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A Reasonable Morality*

David O. Brink

Samuel Scheffler's *Human Morality* is a suggestive and stimulating discussion of the interplay between moral theory and moral psychology. In particular, he thinks that it is an important constraint on moral theory that it make demands on agents that can be integrated into a reasonable and satisfying life plan. This constraint, he argues, militates against extremely demanding conceptions of morality, such as consequentialism, and supports conceptions that, while not complacent, are moderate in their demands. Though Scheffler does not define a *moderate* moral theory in terms of agent-centered prerogatives, the moderate theory that he discusses here is a direct heir of the theory he defended ten years earlier in *The Rejection of Consequentialism*.1 The chief virtue of a moderate moral theory is that it is better situated than its rivals to explain the special authority of morality.

Scheffler structures much of his discussion by examining the way in which different properties of a moral theory—for instance, its scope and demands—interact with different possible expectations about the authority of morality—for instance, whether moral requirements ought always to be overriding in practical deliberation. The level of abstraction at which Scheffler’s discussion proceeds establishes a fruitful analytical framework within which to locate and assess familiar views and debates and allows him to explain the appeal of the sort of moral theory he has advocated before. And along the way, Scheffler provides a sensible defense of the aims and authority of moral theory against its historicist, communitarian, and particularist critics.

Scheffler’s abstract analytical framework is clearly helpful. But his discussion is often very schematic. Rival conceptions of moral theory, psychology, and practical rationality could be explored more systemati-
cally and sympathetically, and Scheffler's own moderate view requires important further articulation. In particular, whereas the moderate's conception of morality tries to respond to both impersonal and personal demands, it is unclear how, if at all, these two quite different demands are to be integrated into a coherent moral conception. We ought to take seriously Scheffler's demand that we integrate our conceptions of practical rationality and morality. But without a more systematic investigation of the moderate view and its rivals, we cannot fairly judge what a reasonable morality must be like. Scheffler's book is a valuable prolegomenon to this more systematic study.

A PROBLEM ABOUT THE AUTHORITY OF MORALITY

Scheffler often describes his primary concern as the problem of how best to respond to certain apparently intrusive and demanding conceptions of morality, such as consequentialism (pp. 17–18). I think that this concern is really just a special case of a broader problem about the rational authority of morality, which I will use to structure my discussion. The broader problem arises from some familiar assumptions. On most moral views, morality includes various other-regarding duties whose performance appears to constrain the agent's pursuit of her own aims and interests. On these views, there is an apparent tension between the moral point of view and the agent's own point of view. The tension produces a problem if we believe that morality must be rationally authoritative and we associate practical rationality with the agent's own point of view. It would help to identify the main ingredients of this problem.

1. Moral requirements are overriding; it is always on-balance irrational to fail to fulfill the demands of morality.
2. Moral requirements sometimes conflict with the agent's own interests and aims.
3. Rational action is action that promotes the agent's interests or achieves her aims.

Claim (1) is one way to represent the common belief that morality has a special authority in practical deliberation; (2) seems to follow from the other-regarding aspects of morality; and (3) represents a common conception of rationality. Whatever their individual appeal, not all three claims can be true. In fact, we can understand and assess different views as solutions to this problem.

Rationalism, as I understand it here, is the view expressed in (1), that moral considerations ought always to control practical deliberation. We might avoid the problem, therefore, by denying rationalism. Antirationalism denies that morality is overriding; immoral conduct need not be irrational. It is important to see that antirationalism, in this sense, challenges the authority of morality. One can imagine
someone conceding that morality and rationality conflict and claiming that it is an open question what an agent facing such a conflict should do. Should he be moral or be rational? But this would be to treat practical rationality as just one standard or perspective among others, with no obviously privileged position. In the present context, by contrast, we should understand practical rationality in a more comprehensive way as concerning whatever fundamentally matters in practical deliberation and as claiming what it is ultimately reasonable to do. So, for example, if I have doubts about whether I have reason to act on a particular norm, I should be interpreted as having doubts about whether that is a norm of practical rationality, rather than as having doubts about rationality. If so, antirationalism denies that morality has complete authority.

One form of antirationalism insists that the special authority of morality is an illusion, perhaps a pernicious one. Moral requirements issue from a distinctive set of concerns and values. On some versions of this view, moral requirements derive from an impartial point of view; on other versions, they derive from socially defined roles that agents occupy (e.g., colleague and citizen). On both versions, moral values can conflict with other values, notably those personal values implicated in the aims and interests of individual agents. On this view, when morality conflicts with the personal point of view, so much the worse for morality; rationality favors the personal point of view.

Another form of antirationalism seeks to accommodate the common view that morality has special authority. On this view, moral requirements can have a very significant role in practical deliberation, even if immoral action is not always on-balance irrational. This view presumably must say that moral considerations typically control practical deliberations but allow that immoral behavior need not always be irrational.

Another solution to the problem is to deny the assumption in (2) that the apparent conflict between the moral point of view and the agent’s own point of view is genuine. This reconciliation strategy might take different forms. The apparent conflict arises because we seem to have two independent points of view. Reconciliation can take the form of reduction; we can eliminate conflict if we define either point of view in terms of the other. Thus, someone might avoid conflict by defining our moral obligations in terms of the personal point of view, for instance, as the ethical egoist does. Alternatively, someone might

2. Compare Allan Gibbard, Wise Choices, Apt Feelings (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990), pp. 7, 48–50. Scheffler himself says that “rational” means “optimal from the standpoint of reason” (p. 53). But until we know whether the standpoint of reason is the most comprehensive evaluative perspective or just one perspective among others, we don’t know how Scheffler stands on this issue.
define the agent’s true interests in terms of morally acceptable behavior. If either reduction reduces the one point of view to the other without any modification in our pretheoretical understanding of the point of view to which the reduction is made, the resulting reduction is likely to reject many of our pretheoretical beliefs about the point of view being reduced. For example, any version of ethical egoism that relies exclusively on our pretheoretical understandings of self-interest is likely to be morally very revisionary.

But reconciliation can proceed without reduction. For example, we might distinguish between morality and self-interest but nonetheless believe that genuine moral requirements and enlightened self-interest coincide. The coincidence is unlikely to be plausible without some modification of our pretheoretical understanding of morality or self-interest. Moreover, the friends of overridingness presumably think that it’s essential to moral demands that they control practical deliberation; if so, the extensional coincidence of morality and self-interest will be insufficient to vindicate the overridingness of morality. Reconciliation must instead show that people’s interests are essentially interdependent such that acting on other-regarding moral demands is a counterfactually reliable way of promoting the agent’s own interests. And the prospects for this sort of reconciliation will also depend on our account of morality’s demands; reconciliation will be harder to achieve the more demanding and pervasive our conception of morality.

