

Morality and the Emotions. Edited by Carla Bagnoli. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. vi + 304. Price £37.50.)

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This is a collection of new essays on the broad theme of morality and the emotions. In her introduction, Carla Bagnoli tells us that the volume is ‘born out of the conviction that philosophy provides a distinctive approach to the cluster of problems about the emotions and their relation to morality’ (p.2). The contrast, I take it, is with the idea that such problems should be left to the empirical sciences, and the essays do largely proceed by traditional philosophical methods (while sometimes drawing on empirical work). Beyond this though, the volume has no great organising theme or focus, and the essays cover a wide-range of ground – including topics in normative ethics, moral psychology, the theory of responsibility, metaethics, and the theory of rationality. Of course, this need not be a criticism. The essays in *Morality and the Emotions* are of high quality and their richness and diversity means that a wide-range of readers will find much of interest in its pages. Many of the essays make significant contributions to on-going debates; taken as a whole, they offer an illuminating snapshot of the range of philosophical work being done on the various connections between morality and the emotions. In what follows, I give a brief indication of the topic of each of the essays.

The volume begins with an interesting and helpful introduction by the editor discussing the two ways in which the emotions have come back into prominence in moral philosophy in the later 20th century – under the influence of the ‘demand for moral psychology’ in the work of Iris Murdoch, Elizabeth Anscombe, and Bernard Williams, and

more recently in response to work on the emotions in the cognitive sciences. Section I of the volume then begin with two essays on the relationship between emotions and moral reasons. Patricia Greenspan revisits and develops her earlier account of how negative emotions provide reasons to act. Very roughly, the idea is that since such emotions involve feelings of discomfort, they provide you with reasons to relieve this discomfort. Greenspan applies a distinction she has developed elsewhere between ‘favouring reasons’ and ‘critical reasons’ to respond to two worries about this view. Carla Bagnoli addresses the perennial problem of the rational authority of morality, arguing that the emotion of respect is what motivates rational agents to comply with moral demands. These essays are followed by two essays on love. Edward Harcourt argues for the intriguing thesis that practical rationality requires self-love, where self-love is the very same attitude towards oneself which is involved in loving another. Aaron Ben-Ze’ev explores the nature and morality of romantic compromises.

Section II opens with Christine Tappolet’s defence of a new version of the neo-sentimentalist view that the valuable is what is fitting to value. On Tappolet’s view, ‘fittingness’ is not a normative notion but a descriptive one – a valuing attitude is fitting if it accurately represents its object. There is a clear worry about how informative such an account can be – isn’t it just to say that the valuable is what is accurately represented as valuable? Tappolet argues that such concerns are misplaced. Michael Brady then draws on dis-analogies between emotions and perceptual experiences to argue that the ‘perceptual model’ of emotions does not provide a plausible epistemology of evaluative judgment. Brady’s argument seemed to me pose a strong challenge to those who would hope to defend a moral epistemology of this sort. The final two chapters in this section engage with empirical work. Paul Thagard and Tracy Finn draw on recent work in neuroscience and psychology to defend a new account of moral intuitions. Laurence Blum offers a wide-ranging critique of Shaun Nichols’s empirically orientated neo-sentimentalist account of moral judgment.

Section III kicks off with two essays on responsibility and the reactive attitudes. John Deigh's interesting and provocative essay defends an interpretation of Strawson's 'Freedom and Resentment' which emphasises that reactive attitudes need not involve normative thoughts. Deigh argues that on this interpretation, prominent accounts of moral responsibility which claim inspiration from Strawson's essay – in particular, those of Jay Wallace and Stephen Darwall – turn out to be fundamentally un-Strawsonian. Bennett Helm then argues that the reactive attitudes constitute our respect for persons, and uses this idea to defend an account of responsibility as involving the capacity to take responsibility for one's actions. Helm's essay is followed by what was for me perhaps the most interesting of the essays in the collection, Angela Smith's 'Guilty Thoughts'. Smith addresses the question of whether we ever wrong another by an unexpressed thought or attitude. As Smith notes, while we sometimes feel guilty about such attitudes, it is puzzling how such attitudes could constitute wrongs, since they are not actions and do not seem to harm others. Smith argues that the possibility of wronging another in this way cannot be easily explained away, that this possibility is one that consequentialism and virtue ethics cannot easily accommodate, and that contractualism offers a plausible explanation of what's wrong with such 'guilty thoughts'. Jacqueline Taylor then criticises accounts of moral judgment and moral responsibility which focus solely on negative emotions such as blame and guilt. Drawing on Hume and on empirical work, Taylor explores some of the ways positive emotions such as admiration and pride are important for normative theory. The volume ends with Talbot Brewer's fascinating discussion of the kinds of alienated emotions caused by what sociologists call 'emotional labour' (focussing especially on service-industry work) and the moral issues they raise.

Hopefully, these brief summaries give some sense of the wide territory covered by the essays in the volume. While I have noted a few of the essays which struck me as especially interesting, these judgments have no pretension to be anything other than idiosyncratic –

readers with different interests will no doubt gain more from other essays in the collection. There is much here for readers interested in any of the wide-range of connections between morality and the emotions.