealment figure in – though cannot straightforwardly be equated with – my notion of *behavioral* hypocrisy.¹⁷

Attitudinal hypocrisy consists in an objectionable attitudinal incoherence. Consider the following example:

UNASHAMED OFFENDER [CARELESS]: John is a careless person, and habitually unreliable in his dealings with Jane. Jane is similarly careless and unreliable. John resents Jane for her unreliability. Jane, too, resents John for his unreliability. John is angered by Jane’s resentment. He feels it unreasonable and unfair – “she’s so uncharitable!”

John’s unrepudiated resentment reflects some conviction that Jane’s unreliability deserves resentment. When it comes to his own conduct, however, the threshold for resentment conveniently shifts, such that Jane’s resentment is, to his mind, out of line. Yet, it is generally thought that moral judgments pretend to a certain universalizability, such that moral standards bind all agents equally.¹⁸ The attitudinal hypocrite fails, in his attitudes, to appreciate the moral comparability of his own and others’ behavior.¹⁹ This is objectionable because none of us is a favorite in morality’s eyes.

¹⁶ Or, more precisely, in a *significant subset* of the public’s imagination. My point, of course, is not political. My point is simply that both figures are *widely regarded* as hypocrites. A search on Google for “famous hypocrites” yields Trump as the first result; in 2011, U.S. News called Gingrich “the current standard-bearer of hypocrisy in politics” (witness Ron Paul’s 2011 attack ad called “Serial Hypocrisy”). The reader is welcome to replace these examples with her preferred examples of infamous attitudinal and behavioral hypocrites.

Separately, I assume Gingrich believes his own infidelity to be wrong. This is essential for behavioral hypocrisy.

¹⁷ I reserve the term for cases in which a person shields herself from tolls which she imposes on others and *which she believes she deserves*; see pp. 13-15.

¹⁸ I refer to the familiar idea that a moral judgment which applies to some agent in some scenario, will apply to anyone who finds herself in the position of the subject of this judgment. The salient level of detail at which to characterize the ‘position’ of the person being judged is, of course, a matter of philosophical dispute, but the uncontroversial point about universalizability I invoke is one which most, including Particularists, accept.

¹⁹ Which (kinds of) distinctions are morally significant is a substantive question which I cannot here address.

The self-exceptionalism definitional of attitudinal hypocrisy reveals itself in casuistry. The attitudinal hypocrite would not, if asked, deny that morality's strictures bind him, but he invariably finds some means of distinguishing his actions from the (actually analogous) actions of others, with whom he finds fault. He is incoherent in the following sense: he selectively conceptualizes and evaluates his own behavior. More precisely, he appeals to principles which draw spurious distinctions between his behavior and the behavior of those whom he criticizes:

SPURIOUS DISTINCTION-DRAWER: Dave's girlfriend, Melinda, has a nasty habit of deceiving him when doing so makes her life easier. Dave openly disapproves and resents Melinda for this. But he similarly deceives her. When Melinda discovers that Dave is having dinner with an ex-girlfriend – rather than with a colleague as he claimed – she complains that he is a hypocrite. Dave finds this accusation unjust: after all, he reasons, his deceptions are totally unlike hers. She is hypersensitive and prone to overreact, he is not. Sure, he gets upset when Melinda deceives him – but that's because one should not deceive a coolheaded person, not because *nobody* should *ever* deceive.

Let us further suppose that Dave regularly appeals to such distinctions, and that his tendency to do so is well-known to his associates. His reasoning seems shoddy; it is clearly self-serving.

To capture what is amiss with this reasoning, I propose the following diagnostic: no matter the particular condition to which the attitudinal hypocrite appeals in distinguishing his behavior and maintaining his blamelessness, *counterfactually*, were that condition satisfied by the behavior of others which he resents, the attitudinal hypocrite would simply find some other condition to which he would appeal in distinguishing his behavior from theirs and maintaining his (but not their) blamelessness. Rather than declare “morality does not bind me,” the attitudinal hypocrite tailors the predicates of the principles he invokes, so that, once generalized, they excuse his actions, but not those actions of others which he resents. Thus, his incoherent collection of beliefs flows from a reasoning process which pays a flippant tribute to the value of coherence. Crucially, this instability is opaque to the attitudinal hypocrite: from ‘the inside,’ his judgments appear well-founded. The attitudinal hypocrite's evaluative outlook is, then, fundamentally unstable: his ‘reasoning’ is better called rationalizing, and the ‘beliefs’ which putatively ground his judgments might be so precarious that some may doubt that they deserve

that name.²⁰ (One has missed the point of the example if one thinks that, were Melinda only to tell lies which followed Dave’s rule of the day, he would not resent her.)