Finally, we might maintain overridingness, in the face of conflicts between morality and the personal point of view, by denying (3). This requires rejecting purely prudential and instrumental conceptions of practical rationality. If we want to take skepticism about the authority of morality seriously, we can’t simply reject prudential and instrumental conceptions of rationality because this is necessary to maintain morality’s authority; we must explain how failure to comply with other-regarding moral norms is directly irrational, independently of frustrating the agent’s aims or interests. Prudential and instrumental conceptions of rationality are agent-centered; they make individual rationality relative to the agent’s own aims or interests. What is needed is an impartial conception of rationality.3

3. My contrast between agent-centered and impartial conceptions of rationality is different from the contrast some have drawn between agent-relative and agent-neutral reasons. Compare Thomas Nagel, The View from Nowhere (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 152–53. According to the latter distinction, reasons are agent-relative if their general form involves essential reference to the agent who has them; otherwise, reasons are agent-neutral. Agent-neutral theories are typically understood to be consequentialist, whereas agent-relative theories are quite varied. Prudential and instrumental conceptions of rationality are both agent-relative, though in different ways. Now consider self-referential altruism, which, as I understand it, claims that agents have reason to be concerned about others that is as direct as their reason to be concerned about
The responses I have described so far are related to each other in various ways. To maintain rationalism, we must reject an agent-centered conception of rationality, reconcile, or reduce. If the rationalist rejects reduction as too revisionary, this leaves other forms of reconciliation, an impartial conception of rationality, or both. Indeed, reconciliation may be a necessary part of any satisfactory defense of overridingness. For unless rationality is completely impartial, the overridingness of morality will depend upon whether there are conflicts, say, between prudential and impartial reasons. Unless there is reconciliation, morality's supremacy is jeopardized. Reconciliation may be difficult to accept on any plausible views about morality's demands and self-interest, but it will be especially hard to accept the more demanding and pervasive we find morality. Consequently, many will want to reject rationalism and its commitment to overridingness. Even if we reject the rationalist's claim that morality should control practical reasoning, we must still decide how much authority morality has. And this will depend upon the nature and scope of morality's demands and the existence and significance of extramoral values, as well as substantive conceptions of rationality. In order to maintain the special authority of morality, we must either make morality's demands more hospitable to the personal point of view or reject purely prudential and instrumental conceptions of rationality.

Scheffler's own response is complex. His attitude toward rationalism is both sympathetic and skeptical; whereas he thinks that influential arguments against the overridingness of morality are not compelling, he does think the extremity of the rationalist thesis makes it difficult to believe (pp. 7, 52). Scheffler's skepticism reflects his views about both morality and rationality.

He thinks that morality is pervasive in scope but moderate in its demands. Whereas all actions fall within the scope of moral evaluation (even if only because they are trivially permissible), morality is moderate, rather than stringent. Exactly what moderation and stringency themselves but that the weight of these altruistic reasons is proportional to the degree of psychological continuity that beneficiaries bear to the agent. Compare C. D. Broad, "Self and Others," in Broad's Critical Essays in Moral Psychology, ed. D. Cheney (London: Allen & Unwin, 1971), pp. 279–80. Though self-referential altruism is agent-relative, its altruistic component makes its justification of other-regarding conduct nonderivative in a way that is alien to prudential and instrumental conceptions of rationality. I am here interested in the contrast between the way in which prudential and instrumental conceptions of rationality make the justification of other-regarding conduct derivative and the way in which agent-neutral theories and some agent-relative theories (e.g., self-referential altruism) do not. Though no labels seem entirely satisfactory, I refer to these two approaches as agent-centered and impartial conceptions, respectively. Notice that in so doing we leave it an open question whether impartiality should take an agent-neutral or agent-relative form.
involve is not entirely clear, as we shall see, but the intuitive distinction is fairly clear. The more demanding a moral theory is, the more stringent it is; though stringency is not defined in consequentialist terms, consequentialism seems to be Scheffler’s chief paradigm of a stringent moral theory. A moderate theory is not minimalist; it does impose other-regarding demands that appear to constrain an agent’s pursuit of his own aims and interests. But it places limits on the amount of sacrifice that morality can demand of agents. Whereas the maximalist sees the moral point of view as a stringent one that requires agents to transcend their own aims and interests and the minimalist sees the moral point of view as one that simply expresses the agent’s own perspective, the moderate sees the moral point of view as one that involves partial but incomplete self-transcendence. Though his views about practical reasoning defy easy description, Scheffler seems to favor an agent-centered conception of rationality; at least, he does not see how to defend an impartial conception of rationality (pp. 73–75).

Because the moderate sees morality as more stringent than the minimalist, the moderate must recognize apparent conflicts between moral demands and the agent’s own aims and interests. Because Scheffler accepts an agent-centered conception of rationality, he must defend reconciliation or reject rationalism. Because he thinks complete reconciliation is impossible, he rejects rationalism. Nonetheless, he does seem to accept the special authority of morality. This is, in part, because he views the moral point of view and the personal point of view as potentially congruent (pp. 4, 115). This claim has two principal components. First, Scheffler believes that considerable reconciliation is possible, even if complete reconciliation is impossible. This is so for two reasons. If, as Scheffler argues, morality is moderate, there will be fewer genuine conflicts between morality and the personal point of view than there would be on the maximalist view because morality itself is responsive to the personal point of view (pp. 59–60, 131, 139). Moreover, he believes that moral judgments are typically psychologically resonant and motivationally authoritative, and this presumably gives agents agent-centered reason to shape their interests and aims in light of their moral beliefs. The second main component of the potential congruence of the moral and personal points of view is the claim that the size of the gap between them is to a significant extent within our control (p. 133). Though this is the shortest part of Scheffler’s discussion, it is in many ways the most interesting and compelling. The moderate recognizes the claims of self-transcendence, even if she balances them against those of the personal point of view (p. 122). In unjust circumstances, the moderate demands more of the beneficiaries of injustice than she does of people in a just society. So, at least for the beneficiaries of injustice, the gap between morality and the personal point of view in an unjust society will be greater than it is in a...
society. Because the ability to reconcile morality and the personal point of view in one's own case is a personal good, many in unjust societies lack this good of reconciliation. But insofar as we have (collective) control over the institutions that determine the justice and injustice of our society, we have control over the degree of reconciliation that we can achieve. Reconciliation turns out to be in significant part a political good and achievement.

THE PERVASIVENESS OF MORALITY

One possible response to the problem about the authority of morality is to modify our views about the scope of moral demands. If morality just doesn't extend to certain aspects of the agent's life, then the moral point of view may be less likely to threaten the agent's own aims and interests. However, in chapter 2, Scheffler argues against solving the problem by restricting morality's scope and defends the pervasive scope of morality; on his view, all conduct is morally assessable.

Scheffler defends the pervasiveness of morality by rejecting two arguments for restricting its scope (pp. 19–26). One argument appeals to issues that may seem too trivial to be subject to moral assessment. Whether or not I brush my teeth tonight or which leg to put into my trousers first may just seem to be issues about which morality has nothing to say. The second argument concerns the justification of an agent's special concern for himself and his intimates. In this connection, Scheffler discusses an example of Bernard Williams in which a man can save his wife or a stranger, but not both. Scheffler interprets Williams as claiming that it would be wrong to say that the man is morally justified in saving his wife. To say that it is morally permissible for the man to save his wife requires us to think that the man ought to be motivated by the thought that it is morally permissible for him to favor his wife because she is his wife. But this, Williams claims, "provides the agent with one thought too many." We should instead see this as a situation that lies beyond moral justification.

