

Valerie Tiberius, *Moral Psychology: An Introduction*

Routledge: New York, 2015. 241pp.
ISBN: 978-0415529693, \$44.95 (Pb)

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Valerie Tiberius's *Moral Psychology: An Introduction* is a gem. Clearly and crisply drawing on empirical and non-empirical work in philosophy and psychology, Tiberius illuminates the many ways in which the issues central to moral psychology arise in and bear on normative ethics, meta-ethics, and the study of agency and responsibility. Tiberius articulates deep debates, complex concepts and rationales, intricate empirical data points, and obscure assumptions with an enviable ease. Further, though the book is pitched in a manner that is accessible to novices, it offers experts an opportunity to see their discipline through a very informed and distinctive lens. In particular, Tiberius imparts a rich and robust picture of value theory that can overlay the expert's own and thereby enrich the concerns and problems that make up its subject matter. I hope that through this review I can add to the book's excellence in two ways.

First, one of the most helpful things to appear in the book are its graphics. On a number of occasions Tiberius lays out tables organizing the views she's just canvassed (pp. 84, 150 & 177). These tables nicely illustrate the extensiveness of her coverage and offer a helpful second look at the material. Hence, I offer two tables in an attempt to do the same. The first aims to bring out the absolute coolness of Tiberius's work by showing how it offers a distinctive conception of a broad portion of the field. The second is a table similar to those Tiberius provides insofar as it primarily organizes the content of a particular section. I hope that both tables exemplify the excellent study that awaits her readers and aids their learning. Here is the first table:

Table 1: The Structure of the Book

CENTRAL QUESTION	Why Should We Be Moral?	Are We Morally Responsible?	How do We Know What is Morally Right?	Can We Derive an 'Ought' From an 'Is'?
HOW CAN STUDYING PHILOSOPHY HELP?	<p><u>Direct:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is it ever really good for individuals <i>themselves</i> to be moral? - Theories of well-being <p><u>Indirect:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nature of reasons - Nature of moral motivation - Nature of worthy motivation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nature of holding responsible - Nature of practical agency - Nature of action - Nature of moral worthiness - Is moral responsibility compatible with determinism? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nature of moral knowledge - Nature of the justification of moral beliefs and truth - Nature of methodology for discovering moral truths - Nature and status of moral intuitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nature of the 'Is'- 'Ought' Gap - Is the best route to deriving 'ought' from 'is' a naturalistic reduction? - If so, should we reduce things to our nature or something like desires?
HOW CAN EMPIRICAL STUDY HELP?	<p><u>Direct:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does acting good contribute to well-being? - If so, how: positive affect, desire satisfaction, value fulfillment, etc.? <p><u>Indirect:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Egoism? - Does Reason motivate independently? - Do external aspects of the situation motivate you or is your behavior patterned in a manner indicative of an internal set of dispositions? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is determinism true? - Under what conditions do we attribute moral responsibility, praiseworthiness, and blameworthiness? - Are we morally competent? - Do we act from our rational capacities? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How reliable are moral intuitions? - What is the cause of moral intuitions? - How reliable is the method for discovering moral truths? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do we use the same method in discovering normative truths as we do when discovering non-normative truths? - Do our normative/ meta-normative theories assume empirical truths? - If so which empirical truths are assumed?

I cannot stress enough the way in which Tiberius’s work provides us with the opportunity to approach a significant portion of value theory from a perspective that paints the issues with an enriching hue. Indeed, it seems that a mid-level ethics course could be approached from this perspective thereby furnishing students with a rare and important philosophical and educational experience.

I must also stress the depth that Tiberius achieves through her elegant structure. To continue to attempt to add to the book while illustrating its awesomeness, here is a table organizing the content of a single chapter:

Table 2: Chapter 12: Can You Get an ‘Ought’ from an ‘Is’?

WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ‘OUGHT’ AND ‘IS’?	METHODOLOGICAL	ONE INFORMS THE OTHER		ENTAILMENT
	The method of discovery is the same insofar as each attempts to uncover truths about their subject matter through systematic processes.	Normative theories rely on some empirical claims.	Meta-ethical Theories rely on some empirical claims.	Descriptive truths (perhaps) entail some normative truths.
EXAMPLES	<u>Chpt 11:</u> Wide Reflective Equilibrium <u>Chpts 9 and 10:</u> Concrete cases testing theories of responsibility and well-being	<u>Chpt 3 and 7:</u> Possibility that we can act from a motive not directed out our own good	<u>Chpt 2:</u> Evolution as foil to moral realism <u>Chpt 5 & 6:</u> The role of sentiment and desire in moral judgments and motivation	<u>This Chpt:</u> Possibility of Naturalistic Reductions - Do facts about human nature entail facts about what we should do? - What about facts about psychological elements?
ENOUGH TO ANSWER THE TITLE QUESTION OF THE CHAPTER?	Probably not	Probably not	Probably not	Maybe

I take it that Table 2 nicely illustrates the fact that Tiberius succinctly covers a difficult topic in a manner that draws on information already covered in previous chapters and presses slowly forward. Revisiting the material helps the reader transfer their understanding of previous concepts from earlier chapters to a new debate. And, pressing forward Tiberius introduces the reader to new concepts which challenges them to keep exploring in search of an answer to the difficult question that is the chapter's title.

The final thing I want to do in order to add to Tiberius's work is draw attention to an area of overlap that goes unmentioned. As we see in Table 2 above, Tiberius's final section, *Part V: Three Big Questions*, brings out the connection between one of those big questions and the forgoing chapters. This is one way in which Tiberius's book proceeds chapter by chapter to add depth to our understanding. In like manner, the layer of depth I aim to offer finds its natural home in Tiberius's already deep, three-chapter long discussion of issues central to agency and responsibility that makes up *Part IV: Moral Responsibility*. In particular, my addition draws a strong connection between that area of research and moral motivation. Since Part IV is the only part of the book that seems to be disconnected from Parts II and III, my addition provides further alignment to the book.

The most popular theories of the nature of the psychological phenomenon of holding an individual responsible are versions of P. F. Strawson's

Reactive Attitudes Account: Responsibility responses are constituted by a reactive attitude (i.e. a complex conative-affective attitude like resentment, indignation, guilt, gratitude, approbation, and pride)

Recently, George Sher (2006. *In Praise of Blame*. Oxford: OUP) offered an account of blame (but not praise) to replace Reactive Attitudes Accounts. Sher's draws on the

insights of the Humean Theory of Motivation, so I call it

The Humean Account: An episode of blame is constituted by a belief that someone is blameworthy for ϕ -ing and a desire that the individual not be that way where that belief and frustration of that desire motivate blame-characteristic behavioral and attitudinal dispositions.

Arguing that Sher overlooks resources available to those who find Strawson's account attractive but are also sympathetic to Sher's critique, in my work I develop and defend

The Recognition Account: Responsibility responses are constituted by an agent's recognition of an act or attitude that manifests a quality of will where that recognition is enough to generate the attitudinal and behavioral dispositions characteristic of such a response.

The central innovation of my account is that it rejects the Humean idea that cognitive judgments cannot motivate absent aid from independent desire. Though the recognition motivates similar to the way an emotion like resentment or approbation does, responsibility or recognition responses need not involve affective attitudes at all.

Here, which account is preferable is beside the point. The point is that a more extensive discussion of the nature of our responsibility responses would deepen the one Tiberius undertakes in Part IV in three ways. First, it would add to the interesting philosophical puzzles that constitute the core subject matter of agency and responsibility. Second, the dialogue would open up new discussions about philosophical and empirical work regarding our responsive psychology. Finally, it would serve to reinforce the continuity of the book that contributes to making Tiberius's work a necessary and unique addition to the study of morality.