Just as Dave distinguishes, self-servingly, between “lying to a coolheaded person” and “lying to a hypersensitive person,” so a promiscuous chauvinist might vaunt himself for being a “player,” while condemning promiscuous women as “sluts.”²¹ These two cases of offensive hypocritical reasoning differ only in whether the hypocrite is exempt *contingently* or *necessarily* from the spurious moral principle to which he appeals. Dave introduces a predicate into his principle which he could, in principle, satisfy (he is in the class of creatures capable of hypersensitivity and overreaction), while the chauvinist introduces a predicate into his principle which cannot apply to him and others in his group (they are men, and so cannot be “sluts”). Despite this difference in the gerrymandered principles to which Dave and the chauvinist appeal, both varieties of attitudinal hypocrisy involve the same offense: both hypocrites characterize behavior at a morally irrelevant level of description, according to which their (or their group’s) conduct is distinct from others’ *in fact analogous* behavior.²² This group-based form of attitudinal hypocrisy is, of course, a familiar fixture of social discrimination, like sexism and racism (one law for us, but another for the stranger that sojourneth with us). My account of hypocrisy helps to explain why such double standards are not only harmful, but also unreasonable and blameworthy.²³

With an eye to the attitudinal hypocrite’s motivated exception-making, we are now in a position to identify, more precisely, the sense in which he is incoherent. His attitudinal profile

²⁰ On some conceptions of belief, it may go too far to credit Dave with the *belief* that lying is blameworthy when one is dealing with a coolheaded person. Proponents of such conceptions may regard my references to ‘beliefs’ as references to ‘beliefs*’, epistemic states resembling beliefs in every regard except their instability.

²¹ Thanks to an anonymous referee for this example.

²² *Cf.* Dover (2019: 410, n. 26).

²³ *Cf.* Bloomfield (2018: 72).

manifests a collection of beliefs which flies in the face of the available evidence. Given that morality does not play favorites, it is plainly implausible that, *e.g.*, lying is blameworthy in exactly all those instances of lie-telling one resents, but in none of those instances of lie-telling one has oneself pursued; or that promiscuity is praiseworthy whenever one's own gender exhibits it, but never when the other gender does. The attitudinal hypocrite self-exceptingly avoids the pain associated with being an object of blame he believes deserved, by refusing to believe that he is blameworthy.

III. Attitudinal Hypocrisy is Blameworthy

The attitudinal hypocrite is blameworthy for the attitudinal profile just elucidated. Common-sense takes this point for granted – we do not hesitate to find fault with the Daves of the world – but it has fallen out of philosophical favor. In a highly influential analysis of hypocrisy, R. Jay Wallace (2010: 327) characterizes hypocrites as attitudinally incoherent, but denies that their incoherence grounds any complaint against them, since the (non-)possession of unreputed blaming attitudes is not “directly subject to agential control,” and so not a licit object of moral criticism. One might query this standard of blameworthiness, but the better tack is to challenge the substantive claim. *Contra* Wallace, attitudinal hypocrisy has an agential dimension.²⁴ The attitudinal hypocrite is blameworthy because he could avail himself of the evidence which tells against his particular type of incoherence, but does not.

The idea that attitudinal hypocrisy cannot be blameworthy flows from a narrow – to my mind, inadequate – conception of the “agential” and “practical,” which reserves these characterizations for actions prompted by intentions, where ‘actions’ in the relevant sense are assumed to be external to the

²⁴ Wallace is easily misread as claiming that the attitudinal incoherence associated with hypocrisy is itself subject to agential control. In fact, his view is that this incoherence correlates with a distinct, practical offense, which is blameworthy. *See* pp. 20-22, and nn. 28 and 49.

belief/desire structure.²⁵ Attitudinal hypocrisy is not ‘under our control,’ in this restricted sense. Motivated belief-formation is indeed unlike going for a walk, picking up a gun, or swearing a mistress to secrecy while pontificating publicly about the significance of fidelity. Whatever goes wrong in attitudinal hypocrisy is internal to the belief/desire structure. Attitudes are the ancestors, not the offspring, of intentions. Yet, there is a different sense in which attitudinal hypocrisy is agential. The failure to form the belief that one is blameworthy, when the evidence to that effect is available, admits of a commonsense distinction between, on the one hand, not possessing a capacity and, on the other, failing to exercise a capacity which one possesses.²⁶ (Here it is worth remembering that both folk morality and the law have a notion of *willful ignorance*.) The attitudinal hypocrite is capable of availing herself of the evidence which tells against her incoherent collection of beliefs, but does not – for example, because she desires not to feel the pain associated with being an object of blame she believes deserved, or desires to be better than others.²⁷

²⁵ Or, more generally: external to the formation of the reasons-responsive attitudes implicated in intention-formation. I talk of the “belief-desire structure” for simplicity. The mental states and agential control implicated in intention-formation may be more complex.

²⁶ See Watson’s (1977) account of weakness of will, which, though skeptical of the commonsense notion of possessing, but failing to exercise, some capacity, preserves the distinction between two ways one can fail to perform an act. For defense of the commonsense notion, see Wolf (2015).

²⁷ We often realize that we have reasoned casuistically about our conduct, to indulge such desires. See Johnston’s (1993) discussion of anxious desires and self-deception. The idea that we must counteract a tendency toward self-serving belief-formation is implicit in the warning – issued by philosophers as otherwise dissimilar as Aristotle (*Politics* Bk III, part IX), Bishop Butler (1729: sermons IV, VI, X), Kant (*MP Collins*, 27:295; *MM-Vigilantius*, 27:204), and Driver (2005) – that we extend a charity to ourselves in accounting for our actions, which we do not extend to others.