Scheffler treats these two rather different alleged counterexamples together, because he believes that the pervasiveness assumption can and should be defended in each context in similar ways. (p. 20). Pervasiveness requires that we treat cases that might seem to lie outside the scope of morality as cases of permissible action, whose permissibility may be obvious. The implications of pervasiveness will seem reasonable, Scheffler thinks, when we recognize how moral assessability de-

4. Scheffler mentions an interesting irony, namely, that the victims of injustice possess the good of personal reconciliation, whereas their oppressors lack it (pp. 139–40).

pends upon the context of an action (p. 23). In trivial cases, the token act (e.g., this brushing of my teeth) has unobjectionable consequences. But other tokens of the same type of act occur in special contexts in which the act has objectionable consequences (e.g., brushing my teeth would prevent me from saving a life in the next room). What makes one token impermissible and the other trivial is a difference in the contexts of the acts. Because the same sort of contextual factors explain why one act is impermissible and the other is trivial, Scheffler believes, it makes no sense to treat the one token as morally assessable and the other as outside the scope of morality. Instead, we should say that the trivial act is morally permissible and obviously so. Similarly, Scheffler believes, it is morally permissible for the man to display special concern for his wife by saving her, rather than the equally needy stranger. If this needs to be shown, we can do so by putting the same type of act in a special context (e.g., in which the man is alienated from his wife, his wife is a moral scoundrel, and the stranger is a saint and benefactor) in which saving one's wife is at least morally questionable. Because what distinguishes special concern that is morally questionable from special concern that is not is the context of the special concern, we should treat innocent displays of special concern as morally permissible, rather than outside morality’s scope.

While I am sympathetic to Scheffler’s defense of the pervasiveness of morality, I find his discussion puzzling. The triviality counterexamples have a prima facie plausibility that the counterexamples based on special concern do not. Someone might think it odd to describe trivial actions as morally permissible; that might seem like a category mistake. By contrast, it seems perfectly natural to think that the decision whom to rescue has moral significance, even if special concern seems sometimes to make the answer obvious. Special concern may be a source of trouble for certain moral views (e.g., consequentialism), but it seems an unlikely source of trouble for assumptions about the pervasiveness of morality. If so, there is something else peculiar about Scheffler’s discussion. Restrictions on scope were introduced as one way of resolving the problem about the authority of morality. But a restriction on scope will have this effect only if the restriction operates to insulate the agent’s own aims and interests in important ways from the demands of morality. A restriction designed to leave trivial cases outside of morality would not operate in this way, whereas a restriction designed to exclude from morality cases involving special concern an agent has for himself and intimates might operate in such a way. But

6. One wonders if it isn't more natural to interpret Williams as appealing to special concern as a problem for certain impartial moral theories, such as consequentialism. On this interpretation, he is trying to make a point about the moral significance of special concern, not trying to restrict the scope of morality.
then the plausibility of the restriction is inversely related to the help it would provide in responding to the problem about the authority of morality.7

THE PROSPECTS FOR RATIONALISM

If morality is pervasive, then we cannot avoid the problem about the authority of morality by restricting morality's scope. We might instead question the rationalist assumption that morality is overriding. Whereas Scheffler is skeptical of this rationalist assumption, he thinks that influential arguments against it are unconvincing (p. 52).

Scheffler focuses on critiques of rationalism from the personal point of view. According to Scheffler, critics typically focus on conflicts between paradigmatic other-regarding moral values (e.g., those of impartiality, fidelity, or mutual aid) and other values associated with the agent leading a satisfying life and claim that at least in some such conflicts the reasonable thing for the agent to do is to act on the values that matter from the personal point of view (p. 56). This style of antirationalist argument is inconclusive, Scheffler maintains, because it is either self-indulgent or reflects an overly narrow conception of morality. Some personal values (e.g., the desires of a gourmand) do appear to be extramoral values, but it would be unreasonably self-indulgent to suppose that it is sometimes on-balance reasonable to side with them against moral requirements (e.g., of mutual aid). As the personal values become more substantial, it becomes less self-indulgent to act on them, but it also becomes less clear that a reasonable moral conception would deny them relevance. If so, it is hard to imagine personal values that are both important enough to control practical deliberation but that do not themselves have moral significance (pp. 57–58).

But the antirationalist need not claim that personal values are without moral significance; she need only claim that it is not always on-balance irrational to give personal values weight out of proportion to their moral significance. This claim need not presuppose an overly

7. Williams's discussion of special concern really raises rather different issues about pervasiveness than those raised by the trivial cases. Whereas the trivial cases question the intrinsic plausibility of claiming that all acts are morally assessable, Williams, according to Scheffler's interpretation, is really worried about the consequences of this supposition. If all acts are morally assessable, then it might seem that a morally good agent will always be motivated by moral considerations. But this might seem to commit us to an intolerably moralized conception of the self. At some points, Scheffler appears simply to deny Williams's assumption that moral assessability implies that a morally good agent's acts must be motivated by moral considerations (pp. 21–23). But in chap. 3 he seems willing to accept this assumption provided we recognize the diverse ways in which moral considerations can play a motivational role. Either way, Scheffler believes, pervasiveness does not commit us to an overmoralized conception of the self.
narrow conception of morality. Nor need it presuppose that morality is stringent, as Scheffler sometimes suggests (pp. 58–60). As long as we assume that morality’s impartiality will sometimes make other-regarding demands that significantly constrain the agent’s pursuit of her own goals and interests, we can represent conflicts between the personal point of view and a moral point of view that treats personal values as morally relevant. But if in some such conflicts it is not unreasonable to act on personal values, then overridingness must be rejected. The plausibility of rationalism depends less upon whether our conception of morality is stringent or moderate than on whether our conception of rationality is agent-centered.

Scheffler recognizes that it is difficult to maintain the rationalist commitment to overridingness if we accept familiar instrumental or prudential conceptions of practical rationality (pp. 61, 73–74). However, he thinks that antirationalists have not sufficiently come to grips with a Kantian challenge to their views about practical rationality (p. 61). Here Scheffler focuses on the Kantian challenge to instrumentalism (p. 61). He motivates an instrumental conception of practical rationality by appealing to the familiar idea that motivation involves a pro-attitude (e.g., desire, aim, or goal) and an internalist principle according to which nothing can count as a reason for a person unless it is capable of motivating him. These claims seem to imply that an agent has reason to engage in a course of action just in case it would satisfy his existing pro-attitudes (e.g., desires, aims, or goals). Kant, according to Scheffler, believes that we ascribe to morality a kind of motivational authority that is incompatible with instrumentalism or any other purely naturalistic theory of motivation (p. 61). We experience this special motivational authority phenomenologically; genuine moral motivation is based on a sense of duty and does not depend upon prior inclination. This sense of duty or conscience functions categorically; to act from a sense of duty is for one’s moral beliefs and attitudes to override all nonmoral motivation. According to Scheffler, Kant thinks that no form of motivational naturalism can explain conscience.

By a naturalistic theory of moral motivation, Scheffler means any “idea that our motivations for behaving morally stem ultimately from our natural attitudes, desires, sentiments, or inclinations, or other features of our psychology” (p. 61). The breadth of motivational naturalism is striking. Even purely cognitive theories of motivation, according to which moral beliefs are sufficient to motivate, apparently count as naturalistic. Scheffler apparently associates Kantian nonnaturalism with the Kantian metaphysical commitment to noumenal determination of the will. If so, the challenge to the naturalist is to explain the phenomenology of the motivational authority of morality without appeal to Kantian metaphysics.
In fact, Scheffler believes that existing naturalistic theories of motivation are incapable of meeting this challenge. Scheffler focuses on versions of motivational naturalism that appeal to sentiments, desires, and other pro-attitudes. He distinguishes between forms of naturalism that appeal to natural (e.g., innate) sentiments, such as sympathy, and those that are agnostic about the content of the relevant pro-attitudes and insist only that moral motivation involves some pro-attitude or other (p. 66). The problem with agnostic forms of naturalism, according to Scheffler, is that without identifying the content of pro-attitudes involved in moral motivation we can’t tell if they allow an explanation of conscience (p. 67). And sentimental (e.g., sympathetic) versions of naturalism straightforwardly fail to make moral motivation independent of inclination and also fail to account for the variety of kinds of moral motive (p. 67).

