Titles & Abstracts

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1. Samantha Brennan

The Structure of Thresholds for Options

Most of us believe that the correct account of morality's demands contains options. That is, we believe that even if morality requires us to promote the good we don't have to promote the good all the time. Some of the time we have the option to perform an act that does not result in the most good overall. We can favour our own interests, for example, or perform acts that benefit only friends and family. Further thought about options suggests that options have thresholds. We can take a break from morality's demands as long the gap between what's at stake for us and what's at stake for others isn't too great. If the first thought is captured by the idea that morality allows us to fiddle rather than bring about the overall good, the second thought is captured by the idea that we can't fiddle while the world burns.

So suppose that morality contains options then and that these options have thresholds. There is some amount of good that will override my option. Are there constraints on the way that good is determined? Must it be structured in a certain way? There are at least three possible views. One determines the threshold in a quasi-consequentialist way, by looking just to the total good that can be done; another rejects aggregation, as does Judith Thomson and also T. M. Scanlon; and then there is a third view which allows aggregation but requires that the good be structured in a certain way. It's this third view for which I intend to argue. This view is in the middle, more deontological than the view that just looks at the total but less extreme than one that rejects aggregation altogether.

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2. Thomas Ferretti

Egalitarian organizations and collaborative consumption: why justice requires sharing access to consumption goods

Markets are often thought to be able to coordinate economic exchanges without obvious central planning, and without a common interest among their members, but this view is not accurate.

Public institutions and governmental organizations play a crucial role in designing markets and maintaining the conditions necessary to produce desirable outcomes such as a more efficient allocation of resources (Simon 2000). But the way public institutions design markets and coordinate consumption can also create more or less inequality (Hansmann 1996; Dow 2003; Malleson 2014). In particular, the rapid growth of the "sharing economy" as raised both enthusiasm about its potential to reduce inequality and concerns about its potential to disrupt social protections (Bostman & Rogers 2010, Schor 2014). Among the various ways in which we can organize collaborative consumption, some are more egalitarian than others. In this presentation, I propose that justice requires public institutions to promote egalitarian forms of collaborative consumption.

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3. Teddy Harrison

Indigeneity, Impartiality, and Criminal Justice

Liberal theory and Canadian justice practices share an emphasis on the importance of impartial judges. John Locke went so far as to argue that the need for an impartial judge to resolve conflicts gives rise to the political condition in the first place. Yet in some Indigenous approaches to justice, precisely the qualities that usually recommend a judge as impartial in the Canadian system – the lack of any direct prior knowledge of or relationship to the disputants – make them unsuited to justly resolve conflicts. This paper examines Indigenous conceptions of impartiality in the practice of justice and explores avenues for reconciling these with the dominant liberal model.

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4. Clifton Mark

Taking Offence: From the Duel of Honour to Identity Politics

Many believe that social struggles are morally motivated, i.e. that they are waged primarily in response to injustice rather than to advance group interests. It has also become common to argue in that the human need for recognition and thus the harm caused by misrecognition plays a role in justifying struggles. Most authors see these two ideas as hanging easily together: just recognition will provide for the need for recognition, and the harms caused by misrecognition lend to the justice of struggles against it. This paper considers this relationship through an examination of Axel Honneth's critical theory. Honneth persuasively argues for the moral nature of social conflict and the importance of recognition, but he fails to connect the human need for recognition to social struggle in the way that he hopes. Although he himself does not draw these conclusions, aspects of his theory imply that the human need for recognition and the moral struggle for recognition are in tension with one another. Focussing on the harm caused by misrecognition may hinder struggles against it.

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5. Simon Lambek

Starting with Rhetoric: Critical Potential and the Hermeneutic Circle

This paper builds on the work of theorists of rhetoric and hermeneutics, but it departs from how rhetoric is often understood in contemporary political theory. In the first half of the paper, I explore some of rhetoric's primary associations and built toward my hermeneutically-informed conception of rhetoric. I suggest that, more than being the persuasive and stylized or effective and affective dimension of communication, the rhetorical dimension of language is its world-disclosing dimension. I argue that rhetoric's importance for democratic politics lies in the inverse relationship between rhetoric and hermeneutics with respect to the hermeneutic circle. That is to say, the relationship is not simply that we aim to be understood when we speak and that we try to understand what is being said. Rather, rhetoric is persuasive when it is attuned to and shifts the world of its audience – when it engages and plays with the recipient's prejudicial structure of understanding. As a consequence, not only does rhetoric persuade or fail to persuade audiences to hold particular opinions, rhetoric is world-altering. In the second half of the paper, my focus turns to critical implications. I point to some of rhetoric's potential receptive effects – transformations not simply in the opinions of audience members but in the ways that audience members receive and interpret rhetorical formulations. I focus on three potential receptive effects: *resonance*, *disruption* and *dissonance* and explore their political ramifications. I highlight dissonance and unpack its significance for fostering critical reflection in audiences. I conclude by arguing that critical theory must attend to the receptive effects of rhetoric. In doing so, we better observe how rhetoric works to shift the conditions of possibility. We also gain a basis upon which to distinguish between rhetoric that induces critical reflection and questioning in audiences from rhetoric that shuts down questioning and reflection.