To be clear, the desire to avoid the pain associated with being an object of blame one believes deserved is a typical concomitant of the vice of hypocrisy, but not an essential feature. It is true of many vicious hypocrites that they have this desire, and that it drives their formation of an incoherent collection of attitudes. But there are also cases of attitudinal hypocrisy where one fails to form the belief that one is blameworthy, although the evidence to this effect is available, for some other reason. Consider a person who conveniently overlooks her own foibles (and so assumes that she is blameless), while keenly discerning others’ foibles and blaming them. Whether or not she is *motivated* by the desire to avoid the pain associated with being an object of blame which she believes deserved, the result of her self-absorbed pattern of attention is that she self-exceptingly avoids that pain. So she is a vicious hypocrite.

This is to be contrasted with cases wherein a person fails to avail herself of the evidence because she is *incapable* of doing so. In these cases, exculpation-preservation comes into play. If one is blameless for one's inability to respond to the evidence – as when, *e.g.*, one's powers of reasoning have been hobbled by forces beyond one's control – one is blameless for the attitudinal incoherence which that failure subserves, too. (Thus, my suggestion is not that in *every* case, an agent is blameworthy for possessing an incoherent, self-excepting collection of blaming attitudes, but rather that, *contra* Wallace, agents can sometimes be blameworthy for this.)

Nor is my suggestion that, in every case, a person can immediately *cure* herself of attitudinal hypocrisy by some conscious exertion of the will. It is rather that there is some amount of moral-psychological self-maintenance which rational agents are required to undertake, and that attitudinal hypocrisy flourishes when they fail to do so. Moreover, since we have a basic tendency to perceive our own interests as more important than others', and since the pain associated with blame (deserving and enduring it) provides each of us with a strong *prima facie* motivation to tip the scales of our moral evaluations in our own favor, this self-maintenance must involve some critical engagement with the beliefs we form about our actions, *e.g.* that we ask ourselves: “do I believe this only because it benefits me?”²⁸

In short, even if we do not have a clear picture of the capacities required to avail oneself of the evidence in forming one's beliefs, still we can appreciate the commonsense distinction between a person who possesses them and a person who does not.²⁹ The former enjoys a kind of control over

²⁸ I claim attitudinal hypocrisy is blameworthy because *both* the formation and maintenance of the incoherent collection of attitudes are subject to agential control. This differs from Wallace's claim that, when we object to a hypocrite's attitudinal incoherence, the real target of our objection is not this incoherence, but a distinct, 'practical' form of hypocrisy with which it is correlated. *See* §VI, especially n. 49.

²⁹ Different people have different capacities, and different circumstances make a capacity harder or easier to exercise. On a 'capacitarian' view like the one I sketch, blameworthiness will be graduated accordingly.

her belief-formation which the latter does not. An attitudinal hypocrite possesses those capacities and so can fairly be blamed for her failure to avail herself of the evidence and the objectionable collection of attitudes this failure supports.

IV. Behavioral Hypocrisy

Recall the two strands of our pre-theorized conception of hypocrisy. The first, which we have already examined, is attitudinal: the hypocrite does not perceive herself as blameworthy, even as she blames others for comparable offenses. Behavioral hypocrisy, by contrast, involves actions which are intentional in the familiar, narrower sense.³⁰ The behavioral hypocrite eagerly exacts social and normative tolls from others for what she believes to be their blameworthy acts. She commits these same acts, and believes that she is blameworthy for them. But she selectively avoids the imposition of (what she takes to be) warranted sanctions in her own case. She does so by working to make others perceive her as blameless by the relevant criterion for blameworthiness:

CONCEALING POLITICIAN: Newt lambasts Bill's infidelity, while going to great lengths to keep his own affair a secret.³¹

Behavioral hypocrisy encompasses a wide range of shielding behaviors, from the literal concealment of actions to subtler manipulative practices, like gaslighting. While more could be said about its varieties, my interest here is in its basic structure, and in how it differs from attitudinal hypocrisy. Moreover, there is no end to the deceptions human beings practice, so an exhaustive taxonomy would quickly become the Key to All Mythologies. For my purposes, it suffices to observe that the behavioral hypocrite makes a conscious effort to dodge the socio-normative sanctions which she takes her conduct to have licensed, while imposing these sanctions on others for their analogous conduct.

³⁰ See pp. 9-10: the narrower class of intentional actions includes such things as going for a walk or telling a lie, but excludes phenomena internal to the belief-desire structure such as avoiding forming a particular belief (n. 25).

³¹ See n. 16.

Like attitudinal hypocrisy, behavioral hypocrisy is self-excepting avoidance of the pain associated with being an object of blame one believes deserved. The behavioral hypocrite endorses a norm to the effect that anyone who φ 's (including herself) deserves blame. By blaming others who φ , she both advertises acceptance of and enforces this norm: she helps *make it the case* that those who φ are sanctioned. At the same time, by concealing the fact of her φ -ing, she prevents the enforcement of this norm in her own case. She thus selectively spares her own φ -ing from (what she perceives to be) deserved blame. This self-exceptionalism grounds a complaint, irrespective of whether or not φ -ing is, in fact, blameworthy.³² For example, a preacher whose sermons reflect his sincere belief that homosexual sex is blameworthy, but who akratically engages in it, is guilty of behavioral hypocrisy, even though he is incorrect that homosexual sex is blameworthy.³³ My account holds that such behavioral hypocrisy is *pro tanto* wrong.³⁴ But this does not entail that the preacher would do better, all things considered, to stop having homosexual sex. On the contrary, given agents' incorrigible false moral beliefs, behavioral hypocrisy may sometimes be the best we can hope for, for them.