Until this challenge has been met, Scheffler believes, naturalism and any form of antirationalism that relies on it must remain in doubt. In chapter 5 Scheffler offers a psychoanalytic theory of moral motivation that he thinks does meet this challenge (pp. 80–81). According to the psychoanalytic account, children experience a conflict between sexual and aggressive attitudes that they have toward their parents and desires for their parents’ approval. Resolution requires suppression of the sexual and aggressive desires; this is accomplished through the development of a superego. By developing a superego the child internalizes the external authority of its parents. The proper functioning superego is a psychological structure that issues categorical imperatives that are experienced as authoritative by the agent. As the child grows, modifies its beliefs about its parents, and integrates with others socially, the standards contained in the superego will be modified and become more complex. Though the superego normally regulates the urges that gave rise to it, these primordial urges can reassert themselves in a crisis or under other psychological pressure; the proper balance between the superego and other psychological structures is a delicate one that can be upset in various ways that produce psychological dysfunction.

Though Scheffler does not insist on the truth of this psychoanalytic approach to moral motivation, he clearly thinks that it provides the right sort of model for a defense of motivational naturalism (pp. 79–80, 91); in particular, it possesses various virtues that the desire-based forms of naturalism lack (pp. 82–90). First, he thinks that the psychoanalytic account is less simplistic than sentimental forms of naturalism. The superego arises out of, and itself interacts with, multiple and conflicting inclinations. Second, because the superego regulates strong impulses in important and necessary ways, we can see how the judgments of the superego play a central role in a person’s psychic economy. In this way, the psychoanalytic account explains the psycho-
logical resonance of moral judgments and emotions (cf. pp. 69–70). Third, because the equilibrium that a properly functioning superego makes possible is delicate, we can see how proper moral motivation is fragile (cf. pp. 70–71). Fourth, Scheffler thinks that the psychoanalytic theory provides an account of authoritative motivation that is an alternative to desire-based accounts of motivation (p. 86). In a person for whom the superego is playing its proper functional role, acquiring a moral belief about what is required in a particular situation is sufficient to motivate a person to act, without the need of any independent desire or pro-attitude (pp. 86, 87, 90–92). This cognitive picture of moral motivation provides an alternative to desire-based versions of naturalism and so promises to deliver an account of the motivational authority of conscience without Kantian metaphysics. Finally, Scheffler believes that the psychoanalytic account of moral motivation provides a reasonable approximation to the aspirations of rationalism. The rationalist represents the special authority of morality as the claim that moral requirements are overriding. Though Scheffler thinks that familiar forms of antirationalism are unconvincing, he does think rationalism is implausible. This is because overridingness would require either a conception of rationality that is impartial and not agent-centered (pp. 73–74) or the reconciliation of morality and the personal point of view. Because Scheffler is skeptical about the possibility of defending any such alternative conception of rationality and about reconciliation, he thinks we should reject overridingness (pp. 74–75). But this does not require us to give up the special authority of morality; we can have special authority without overridingness (pp. 75–76). In particular, the ways in which moral concerns resonate throughout the network of a person’s beliefs and attitudes give moral requirements special authority (pp. 78–79). And the psychoanalytic account, unlike other forms of motivational naturalism, can explain the psychological resonance of morality.

Despite the interesting things Scheffler has to say about motivational naturalism in general and the psychoanalytic account in particular, I find various aspects of his discussion puzzling, especially the greater virtues he finds in the psychoanalytic account.

First of all, unlike Scheffler, I find it hard to regard nonnaturalism about moral motivation as a serious option. The phenomenon to be

8. Scheffler also claims that, even if overridingness were supported by a noninstrumental or nonprudential account of rationality, it might not deliver all that the rationalist wants. Immoral behavior might still occur that was guided by an agent’s sense of his own advantage. Because a sense of one’s own advantage is a reason “of a perfectly recognizable kind,” it remains possible for “sane” people to act immorally (pp. 76–77). But I don’t know any rationalist who thinks immorality involves insanity as well as irrationality. The rationalist recognizes that intentional immorality is possible but views it as akratic behavior.
explained (or possibly explained away) is the motivational authority of conscience—that is, the way in which moral beliefs and attitudes can be motivationally efficacious and not merely as an instrumental means to achieving independent aims or desires. A theory of moral motivation is naturalistic as long as it appeals to desires, inclinations, "or other features of our psychology" (p. 61); a theory is nonnaturalistic if it appeals to noumenal determination. If so, I see no reason to think that we might want to appeal to nonnaturalism as an explanation of the authority of conscience. Though we might like to know their etiology, moral beliefs and commitments are features of our psychology. So presumably any account of the authority of conscience will be naturalistic. If, for some inexplicable reason, we became convinced that the special authority of conscience required noumenal determination, this would seem to me to be a decisive reason to reject (and explain away) the phenomenology of conscience.

Second, it is hard to see how psychoanalytic theory offers any better account of the authority of conscience than more familiar naturalistic accounts. The superego is established as a mechanism to quiet the self's fear of its own sexual and aggressive urges and secure parental approval. If the motivational authority of the superego retains this instrumental character, it's hard to see how it offers any better response to the Kantian challenge than other naturalistic accounts. In defending the psychoanalytic account, I think Scheffler wants to distinguish between the origin of conscience and its phenomenology. What matters is that conscience be experienced as categorical. Though the superego originates as an answer to powerful psychic urges, it acquires psychological autonomy. Its judgments become invested with motivational force in their own right such that they can conflict with and override the motivational influence of the urges that gave rise to the superego in the first place.

Whereas the psychological autonomy of conscience may be sufficient to capture Kant's claims about the phenomenology of moral motivation, it does not seem enough to capture other things Kant means when he says that moral requirements are categorical imperatives. In particular, moral requirements might be psychologically categorical without actually being rationally categorical, that is, without establishing that immoral conduct is irrational independently of the agent's aims and interests. If the rational authority of the judgments of the superego lies in the way the superego copes with the agent's psychic urges, the psychoanalytic account will not capture this Kantian theme.

Moreover, it is not clear that psychoanalytic theory has any distinctive virtues even as an account of the phenomenology of moral motivation. This is one place where I think Scheffler has been unfair to rival accounts and might have examined them more systematically. For
familiar naturalistic theories of motivation can and do distinguish between the origin and phenomenology of conscience. The only determinate naturalistic rival Scheffler considers is a sentimental theory that appeals to sympathy. Whereas various different moral emotions may all originate as sympathetic responses to different kinds of situation, these emotions can acquire psychological autonomy. To explain the emergence of this kind of psychological autonomy we need only appeal to traditional associationalist psychology. Though the miser begins by valuing money only instrumentally, he comes, by a process of association, to value money for its own sake such that his concern for money can conflict with and override the prudential concern from which it originated. When sympathetic responses do become psychologically autonomous, they will operate independently of sympathy such that they can conflict with and override the sympathetic impulses that gave rise to them. In this way, the sentimentalist can achieve the psychological autonomy of conscience that Scheffler takes to be sufficient to deliver Kantian claims about the phenomenology of moral motivation.