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1.   Paul Boswell

Intelligibility and the Guise of the Good

The Guise of the Good holds that an agent only does for a reason what she sees as good in some way. There are two main versions of the theory. According to the *attitudinal* version, motivation has a presenting-as-good character but the good need not figure in the content of motivation. According to the rival *assertoric* version, motivations are better understood as representations with a normative content that is presented with assertoric force -- that is, the force shared by perception and belief. In this paper I present a dilemma for the attitudinal theorist who aims relies upon one of the main motivations for the Guise of the Good, its ability to account for the intelligibility of action for a reason. I show that the very property Guise of the Good theories need to answer an objection from Kieran Setiya and Michael Stocker forces them to characterize their view in a way that either favors the assertoric model or cannot explain the intelligibility of action. The upshot is that Guise of the Good theorists should move to assertoric formulations of the view.

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2.   Angela Pepper

Nonhuman Animals and the Right to Privacy

In a recent interview, renowned naturalist David Attenborough suggested that gorillas in zoos have a right to privacy: "they are not just animals. They are related to us. They value their privacy. Just imagine what it's like to be there. […] Maybe the solution is that people should not be allowed to be behind big sheets of glass but look behind peepholes so that the gorillas don't realise [they are being watched]" (quoted in *The Guardian*, 2016). In this paper I will vindicate the first of Attenborough's claims by arguing that many sentient nonhuman animals have interests sufficient to ground a right to privacy. However, I will also suggest, contra Attenborough, that we can wrongfully infringe the privacy of nonhuman animals when we observe them undetected and without harmful effect. The paper is structured as follows. First, building on accounts advanced by Andrei Marmor (2015) and Eldon Soifer and David Elliott (2014), I offer what I take to be the most plausible explanation of the value of privacy for humans. In short, I will suggest that the right to privacy protects our interest in shaping special relationships with one another and is crucial to the exercise of autonomy. I then argue that because sentient animals also have interests in controlling the degree of intimacy they have with us and having us relate to them in ways that respect their autonomy, privacy is valuable for them too. I conclude by considering the implications of my argument for some of our current practices and relationships with nonhuman animals.

3. Virginie Maris

Diverse values of nature and ecosystem services - a practical framework for decision-makers to tackle political and axiological pluralism into biodiversity values assessment

Created in 2013, the Intergovernemental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), hosted by the United Nations, aims to articulate science, expertise and policy making. I took part in one of the first working programs of the platform, dedicated to "Policy support tools and methodologies regarding the diverse conceptualization of values of biodiversity and nature's benefits to people including ecosystem services based on an assessment and a guide". Here, I will present the pluralist framework to assess biodiversity values we have developed and advocated for. I will highlight the main difficulties faced in this work task but also the positive feedbacks from both the scientific community and the Conference of the Parties of the IPBES.

4. Jason D'Cruz

Renouncing Distrust

Can distrust that is sincerely felt be at the same time morally indecent? If we discover that our own felt distrust lacks warrant, ought we attempt to stifle its expression? To answer these questions I first give an account of the underlying concept of distrust that brings into relief the moral hazard of unwarranted distrust, in particular, its propensity to dishonor and its tendency to confirm itself. If, as I argue, we insult others by distrusting without warrant, then we should ask what it might mean to renounce distrust, and whether is it within our power to realize such a renunciation even while it is beyond our power to feel or to believe at will. In my specification of what it means to renounce trust in concrete terms, I distinguish the practical element of distrust from its cognitive and the affective features. Finally, I ask whether it is irrational to entrust things to individuals who are routinely distrusted by others, and I propose a way of reconciling these moral and epistemic commitments.

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5. Jens Gillissen

Reason-tracking dispositions and the normativity of formal coherence

Since Joseph Raz and Niko Kolodny have triggered a large-scale debate on reasons to be rational, their 'myth theoretical' views have often been associated with a denial of the normativity of rationality as such. Yet, what Kolodny in particular has suggested is actually a reformed view of both rationality and its normativity: Rationality, for one thing, is seen as a disposition to respond to one's beliefs about one's reasons. For another, we do have reason to acquire, maintain and inculcate this disposition because the rational disposition enables us to respond correctly to our reasons. Now, Kolodny's argument for the latter claim rests on the assumption that we tend to have true rather than false beliefs about our reasons. Plausible as it

sounds, the claim invites further generalization: Perhaps not only our reason-beliefs, but our attitudes quite generally track the true and the good rather than the false and the bad? The talk will assess how this generalization, if true, would bear on Kolodny's arguments against rival, coherentist conceptions of rationality.

6.　　Richard Healey

A Relational Theory of Consent

The power of consent plays a central role in the management of interpersonal relations. By giving my consent I can, for example, release a surgeon from a duty not to operate upon me, make it permissible for a colleague to borrow a book from my office, or give my partner permission to have sex with me. In so doing I make it the case that these agents will no longer wrong me by acting in these ways, and so by giving my consent I can make permissible a range of actions that were previously impermissible.

Why, though, do agents have the power of consent? Whilst much has been written about the conditions under which consent is valid, as well as the question of what constitutes an act of consent, relatively little has been said about *why* agents possess the moral power of consent. The lack of detailed attention to this question is surprising, especially in light of the extensive literature concerning the parallel question of why we have the power to promise. Plausibly, consent has received less attention because many regard it as straightforwardly grounded in the value of personal autonomy, or, in Seana Shiffrin's words, as "part and parcel [of] any plausible conception of an autonomous agent" (Shiffrin 2008: 500). In this paper, my aim is to cast doubt on this view, and to outline an alternative. While I agree that our interests in autonomy play an important role in a complete account, I do not believe that those interests alone can explain why we possess such a power. According to the *relational theory* I propose, our power of consent is instead explained by its role in sustaining a valuable form of relationship between agents, a relationship, I will argue, of *mutual recognition*.