The doxastic condition on behavioral hypocrisy merits special attention. It is not sufficient for behavioral hypocrisy that a person φ , blame others for φ -ing, and evade others' blame for her φ -ing. She must, additionally, *believe* that she deserves blame for her φ -ing. The class of behavioral hypocrites thus excludes figures like the following:³⁵

MASQUERADING POLITICIAN: Candidate A is running for office in a highly homophobic society. He is gay. In an effort to woo the electorate, he hides this fact, and publicly attacks his rival, Candidate B, for his open homosexuality. In fact, Candidate A does not believe that homosexuality is morally wrong; he simply pretends that he does, so as to harm his opponent and curry favor with voters.

³² See pp. 23-24.

³³ This example comes from Dover (2010: 406-7).

³⁴ Cf. Dover (2010).

³⁵ Thanks to an anonymous referee for raising this point.

My account has it that Candidate A is not a behavioral hypocrite, though he φ 's, blames others for φ -ing, and hides the fact that he φ 's so as to avoid blame. But why deny that he and his kind are behavioral hypocrites? What motivates excluding them from this class? The fact that they are morally unlike *bona fide* behavioral hypocrites, and the fact that they are not guilty of the vice of hypocrisy.

Consider, first, that despite parallels in their observable behavior, the Masquerading Politician and the behavioral hypocrite have entirely different motivations in shielding themselves from others' blame. The Masquerading Politician shields himself from blame which he does not believe he deserves. This is unobjectionable to the extent that his not believing he deserves blame is reasonable. The behavioral hypocrite shields herself from blame which she believes she does deserve – thus exhibiting a kind of cowardice. A moral evaluation of hypocrisy must discriminate between these two very different phenomena.

This point is underscored by the fact that, although the Masquerading Politician is a hypocrite in the thin, ordinary-language sense – he exhibits the hypocritical conjunction – and is guilty of *something*, he is not guilty of the vice of hypocrisy. His wrongdoing only incidentally satisfies the hypocritical conjunction. Unlike in attitudinal and behavioral hypocrisy, the fact that he satisfies the conjunction does not figure essentially in his offense. The Masquerading Politician is objectionable because he is a full-throated dissembler (leading the public to believe that he believes homosexuality is wrong) and because he subjects somebody else to a punishment which is, by his own lights, unjust (social and political sanctions on homosexuality). If one has a special obligation to show solidarity to the group one insincerely blames – whether because one is a member of it, or for some other reason – such dissembling is all the worse. But once it is established that, contrary to his representations (including his attacks on others), the Masquerading Politician only pretends to believe that φ -ing is wrong, the further fact that he himself φ -s, and so satisfies the hypocritical conjunction, is neither here

nor there.³⁶ Thus, the Masquerading Politician is not guilty of the vice of hypocrisy. The doxastic condition on behavioral hypocrisy serves to restrict that label for cases wherein the hypocritical conjunction figures essentially in our moral complaint against an agent – just as we should want, since it is the distinctively hypocritical vice which we are seeking to understand.³⁷

V. The Janus-Faced Structure of the Vice of Hypocrisy

The inward-facing, attitudinal form of hypocrisy, and the outward-facing, behavioral form, are clearly distinct. But they are muddled together in our pre-theorized, ordinary conception of the vice. Accusations that are properly directed at one or the other form tend not to be distinguished neatly. Recent philosophical treatments of hypocrisy reflect this tendency, theorizing one form of hypocrisy at the expense of the other, or tracing our objection to the one back to our objection to the other.³⁸ *Contra* this tendency, we should not seek an overly unifying characterization of the vicious hypocrite and her offensiveness.³⁹ For although both forms of hypocrisy amount to self-excepting avoidance of the same pain (*viz.* the pain associated with being an object of blame one believes deserved), they are *distinct* strategies for that avoidance which elicit *different* specific complaints from us. What rankles –

³⁶ This point is easily overlooked, since, outside of contrived thought-experiments, the discovery that a person himself performs some action has crucial *evidentiary* value: in practice, our knowledge that a person has misrepresented his values may depend upon our discovering that he has acted out of keeping with his representations.

³⁷ A recent psychology study (Yu, H. et. al. (2022)) investigated “the neurocognitive processes of hypocritical blamers during moral decision-making,” finding that most people who “blame others for moral violations that they themselves commit” *do* “hold the moral standards that they apply to others” and feel guilty about their comparable misdeeds. This data contravenes the popular assumption that people who satisfy the hypocritical conjunction are insincere dissemblers and suggests that, far from *gerrymandering* the phenomenon of hypocrisy, the doxastic constraint on behavioral hypocrisy gets at something deep about it.

³⁸ §VI discusses views of each kind.

³⁹ Disjunctivists (Bartel (2019), Rossi (2021)) also oppose unified characterizations of hypocrisy’s wrongness, but on different grounds. They do not distinguish the hypocritical conjunction from the vice of hypocrisy, and they deny that there is any distinctively hypocritical vice.

Separately, identifying a *conceptually* unifying feature of the vice of hypocrisy, as this paper does, differs from propounding a unified *moral-psychological* characterization of the vice’s two forms (§VII).

what specifically we want rectified in the hypocrite – depends on which sort of hypocrisy is at hand.