Scheffler doesn’t even consider another familiar naturalistic story about the etiology of moral emotions. We might call this the socialist account of the origin of moral attitudes, because it appeals to the role of moral emotions in stable and mutually advantageous social relations. On this view, moral attitudes arise as ways of counteracting the individually and collectively destructive effects of limited altruism in circumstances of scarcity. In order for moral attitudes to play this role, it is arguable that they be perceived as categorical. The social adoption and internalization of a set of moral imperatives enjoining mutual forbearance and cooperation and comparative social equality is what enables us individually and collectively to overcome the obstacles of scarcity and limited altruism. If the psychological autonomy of moral attitudes is necessary for them to play these roles, this account naturally explains the phenomenology of moral motivation. Because of the importance of the individual and social roles that these attitudes play, it’s easy to see why moral attitudes can be psychologically resonant. Because the individual and social roles that moral attitudes play can conflict, it’s easy to see how moral motivation can be fragile. Indeed, the socialist account of the origin of our moral attitudes has an important virtue the psychoanalytic account seems to lack. As Scheffler himself admits, there is a serious worry about whether the forces that shape the superego are likely to forge a conscience with all and only the judgments and attitudes that most of us regard as morally important (pp. 94–95). Why should a superego designed to suppress oedipal urges and fears and secure parental approval deliver judgments about fairness, reciprocity, distributive justice, and individual rights? By contrast, it’s not hard to imagine how such considerations would figure prominently in a socialist account of the origin of moral
judgments and attitudes. Indeed, it seems to me that the psychoanalytic theory can only hope to respond to this worry by stressing the way in which the superego is transformed as the self matures and integrates into society. But this will require helping itself to socialist resources. This makes it hard to see the psychoanalytic account as a plausible rival to the socialist one.

Third, Scheffler wants to contrast the authoritative motivation that is supposed to characterize the operation of the superego with desire-based accounts of moral motivation (pp. 86–92). Scheffler claims that on the psychoanalytic picture cognitive states—moral beliefs—are sufficient to motivate, without the need of any independent desire or pro-attitude. Scheffler takes this purely cognitive picture of motivation to be characteristic of the virtuous person's psychology—the person whose superego is playing its proper functional role. The virtuous person need only see what morality requires to be motivated to act. If we insist on ascribing to the person who acts on her moral beliefs a desire to do the act in question, this ascription of pro-attitude is "merely consequential" on our interpreting her behavior as intentional; the action is produced by her moral beliefs and does not depend upon prior, independent affective states.

But this purely cognitive interpretation of the psychoanalytic account of moral motivation seems both unnecessary and unconvincing. It seems unnecessary, because it seems an agent would avoid Scheffler's interpretation of heteronomy provided that her conduct is motivated, in part, by moral attitudes or desires that are psychologically autonomous and not merely instrumental to the satisfaction of non-moral desires. A purely cognitive interpretation is unconvincing, because there are good general reasons to think that pro-attitudes are a necessary part of motivation.

Intentional action seems best understood as the product of two kinds of intentional states. The intentional states of an agent are representational insofar as she seeks to adjust them to conform to the world, whereas they are practical insofar as she seeks to adjust the world to conform to them.9 Cognitive states (e.g., beliefs) are representational, and pro-attitudes (e.g., desires) are practical. Intentional action is the attempt to bring the world into line with one's practical states in ways that are constrained by one's representational states. If so, a purely cognitive approach to moral motivation seems doomed for quite general reasons.

Suppose I believe that fairness requires me to keep my promise to you, even at significant personal cost to myself. I want to be fair.

So I keep my promise to you. Perhaps ascription to me of a desire to keep my promise to you is merely consequential. I don't know. But the motivation for my action does involve my desire to be fair. If we count appeal to my beliefs about the requirements of fairness as explaining my action, it's only because we are taking for granted my desire to be fair as part of my psychological background. If I did not have this desire or commitment, my moral belief would lead nowhere.

Scheffler responds to this counterfactual by claiming that given the shape of the virtuous person's personality (superego) the moral belief itself is sufficient to motivate (pp. 91, 92). But even if this is true, there's no reason to assume that the background psychological structures do not themselves contain pro-attitudes. If our general picture of intentional action is correct, they must. If the superego is responsible for moral motivation, it must contain practical commitments, as well as moral beliefs. Whether or not these commitments have the functional profile of desires, the practical character of their functional profile makes them part of the larger class of pro-attitudes. Indeed, given the ways Freud wants to extend the notion of desire (e.g., desires include various subconscious states whose motivational efficacy would appear to explain otherwise puzzling behavior), it's hard to see why Scheffler should object to thinking of these pro-attitudes as desires.\textsuperscript{10}

\textsuperscript{10} Scheffler considers the suggestion that his distinction between desire-based and authoritative motivation is best understood as a distinction within the category of desire-based motivation, or motivation by pro-attitude, more broadly construed (p. 93). He claims that this would be a mistake, because such a capacious notion of desire or pro-attitude would be empty (pp. 93–94). And he complains about Michael Smith's appeal to this broader notion to defend what Smith calls a "Humean" theory of motivation (p. 94n.). But, as I say in the text, it strikes me as surprising that a Freudian thinks there is no good theoretical work to be done by a notion of desire that is broader than ordinary language would suggest. Moreover, Scheffler's reply appears either to misunderstand the suggestion or take it out of context. The merits of purely cognitive accounts of moral motivation have been debated in the context of a problem about moral motivation. (1) Moral judgments express beliefs. (2) Moral judgments entail motivation. (3) Motivation involves a desire or pro-attitude. (4) There is no necessary connection between any belief and any desire or pro-attitude. Though each claim may seem plausible, not all four claims can be true. Different views can be understood and assessed as, perhaps tacit, solutions to this problem that give up one element of the puzzle in order to preserve others. Noncognitivists (e.g., A. J. Ayer, C. L. Stevenson, and R. M. Hare) reject (1); externalists about moral motivation (e.g., Philippa Foot and myself) reject (2); and cognitive theories of motivation (e.g., those of Thomas Nagel and John McDowell) reject either (3) or (4). For perfectly general reasons about the nature of intentional action, like those I offer in the text, Smith believes we must accept (3). Moral motivation must involve states that, however different from garden variety desires, share with desires the practical features characteristic of all pro-attitudes. (Smith refers to this feature as a particular "direction of fit" between the intentional states and the world.) If so, then there is a very important explanatory continuity between desire-based and
Finally, it is not clear that the psychoanalytic account of moral motivation provides a reasonable approximation to the aspirations of rationalism. The rationalist's claim about morality's overridingness is a claim about the rational authority of morality, namely, that it is always on-balance irrational to fail to act morally. But even if we suppose that the imperatives of the superego are recognizably moral in content, the psychoanalytic theory purports only to explain their motivational authority. When we see the psychological and social forces that have shaped our superegos, we can wonder whether it is ultimately reasonable and desirable for us to be motivated by such a mechanism. Nor does the resonance of such motivation provide an answer, because it establishes only the psychological centrality and pervasiveness of this sort of motivation, not its rational authority. Rationalism does not assume that morality is motivationally authoritative; it seeks to establish why it deserves to be. For this reason, I don’t see why rationalists should find much consolation in Scheffler's psychoanalytic interpretation of the motivational authority of morality.

This problem may arise because Scheffler introduces issues about motivational authority as part of a Kantian view. But, as I have said, Kant thinks not only that those who are genuinely morally motivated experience moral requirements as categorical but also that moral requirements are categorical imperatives—that is, are rationally authoritative independently of promoting the agent's interests and aims. Kant appeals to the phenomenology of moral motivation as evidence that we believe moral requirements to be rationally authoritative, but it is the fact that moral requirements are rationally authoritative that is supposed to explain why it is reasonable for us to give them motivational authority. If so, Scheffler has not met the real Kantian challenge, which is to show that moral requirements are categorical imperatives. Perhaps we should reject this challenge, but this is not a conclusion Scheffler argues for; he simply expresses skepticism about the prospects of defending an alternative to agent-centered conceptions of rationality (pp. 73–75). This is unfortunate, because the main outlines of a promising Kantian argument are suggested by Kantian claims Scheffler does discuss.

In the *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals* Kant distinguishes between hypothetical and categorical imperatives.11 Hypothetical imperatives are conditional on whether the conduct enjoined promotes the agent's antecedent interests or desires, whereas categorical imperatives are not. Kant claims that moral requirements express categorical, authoritative motivation. In this context, at least, the differences between them are not important.

rather than hypothetical, imperatives.\textsuperscript{12} But we might identify two distinguishable claims here corresponding to two distinct senses in which an imperative can be categorical. In one sense, imperatives are categorical just in case they apply to agents independently of their aims or interests. Let us say that imperatives are categorical in this sense insofar as they generate \textit{categorical norms}. Imperatives are categorical in another sense just in case they provide those to whom they apply with \textit{reasons for action} independently of their aims or interests, such that failure to act on them is \textit{pro tanto} irrational. Let us say that imperatives are categorical in this sense just in case they generate \textit{categorical reasons}. Kant believes that moral requirements deserve to be motivationally authoritative, in Scheffler's sense, because they express categorical reasons and that moral requirements express categorical reasons because of the kind of categorical norms they are.

Kant thinks that moral requirements are categorical norms, because they apply to us insofar as we are rational beings and independently of our contingent interests and inclinations.\textsuperscript{15} If so, moral requirements apply to us in virtue of our rational capacities, and these are essential to our being agents who deliberate, bear responsibility, and possess reasons for action. If so, any norms that apply to us in this way would generate categorical reasons for action. It remains to be seen whether there are any such requirements and whether they include familiar moral duties. Kant thinks so. He understands the first formulation of the Categorical Imperative to require that one act on maxims that a rational being as such could will to be universal.\textsuperscript{14} He thinks that the one thing that an agent would choose for its own sake insofar as she is rational, and independently of her contingent inclinations and interests, would be the realization of rational agency. If I choose rational agency solely insofar as I am a rational being, then I will choose to develop rational agency as such. Kant concludes that insofar as we are rational beings we would will that all rational agents be treated as ends in themselves and never merely as means;\textsuperscript{15} this is his second main formulation of the Categorical Imperative.

This brief sketch of the Kantian strategy represents the motivational authority of morality in terms of an impartial conception of rationality implicit in our understanding of moral requirements themselves. It represents an important further challenge of Kantian rationalism that does not appear to presuppose Kantian metaphysics. No

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., p. 416.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., pp. 408, 411, 425–27, 432, 442.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., pp. 421, 425–27.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., p. 429.
reasonable assessment of the prospects of rationalism can afford to ignore these aspects of Kantian ethical theory.

A MODERATE MORALITY

In part because Scheffler accepts agent-centered assumptions about rationality, he is skeptical of rationalism. But as long as one accepts, as Scheffler seems to, the idea that morality nonetheless has a special claim to rational authority, one cannot simply reject the rationalist element of the problem about the rational authority of morality. One must either show that rationality can be impartial or reduce the conflict between the moral and personal points of view. Because Scheffler is skeptical about the prospects for an impartial conception of rationality, he must reduce the conflict between the moral and personal points of view. Though Scheffler rejects the goal of complete reconciliation, he is committed to some significant reconciliation. Because the conflict will be more serious the more stringent morality is, it is necessary for Scheffler to argue that morality is moderate, rather than stringent. According to Scheffler, those who believe morality is stringent do so because they associate morality with a perspective that transcends the agent’s own interests and concerns, which he refers to as an ideal of purity (p. 101). By contrast, those who believe that morality is moderate in its demands believe that morality must be psychologically accessible to agents; they associate morality with what Scheffler refers to as an ideal of humanity (pp. 101–2). Though neither purity nor stringency is defined in consequentialist terms, Scheffler focuses on consequentialist interpretations of both. In chapter 6 Scheffler argues that various arguments for consequentialism based on the impartiality of the moral point of view are unconvincing. In particular, he argues that there is “no form of impartiality that (1) is uncontroversially viewed as characteristic of the moral point of view, and (2) supports some form of consequentialism over agent-relative views” (p. 108). Though Scheffler does not believe the moral point of view can be understood exclusively in terms of purity, he thinks that both stringency (purity) and moderation (humanity) are strands in ordinary moral thought and that the best account of ordinary moral thought must include the claims of moderation (p. 114). Indeed, he appears to go on, in chapter 7, to associate moderation with the more inclusive conception of morality that recognizes and attempts to balance consequentialism’s impersonal point of view and the personal point of view (p. 122). Though not morally complacent or indulgent (p. 126), the moderate can effect substantial reconciliation. In this way, the moderate view promises to represent morality as something that an agent can integrate into a reasonable and satisfying life plan (pp. 124–25).

Whereas Scheffler is surely right that it is a virtue of the moderate view that it takes the need for integration of morality into a reasonable
life plan seriously, it is less clear that the moderate view is the best way to do this.

Scheffler focuses on the debate between the maximalist, who associates morality with an impersonal point of view that is potentially very demanding, and the moderate, who sees morality as also responsive to the personal point of view. But Scheffler has very little to say about the minimalist, who associates morality with the agent’s own point of view. This is somewhat surprising, because minimalism seems especially well positioned to explain the special authority of morality. If rationality is agent-centered and morality expresses the personal point of view, it is clear why moral requirements should have special authority. By contrast, both the maximalist and the moderate, on Scheffler’s view, must admit conflicts between morality and agent-centered rationality. True, a moderate may recognize fewer such conflicts than the maximalist (p. 131). But until we know more about how the moderate effects the balance between impersonal and personal demands, we don’t know how many such conflicts the moderate must recognize. And, as I will argue shortly, on one of Scheffler’s own proposals about how to understand moderation, the moderate will likely face many such conflicts in the foreseeable future. If so, it is unclear how, given Scheffler’s agent-centered assumptions about rationality, the maximalist or the moderate can explain the special authority of morality.

There is an obvious worry about minimalism (cf. pp. 116–18). Minimalism may seem too concessionary a solution to the problem about the rational authority of morality. If the minimalists reject others-regarding duties of forbearance, cooperation, and mutual aid, the solution may come at too high a price. But not all forms of minimalism are so morally revisionary. Minimalism need not be morally revisionary if it makes suitable modifications in our pretheoretical understanding of self-interest; in particular, it must explain how others-regarding conduct plays an essential role in promoting the agent’s own interests. Some forms of ethical egoism justify others-regarding behavior on strategic grounds.16 On one such view, an individual fares best if she constrains her attempts to maximize her own welfare by others-regarding norms of mutual forbearance, cooperation, and aid. Other forms of ethical egoism defend the interdependence of people’s interests on metaphysical grounds.17 On one such view, I should regard others as

extending my own interests insofar as they stand in the same sort of psychological relations to me as my own future self does; interpersonal psychological continuity provides agent-centered justification of familiar other-regarding duties. Minimalist views may appear to make other-regarding moral concern too instrumental (pp. 116–17), but both strategic and metaphysical egoists have resources to explain non-instrumental concern. As the socialist account of the origin of moral motivation makes clear, the categorical character of certain other-regarding norms may contribute to their strategic value. And if the metaphysical egoist is right to model interpersonal concern on interpersonal concern, other-regarding concern need be no more instrumental than prudential concern. 18 To be sure, strategic and metaphysical forms of ethical egoism face many difficulties and may yet prove to be too morally revisionary. Scheffler may be right to find the degree of reconciliation contained in these forms of minimalism hard to believe (pp. 100, 118), but he owes us a fuller discussion of these and other minimalist alternatives if he expects us to accept the moderate solution.