A series of examples clarifies the point.

First, consider attitudinal hypocrisy, stripped of any trace of behavioral hypocrisy:

UNASHAMED OFFENDER [THIEF]: Ann resents those who steal from her, is indignant when she witnesses a robbery, and blames others who steal. She also never perceives any anti-stealing norm to apply in her own case: a motivated reasoner, she always takes her particular circumstances to render her thievery blameless. She does not bother to hide her thieving, and is indeed widely resented. While, to her mind, these blaming attitudes are misguided, she tolerates them in a spirit of generosity: her critics lack her superior moral insight.⁴⁰

We find Ann obnoxious because she effectively sees herself as special. We feel she should take herself down a peg.

Now consider behavioral hypocrisy, stripped of any trace of attitudinal hypocrisy:

AKRATIC CRITIC: Sally resents her ex-husband for his infidelity, and when a friend confesses to an affair, is indignant. But after remarrying, Sally falls for a *different* man, with whom she begins an affair. She feels guilty: she sees that what she is doing is wrong, and that her conduct is blameworthy in just the way her ex-husband's was. Nevertheless, enthralled by her lover's charms, she fails to bring her actions into line with her attitudes. Ashamed, she keeps the affair a secret.⁴¹

We find Sally obnoxious because she readily blames others while preventing others from blaming her. Notice that this is very unlike why we find Ann obnoxious. Sally's hypocrisy betrays incontinence and cowardice. Thus it is *differently* offensive from attitudinal hypocrisy like Ann's. Sally does not need to take herself down a peg. She needs to face the music.

That attitudinal and behavioral hypocrisy offend us differently is perhaps clearest in cases where we discover that a person is guilty of one rather than the other. Consider:

CLOSET BEHAVIORAL HYPOCRITE: Your friend always arrives late and never apologizes. When you confront her, she gaslights you, insisting that you have misremembered the time of your appointment. Eventually, you begin showing up late, too. Your friend resents you for this, and her (apparently attitudinal) hypocrisy upsets you – how dare she find fault

⁴⁰ Those who regard this case as a philosopher's fanciful invention overlook the "upmarket kleptomania" practiced by Queen Elizabeth II's "predatory" grandmother (remarks quoted in Meares (2021); see also Hill (2018)).

⁴¹ Bartel (2019) and Bell (2013) also discuss "weak-willed hypocrites." See n. 52.

with you, when she shamelessly behaves in just the same way? Then you come across her diary, and discover that she is deeply ashamed of herself for always showing up late.

Discovering your friend is a behavioral, not an attitudinal, hypocrite alters the character of her offensiveness. Now you know she appreciates that the rules she invokes apply to her, too – she is just too immature, or pain-averse, or whatever, to admit this in your presence. Her hypocrisy remains offensive. But now it is offensively pathetic and insincere, rather than offensively self-important.

Attitudinal and behavioral hypocrisy elicit such different specific complaints from us because their moral-psychological structures are so dissimilar. Indeed – I turn now to arguing – attitudinal and behavioral hypocrisy not only are distinct, but more strongly, are *in tension*. They demand generally incompatible psychological states, such that a given instance of the vice of hypocrisy will typically involve only the one or the other.

One indication of this is that they paradigmatically issue in dissonant behaviors. Behavioral hypocrisy involves the hypocrite's attempt to shield herself from the socio-normative sanctions associated with her actions – blame, embarrassment, loss of political power, whatever – which she believes herself to deserve, but cannot bring herself to endure. Because she believes that her actions are blameworthy, she is eager to hide them. (Arthur Dimmesdale works hard to conceal that he fathered Hester Prynne's child, partly because he is sick with guilt.) Conversely, those who are furthest gone in their attitudinal hypocrisy fail to consider that their hypocritical conduct might be blameworthy, and so are liable to overlook the sense in which crude self-interest recommends concealing their hypocritical acts. Their motivated classification of their own conduct as not blameworthy tells against their recognizing it as worth concealing. (Trump is often said *guilelessly*

to flout principles to which he holds others; apparently convinced that his actions are morally dissimilar to theirs, he does not *bother* to conceal them.)⁴²

A closer examination of their moral-psychological structures reveals exactly how the two forms of hypocrisy conflict in any given instance of the vice. Both attitudinal and behavioral hypocrites self-exceptingly avoid the pain associated with being an object of blame which they believe deserved. But whereas the attitudinal hypocrite avoids believing that she is blameworthy, the behavioral hypocrite operates on the belief that she is blameworthy. Attitudinal hypocrisy is, at its most effective, opaque to its practitioner; to spare herself the pain of being an object of blame which she believes deserved, the attitudinal hypocrite not only avoids availing herself of the evidence which indicates that she is blameworthy, she avoids recognizing her avoidance as such. By contrast, behavioral hypocrisy is necessarily transparent to its practitioner, who works to dodge the consequences of the ‘fact’ – apparent to her – that others have grounds for blaming her. Behavioral hypocrisy requires one to believe that one is blameworthy. Attitudinal hypocrisy requires that one avoid forming that belief. The two forms of the vice of hypocrisy are rooted in conflicting psychological states.