Nor do I think Scheffler is entirely fair to the maximalist. One cannot help but wonder how his assessment of maximalism and his own version of moderation might have been different if he considered nonconsequentialist or agent-relative interpretations of stringency and purity. However, following Scheffler, I will focus on (broadly) consequentialist forms of maximalism. As he acknowledges, one reason some people find consequentialism attractive is its interpretation of impartiality. Though some may think consequentialism can be derived from conceptual or otherwise uncontroversial claims about impartiality, it is open to consequentialists to defend their interpretation of impartiality as a substantive claim. 19 On one such view, impartiality

18. For the metaphysical egoist’s resources, see my “Rational Egoism, Self, and Others,” pp. 367–70, and “A Puzzle about the Rational Authority of Morality,” pp. 18–19.

19. Because some claims of my own are among the few consequentialist arguments Scheffler explicitly discusses (pp. 105–10), perhaps I should respond briefly to his criticisms. He is responding to claims I made in “Utilitarian Morality and the Personal Point of View,” Journal of Philosophy 83 (1986): 417–38, and Moral Realism and the Foundations of Ethics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 273–83. I agree with Scheffler that there is no conception of impartiality that is both uncontroversial and implies consequentialism, and never meant to claim otherwise. I do believe that an aggregative conception of impartiality, though controversial, is intuitively attractive and can be defended against familiar objections and that such a conception of impartiality supports certain forms of consequentialism. I have outlined a proper part of this argument in “The Separateness of Persons, Distributive Norms, and Moral Theory,” in Value, Welfare, and Morality, ed. R. Frey and C. Morris (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993). What I argued in the work that Scheffler is discussing is, in part, that there is a very general conception of impartiality as sometimes requiring significant
involves taking everyone's interests into account equally. The consequentialist takes everyone's interests into account by aggregating their interests, balancing benefits to some against harm to others, where necessary, so as to produce the best total outcome. I think that this interpretation of impartiality is very appealing, especially when one considers difficulties in nonaggregative interpretations of impartiality—for instance, the difficulties associated with finding outcomes that are acceptable to each affected party. But I also realize that it gives rise to familiar worries involving rights, distributive justice, and special obligations. If the consequentialist appeals to a substantive conception of impartiality, she must be prepared to take these substantive worries seriously, arguing either that apparently recalcitrant moral phenomena involve mistaken commitments or that, appearances to the contrary notwithstanding, they can be accommodated within a consequentialist view. Consequentialism has never been an entirely complacent view; any substantive defense of its overall appeal will likely involve reform as well as accommodation. This is obviously too large a topic to begin here. What's surprising is that Scheffler thinks he can dismiss the maximalist interpretation of morality without taking on these issues himself. Scheffler has himself elsewhere expressed doubts about the coherence of the agent-relative constraints (e.g., rights) that consequentialism is alleged to violate. He regards worries about the demandingness of consequentialism as more serious. Though Scheffler expresses skepticism about a consequentialist account of patterns of partiality (e.g., among intimates) and the personal point of view (p. 124), he examines neither the resources for consequentialist accommodation nor the plausibility of consequentialist reform.

Even if we assume that consequentialism imposes burdens on agents, we won't know whether this poses a problem for the rational authority of consequentialist morality until we know what conception of practical rationality is correct. It ought only to count against a conception of morality if it imposes unreasonable burdens. There is a prima facie problem for consequentialism here if our conception of rationality is agent-centered, as Scheffler assumes. But if our conception of rationality is impartial, as I have suggested Kant's is, the consequentialist burdens are likely to seem less unreasonable. They will seem

personal sacrifice, of which consequentialism provides one interpretation, that is plausibly associated with the moral point of view and that is incompatible with those agent-relative views of morality that make personal values a sufficient defense of the moral permissibility of conduct.

even more reasonable if we can defend an impersonal interpretation of rationality's impartiality. The Kantian argument I outlined for an impartial conception of practical rationality admits of a possible impersonal interpretation. If we begin by asking what one would will just insofar as one was a rational agent, the answer, I said, seems to be rational agency. This seems to commit me to valuing the development and exercise of rational agency as such and not the rational agency of this or that being. If so, my commitment to rational agency is arguably impersonal; whose rational agency is promoted or retarded is not itself morally significant.21 If this impersonal interpretation of impartiality could be defended, the demands of practical rationality and a certain kind of consequentialist conception of morality would dovetail nicely.

Even if our conception of rationality is agent-centered, as Scheffler assumes, how burdensome consequentialism really is depends not only on what consequentialism requires but also on what is to count as a burden. In other words, to assess the significance of the conflicts between morality and self-interest to which consequentialism gives rise we need to know not only what consequentialist morality requires but also what self-interest consists in. If enlightened self-interest had significant other-regarding components, this would reduce the conflicts between consequentialist morality and the personal point of view, quite independently of consequentialism's ability to accommodate common moral beliefs about the permissibility of partiality to oneself and one's intimates. It's clear that Scheffler does not believe that any plausible conception of self-interest could completely reconcile moderation and self-interest (pp. 115, 131). A fortiori he does not believe that any plausible conception of self-interest could completely reconcile consequentialist morality and self-interest. But he offers no justification for this pessimism; he does not examine the implications of different conceptions of self-interest, which, of course, goes hand in hand with his failure to take minimalism seriously.

Moreover, it's difficult to assess the significance of these conflicts for consequentialism given how little Scheffler tells us about the requirements of his own moderate alternative. Whereas he insists that his moderate view is not complacent (p. 126) and that it will not eliminate conflicts between morality and self-interest (p. 131), it's very unclear how demanding it is. What we do know, therefore, is that the moderate view will itself sometimes appear overdemanding from the agent's perspective. What we don't know is whether these conflicts will be significantly reduced on the moderate view. On some interpretations

21. It would need to be shown that an impersonal commitment to rational agency is compatible with Kant's second main formulation of the Categorical Imperative. I think that such an argument can be made, though I cannot provide it here.
of moderation (see below), this seems unlikely. In any case, how much significance should we attach to fine-tuning the frequency of such conflicts? If the conflicts are troubling, say, because we are rationalists, shouldn't we prefer minimalism to moderation? If the conflicts are not troubling, say, because we have already given up rationalism, does their frequency provide any independent objection to maximalism? Scheffler recognizes the worries to which the moderate view is exposed by virtue of standing intermediate between minimalism and maximalism (pp. 4–5, 100); however, I'm not sure that he has successfully answered these worries.

The moderate recognizes and attempts to balance impersonal and personal demands.

According to the alternative [moderate] construal, morality attaches unmediated significance to each of two basic propositions. The first proposition is that, [1] from an impersonal standpoint, everyone's life is of equal intrinsic value and everyone's interests are of equal intrinsic importance. The second proposition is that [2] each person's interests nevertheless have a significance for him or her that is out of proportion to their importance from an impersonal standpoint. On the alternative construal, moral norms reflect and attempt to balance these two fundamental propositions. [P. 122]

But this statement of moderation leaves fundamental questions unanswered. Can impersonal and personal demands be integrated into a coherent moral theory or outlook? If so, what is the structure of a theory that integrates them?

It looks as if impersonal and personal points of view make conflicting demands on agents. As long as complete reconciliation is impossible, it is not clear how an agent could always act so as to satisfy both points of view. If both points of view have moral significance, the conflict between them threatens to introduce what Sidgwick calls a fundamental "dualism of practical reason."22 If each point of view makes claims about what is on-balance right, the dualism produces theoretical inconsistency. To avoid inconsistency, one might reinterpret the two points of view so that they apply to different domains. On one such view, the moral point of view is properly articulated in impersonal terms, whereas rationality is properly interpreted in personal terms.23 But this is a maximalist view about morality. Alterna-

23. Sidgwick's dualism does, I believe, face this sort of theoretical inconsistency; and this sort of reinterpretation is, I argue, very well motivated in his case (see my "Sidgwick and the Rationale for Rational Egoism," in Essays on Henry Sidgwick, ed. B. Schultz [New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992], esp. sec. 1).
tively, each point of view might be understood as making a claim about a fundamental right-making property or cluster of properties. If so, the dualism is committed to a kind of practical, rather than theoretical, inconsistency. But even on this interpretation, morality seems to fall short of an ideal of theoretical unification. Perhaps this ideal is unattainable and properly rejected. But Scheffler does not argue for this. It is a cost that we ought to bear in mind when we calculate the overall plausibility of the moderate view.

There is a practical tension, because we cannot always satisfy both impersonal and personal demands. What sort of compromise does the moderate propose? Scheffler says that the moderate view allows agents to give their own aims and interests moral weight out of proportion to their impersonal value (p. 122). On one interpretation of this claim, an agent can act on a moral ranking of alternatives that results from adding an agent-multiplier to an otherwise consequentialist analysis. On a standard consequentialist view, an agent is obligated to perform the action with the best total consequences; in effect, it multiplies the value of all consequences by one. On the agent-multiplier view, the agent is allowed to perform the action with the largest total—after values to others have been multiplied by one and his personal values have been multiplied by the appropriate factor, greater than one. Besides the obvious question about how we go about specifying the size of the agent-multiplier, there are other problems for the agent-multiplier interpretation.

The agent-multiplier appears not to be an interpretation of moderation, as Scheffler states that view, because it articulates only one of the two fundamental propositions that the moderate tries to accommodate. It appears not to balance (1) and (2); it simply expresses (2) and ignores (1). Scheffler may believe that a moderate view containing an agent-multiplier does respond to both (1) and (2) by virtue of its disjunctive character. His version of the agent-multiplier requires agents either to maximize impersonal value or to act on a moral ranking of alternatives that results from adding an agent-multiplier to an otherwise consequentialist analysis (i.e., maximize agent-multiplied values). But if the agent-multiplier never requires more than (2), it's hard to see how it balances the demands of (1) and (2).

But perhaps this reflects only a misstatement of the moderate view and not any serious objection to the moderate credentials of the agent-multiplier. If we understand the moderate as balancing impersonal and personal demands, then any theory which gives disproportionate weight to personal values (this is how Scheffler actually characterizes [2]), as the agent-multiplier does, can count as a moderate theory.

Still, the clearest balance between impersonal and personal values would be a nondisjunctive interpretation of the agent-multiplier. On this view, it would be obligatory for the agent to maximize agent-multiplied values. I am not sure why Scheffler prefers the disjunctive to the nondisjunctive interpretation of the agent-multiplier. 25 However, both versions of the agent-multiplier raise further questions.

It is unclear if an agent-multiplier represents a plausible response to worries about the rational authority of demanding moral conceptions. One reason consequentialism appears quite demanding of some people is that the world contains a great deal of suffering, much of which can be very efficiently relieved if the better-off make sacrifices. If others are not making their share of sacrifice (partial compliance), consequentialist demands for sacrifice will apparently increase. If each of us ought to give until the point that our sacrifices are as great as the benefits we confer, then, given the conditions of partial compliance, each of us is obligated to sacrifice a great deal. 26 This sort of sacrifice would involve a very significant change in lifestyle for most of those living reasonably comfortable lives. Would an agent-multiplier significantly reduce the amount of sacrifice an impersonal point of view appears to require? Given the very high benefit-to-cost ratio of many relief operations—where I can save many lives by very small contributions—it’s difficult to see how an agent-multiplier would significantly reduce consequentialism’s demands for aid under normal conditions of partial compliance unless the multiplier is very large indeed. If the multiplier is this large and is constant across different contexts, then personal demands are likely to defeat impersonal demands in all other contexts. As we approach full compliance, an agent-multiplier view would assign no duties of mutual aid, not simply smaller ones. 27 Nor could such a theory recognize various obligations to others within a reasonably well-off community. For instance, given

25. Scheffler may simply have the intuition that an agent ought always to be able to maximize impersonal values if she so chooses. However, if the personal values that the moderate aims to accommodate include special relationships (e.g., to intimates), then there may be worries about the permissibility of the impersonal option. Moreover, in cases where an agent would choose to maximize impersonal value, she can and should be ascribed impersonal aims to which a nondisjunctive agent-multiplier would give disproportionate weight.

26. Compare Peter Singer, “Famine, Affluence, and Morality,” Philosophy and Public Affairs 1 (1972): 229–43; and Liam Murphy, “The Demands of Beneficence,” Philosophy and Public Affairs 22 (1993): 267–92. Murphy’s Cooperative Principle appeals to full compliance to set an upper limit on how much sacrifice beneficence can require; no agent can be asked to sacrifice more under partial compliance than she would under full compliance. If the consequentialist can incorporate Murphy’s Cooperative Principle in a way that is not ad hoc, she can plausibly argue that consequentialism, though not complacent, is not overly demanding.

27. See Murphy.
such a large multiplier, my personal values would always trump impersonal demands by others within my professional or neighborhood community that I make small but nonnegligible contributions to the community (e.g., by doing committee work). The resulting view would verge on a complacent form of minimalism that Scheffler clearly wants to avoid. But if we do not make the multiplier this large, the moderate view will, in actual circumstances of partial compliance, be forced to recognize duties of aid barely less demanding than those of consequentialism. If so, it's hard to see what advantages this kind of moderate view has over the maximalist view. In particular, if the maximalist's demands cannot be integrated into a reasonable and satisfying life plan, it's difficult to see how the moderate's demands can be.

Perhaps the moderate view should not employ a constant multiplier. Perhaps the multiplier should shift with context and contain some absolute upper limit. But one wants some idea how this upper limit would be set. Moreover, below this limit there are different ways of distributing one's sacrifices. If the entire amount is not to go to famine relief, the moderate must employ a context-sensitive multiplier that distinguishes the urgency of beneficiaries in terms that are not purely impersonal, for instance, in terms of the relationship in which beneficiary stands to benefactor. But this will involve the moderate in recognizing and responding to more than impersonal and personal values.

Scheffler may wish to avoid these messy issues about the proper interpretation of the moderate view. He may see his task as motivating the general moderate outlook, rather than developing or endorsing any particular moderate proposal (p. 121). However, it is difficult to motivate the moderate view (or any of its rivals) without getting one's hands dirty. Until we see that there is at least one plausible way to balance impersonal and personal demands that really avoids the apparent complacency of the minimalist and the apparent stringency of the maximalist, we do not know whether the moderate does offer a distinctive and plausible solution to problems about the authority of morality. Nevertheless, Scheffler has raised important issues about how best to integrate moral theory and moral psychology and has helped shape the agenda for those interested in finding and defending a reasonable morality.