VI. Existing Accounts

The vice of hypocrisy is, in all cases, the self-excepting avoidance of the pain associated with being an object of blame one believes deserved. But the distinctness and psychological incongruity of its two forms tell us something about the prospects of a unified *moral-psychological* characterization of the vice.⁴³ Namely, such characterizations will, of necessity, be either incomplete or muddled. To ignore one form or the other is to leave a gaping hole in the account, while to conflate them in an

⁴² Of course, there is no guarantee that attitudinal hypocrites will not hide their conduct the way behavioral hypocrites do. People hide their conduct for many reasons other than that they believe it blameworthy (*e.g.* because it incurs a political cost, as in *MASQUERADING POLITICIAN*).

⁴³ See n. 39 and §VII.

effort to capture our pre-theoretical conception requires running together different offenses and incongruous moral-psychologies. A brief survey of the available literature brings out the point.

One camp characterizes hypocrisy in terms that befit attitudinal hypocrisy alone. On Fritz & Miller's (2018: 122) formulation, for example, the hypocrite is "disposed to blame others for violations of *N*, but...not disposed to blame herself for violations of *N*." But behavioral hypocrites do not exhibit this differential blaming disposition. Similarly, Statman (1997) associates hypocrisy with self-deception. But behavioral hypocrites are not self-deceived. This camp cannot explain the wrong in behavioral hypocrisy or its connection to attitudinal hypocrisy.

Another camp can only accommodate behavioral hypocrisy. On Rossi's (2018) formulation, for example, the hypocrite is (among other criteria) indisposed "to tolerate or submit to" others' blame. But attitudinal hypocrites need not be so disinclined (recall UNASHAMED OFFENDER [THIEF]).⁴⁴ Separately, Isserow & Klein identify, as a "core feature" of all forms of hypocrisy, the hypocrite's undermining of a norm which she elsewhere signals that she embraces.⁴⁵ But the undermining of signaled standards is not always present in attitudinal hypocrisy: precisely because they are self-deceived, some attitudinal hypocrites wear their self-selective belief that they are not blameworthy on their sleeves.⁴⁶ Lastly, Dover (2019) runs through instances of the hypocritical

⁴⁴ Rossi (2018: 556) in fact distinguishes two senses in which one can be said to accept others' blame. In the first sense, one is "inclined to affirm the proposition that [one is] blameworthy for violating the relevant norm;" in the second, one "tolerate[s] or submit[s] to" the blame of others. Rossi then clarifies that it is this second sense of blame acceptance which is "operative" in his characterization of the hypocrite as reluctant to accept blame. Yet, attitudinal hypocrites are more plausibly construed as reluctant to accept blame in the *first* sense. To account for all vicious hypocrites, Rossi must import a version of my distinction and defend a *bifurcated* account of how one can be "indisposed to accept blame from others,." Rossi (2021) states there are other problems with his (2018).

⁴⁵ Isserow & Klein (2017: 194). They mean to allow that someone can be a hypocrite in virtue of "mismatched" judgments.

⁴⁶ It does not do to insist that, merely by blaming others for (*e.g.*) deceiving her, the attitudinal hypocrite signals that he accepts a broad, anti-deception norm, which he elsewhere undermines. Recall distinction-drawing Dave: his *advertised* view is not that lying is impermissible, but that lying is impermissible *when* one is dealing with a coolheaded person. Many attitudinal hypocrites work to appear coherent.

conjunction, claims that the conjunction does not, in these cases, source a moral complaint, and concludes that we are – in a slogan – too hard on hypocrites. Yet, she overlooks that some instances of the hypocritical conjunction do inform our moral complaint against the hypocrite; and she does not discuss cases of attitudinal hypocrisy at all. This camp cannot explain the wrong in attitudinal hypocrisy or its connection to behavioral hypocrisy.

Finally, a third camp characterizes hypocrisy in terms which mix together attributes of attitudinal and behavioral hypocrisy.⁴⁷ The problem with this approach is that the two forms are distinct, and require incongruous moral-psychological states. Wallace’s view is the exemplar. He recognizes that our pre-theoretical conception of hypocrisy involves offensive attitudinal incoherence. But he denies that such incoherence is a licit object of criticism, and so seeks a “practical” offense with which to associate it.⁴⁸ On his complex formulation, the hypocrite’s practical offense consists in a refusal to waive her protection from others’ opprobrium. When we blame others for φ -ing, we “owe it to [them] to waive our own claim to protection” from their opprobrium when we ourselves φ .⁴⁹ The

⁴⁷ Rossi (2018), Isserow & Klein, and Fritz & Miller (2018, 2019) intend to explain the wrong in both attitudinal and behavioral hypocrisy, but the substance of their views prevents this. Herstein (2020) and Wallace (2010) conflate the two.

⁴⁸ Wallace (2010: 325, 327). Again, Wallace has a narrow conception of the “practical” (pp. 9-10).

⁴⁹ Wallace (2010: 326-9). He hints that there is a second (putatively) practical offense involved in hypocrisy: the failure to live up to a “practical commitment to critical self-scrutiny.” This is a commitment which, supposedly, one automatically undertakes upon blaming others. Living up to it involves “subjecting [one’s] own attitudes and behavior to critical assessment, and bringing them into harmony with [one’s] current reactions to the attitudes and behavior of others.” But Wallace lacks the theoretical resources to explain the mechanism by which merely possessing blaming attitudes “commits” an agent to self-scrutiny. Positing such a mechanism requires accepting some claim concerning the moral obligatoriness of coherence itself, to the effect that applying a moral standard to others obliges one to apply it to oneself, too. Embracing this thesis puts Wallace in an awkward position: the more stock he puts in the idea that attitudinal coherence can itself be *morally* required, the less motivated his theory of hypocrisy. If he goes so far as to say that moral norms govern attitudinal coherence, then there is no need to invoke a separate, narrowly practical offense, to legitimate our offense at hypocrites’ attitudinal incoherence. If he does not go so far, then he cannot explain the sense in which an agent’s possession of certain attitudes *obliges* or *commits* her to self-scrutinize.

attitudinal incoherence we pre-theoretically attribute to the hypocrite goes hand-in-hand with, and is blameworthy *only insofar as* it accompanies, her “practical” refusal to waive this protection.

But the refusal to waive protection from opprobrium also admits of the attitudinal/behavioral distinction drawn here, a fact Wallace elides. An agent can refuse *in her behavior*, preventing others from directing opprobrium at her (as in behavioral hypocrisy), which is what Wallace has in mind. Or she can refuse *in her attitudes*, continuing to believe that she is entitled to protection from others’ opprobrium (as in attitudinal hypocrisy).⁵⁰ Once drawn out, the attitudinal/behavioral distinction undermines Wallace’s thesis – *viz.* that we object to hypocrites because they exhibit an attitudinal incoherence which is correlated with the behavioral refusal to waive protection from opprobrium (which is their real offense). As we have seen, there are objectionable hypocrites who exhibit attitudinal incoherence but do not prevent others from directing opprobrium at them (UNASHAMED OFFENDER [THIEF]), just as there are objectionable hypocrites who prevent others from directing opprobrium at them, but exhibit no attitudinal incoherence (AKRATIC CRITIC). The two phenomena are, if anything, *negatively* correlated (§V).⁵¹

The general lesson to draw from this survey of the literature is that a plausible philosophical treatment of hypocrisy must be sensitive not only to the fundamental distinction between mere instances of the hypocritical conjunction and the *vice* of hypocrisy, but also to the two, quite different forms which that vice takes. In particular, since one form is inward-facing, involving self-deception and the hypocrite’s refusal to believe that she is blameworthy, while the other is outward-facing, involving the deception of others and the hypocrite’s belief that she is blameworthy, each must be

⁵⁰ Compare Rossi’s (2018) distinction between two ways one can avoid accepting blame: n. 44.

⁵¹ Recent psychological data (n. 37) casts separate, empirical doubt on Wallace’s proposal that hypocritical blaming correlates with attitudinal incoherence.

characterized and evaluated in its own right. Philosophers cannot plausibly speak to the moral dimensions of hypocrisy without acknowledging the vice’s Janus-faced structure.⁵²

This insight points us toward a new set of moral questions about the vice of hypocrisy. Is attitudinal hypocrisy a graver offense than behavioral hypocrisy? If so, why? (Perhaps because it involves the misperception of moral reality?⁵³) Or is behavioral hypocrisy a graver offense, and if so, why? (Perhaps because it involves intentional deception of others, thus interpersonal harm?) How does the vice of hypocrisy affect one’s standing to blame others? According to Todd, for example, non-hypocrisy is the sole condition on standing to blame.⁵⁴ But is this the claim that one’s blaming must not manifest the vice of hypocrisy; or that one’s blaming must not manifest the *behavioral*, or the *attitudinal*, form of the vice of hypocrisy; or (as seems implausible) that one’s blaming must not generate an instance of the hypocritical conjunction?⁵⁵ And so on.

VII. Conclusion

Having emphasized the moral and psychological differences between hypocrisy’s two forms, let me reiterate what unifies them, and identify the theoretical dividends my account pays. The behavioral hypocrite dodges the socio-normative sanctions to which she subjects others, though her action is, by her own lights, equally sanctionable; she lets sanctions be delivered in all cases but her

⁵² Bell (2013) recognizes this fact. Her distinction between “exception-seeking” and “weak-willed” hypocrisy resembles my distinction between attitudinal and behavioral hypocrisy, although her “weak-willed” hypocrite must feel “remorse and shame in response to her moral failings and strives to improve herself,” whereas my behavioral hypocrite must *believe* herself blameworthy, but need not *feel* remorse or shame (nor strive to improve herself). Indeed, in my view, behavioral hypocrisy sometimes serves precisely to *suppress* those painful emotions. The most important differences between our accounts are, first, that Bell’s does not conceptually unify “exception-seeking” and “weak-willed” hypocrisy, and second, that her taxonomy of hypocrites is not restricted to agents who commit the distinctively hypocritical vice. It includes so-called “clear-eyed” hypocrites – figures like my Masquerading Politician – who satisfy the hypocritical conjunction and are objectionable, but where the former is not essential in explaining the latter.

⁵³ Cf. Statman (1997).

⁵⁴ Todd (2019).

⁵⁵ Bell (2013) addresses related questions.

own. The attitudinal hypocrite fails to judge that she deserves those socio-normative penalties which she judges others to deserve. Both self-exceptingly avoid the pain associated with being an object of blame they believe deserved. In identifying this conceptually unifying feature, my account connects the two forms of the vice of hypocrisy without denying their distinctness.

More generally, my account captures the fact that hypocrisy is a structural or ‘executive’ vice, one which obtains irrespective of the correctness or incorrectness of a person’s first-order moral commitments. We saw above that a person is guilty of behavioral hypocrisy even when the action for which she blames others and herself is not, in fact, blameworthy.⁵⁶ Equally, a person is guilty of attitudinal hypocrisy when, *contra* the available evidence, she blames others, but not herself, for morally comparable conduct⁵⁷ – whether or not this conduct is, in fact, blameworthy. This is because self-exceptionalism is structural: a matter of the *relation between* one’s treatment of oneself and one’s treatment of others. By characterizing hypocrisy partly in terms of self-exceptionalism, my account explains both why accusations of hypocrisy are – as Wallace puts it – “one of the most common forms of moral censure in the contemporary world...a nearly universal moral currency...acknowledged and taken seriously even by people who may differ in many of their first-order moral views;”⁵⁸ and why the more, and the more *enthusiastically*, a person blames others, the more hypocritical (or more objectionably hypocritical) she seems. The more fervently one blames others (and thus, seeks to expose them to the pain associated with being an object of blame they believe deserved⁵⁹), the more exceptional one’s own avoidance of this pain.

⁵⁶ P. 13.

⁵⁷ See n. 19.

⁵⁸ Wallace (2010: 307).

⁵⁹ See n. 61.

At the same time, by not characterizing hypocrisy *merely* as self-exceptionalism, my account explains the fact that, in many cases, the hypocrite would not be morally better if she simply ceased blaming others while continuing to believe they act wrongly, even though she would thus eradicate her self-exceptionalism. Accounts which characterize the wrong in hypocrisy purely structurally (*e.g.* as unequal treatment of oneself and others), struggle to explain this.⁶⁰ By contrast, my account discerns that the ‘good’ which the hypocrite allots herself but denies others (*viz.* avoidance of the pain associated with being an object of blame which one believes deserved) is not *really* a good. For the hypocrite to stop blaming others is for her to indulge an interest of theirs which is morally insignificant⁶¹ — and thus no moral gain.

My account also tracks the commonsense thought that *prideful* people and *moralizers* are closely related to hypocrites. Prideful people think too highly of themselves, and thus are reluctant to form the belief that they are blameworthy. Moralizers too eagerly find fault with others. These obnoxious traits do not *quite* constitute hypocrisy,⁶² but they can be viewed as the conceptual and psychological ‘borders’ which shade into the vice. Each disposes a person to be self-excepting along the dimension relevant for hypocrisy, namely, avoiding the pain associated with being an object of blame one believes deserved.

⁶⁰ Dover (2019).

⁶¹ If the target of the blame believes his action was blameworthy, then for the hypocrite to cease blaming him is for the hypocrite to cease exposing him to the associated pain. But he has no morally legitimate interest in protection from this pain *per se*. If the target of the blame does not believe his action was blameless, then for the hypocrite to cease blaming him is for the hypocrite to cease *urging him* to regard his conduct as blameworthy (one function of communicating blame), and thus for the hypocrite to cease *trying* to expose him to the concomitant pain. But again, he has no morally legitimate interest in protection from this pain *per se*.

⁶² A prideful person may think herself blameless, but not blame others; and a moralistic person may blame herself as eagerly as she blames others.

Finally, my account allows us to locate hypocrisy as a specific form of a more general moral-psychological phenomenon: favoritism.⁶³ It is an interesting question whether favoritism can be fruitfully construed as a third-person version of hypocrisy. Might it exhibit the same bifurcated structure? That is, might it take two forms, one at the level of belief (the mother who avoids blaming her son, inevitably distinguishing and then excusing his actions),⁶⁴ the other at the level of straightforwardly intentional behavior (the mother who works to prevent others from discovering that her son is blameworthy)? And might these involve quite distinct moral-psychological states, and so deserve distinct moral evaluations? The acknowledgement of hypocrisy's two faces illuminates new paths of inquiry.

As we saw at the outset, the mere fact that a person φ 's and blames others for φ -ing does not tell us whether she is a hypocrite in the morally distinctive sense, *i.e.*, whether she is guilty of the vice of hypocrisy. However, granting my account of this vice, a conceptually illuminating (albeit hard-to-employ) diagnostic suggests itself.⁶⁵ Suppose a person who offends us satisfies the hypocritical conjunction. If she thereby self-exceptingly avoids the pain associated with being an object of blame she believes deserved, then she offends us *because* she is a vicious hypocrite. If not, then it is not vicious hypocrisy which sources our offense: we must look elsewhere for its explanation.

On my account, hypocrisy is a vice to which we are all susceptible, insofar as we are pain-averse and inclined to view our own interests as more important than others'. We dislike deserving

⁶³ Fritz & Miller (2018: 132; 2019: 560), and Rossi (2021: 74) also see a connection between other-regarding differential blaming dispositions and hypocrisy. *Cf.* Bloomfield (2018: 72).

⁶⁴ Rossi (2021: 63) discusses a similar case.

⁶⁵ Though perhaps not *as* hard to employ as we might assume from the armchair: *see* n. 37.

and receiving blame. We therefore all have an interest in denying that we are blameworthy, and in masking (what we take to be) our blameworthy conduct. We will do well, then, to stay on guard.⁶⁶

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