Quasi-Realism for Realists

Bart Streumer

University of Groningen

Reductive realists about normative properties are often charged with being relativists: it is often argued that their view implies that when two people make conflicting normative judgements, these judgements can both be true. I will argue that reductive realists can answer this charge by copying the quasi-realist moves that many expressivists make. I will also suggest that the remaining difference between these views is unimportant.

In §1 I will outline the two main versions of realism about normative properties, reductive realism and robust realism, and I will explain why reductive realists are often charged with being relativists. In §2 I will outline the quasi-realist moves that many expressivists make. In §3 I will argue that if these moves work, reductive realists can copy them to answer the charge that they are relativists. In §4 I will show that the assumptions behind these moves are either shared with quasi-realism, or already made by reductive realism, or independently defensible. In §5 I will argue that reductive realists can also copy quasi-realists' answers to robust realists' doubts about these moves. In §6 I will suggest that the remaining difference between reductive realism and expressivism is unimportant.

1. Reductive realism and relativism

Normative judgements are mental states that can be expressed with a sentence that applies a normative predicate to something, such as:

> Lying is wrong.[1]

Cognitivists take such judgements to be beliefs that ascribe normative properties: they take the judgement that lying is wrong to be a belief that ascribes the property of being wrong to lying.[2] If we distinguish

---

1. Certain sentences that do not apply normative predicates may also express normative judgements: for example, in Streumer (2017) I take normative judgements to be mental states that can be expressed with a sentence that conceptually entails that there is a possible world in which something satisfies a normative predicate (pp. 2, 107–109, 112). How exactly we delineate normative judgements does not matter to my arguments.

2. To fully distinguish cognitivism from expressivism more needs to be said, since expressivists who endorse minimalism can agree that normative

normative predicates (such as 'is right', 'is wrong', and 'is a reason') from descriptive predicates (such as 'is a table', 'is white', and 'is made of wood'), we can say that

> A property is *normative* if and only if it can non-accidentally be ascribed with a normative predicate

and that

> A property is *descriptive* if and only if it can non-accidentally be ascribed with a descriptive predicate.[3]

Most cognitivists are *realists*, who think that normative properties exist. But realists disagree about the nature of these properties. *Reductive* realists think that all normative properties are descriptive properties.[4] If so, a normative predicate such as 'is wrong' ascribes a descriptive property. By contrast, *robust* realists think that at least some normative properties are not descriptive properties.[5]

Early reductive realists often took normative predicates to ascribe descriptive properties that are constituted by our attitudes.[6] A view of this kind could say, for example, that

> (1) The predicate 'is wrong' ascribes the descriptive property of being disapproved of by the user of this predicate.[7]

But suppose that Fred thinks lying is wrong and Susan thinks lying is not wrong, and suppose that Fred disapproves of lying and Susan does not disapprove of lying. In that case, (1) seems to imply that Fred and Susan's conflicting normative judgements are both true.[8] This is so clearly relativist that it seems a stretch to call it 'realism'.

---

judgements are beliefs that ascribe normative properties (see §2). We could say, for example, that whereas cognitivists explain the meanings of normative sentences in terms of the contents of the mental states that these sentences express, expressivists explain these meanings in terms of the mental states that these sentences express without appealing to their contents. But the distinction can also be drawn in other ways. See Bedke (2017) and van Roojen (2018) for discussion.

3. I follow Dunaway (2015, p. 632) in taking a predicate to *non-accidentally* ascribe a property if and only if this predicate ascribes this property in all contexts of utterance in which it has the same meaning. Since these claims merely give a necessary and sufficient condition for a property's being normative or descriptive, they are compatible with different views about what *makes* a property normative or descriptive: see Streumer (2017, pp. 101–103).

4. A clear example is Jackson (1998), but naturalist realists such as Railton (1986) or Boyd (1988) are also reductive realists in this sense, since they think not only that normative properties are natural properties but also that they can be ascribed with descriptive predicates.

5. Robust realists often call such properties *irreducibly normative*. They are normally non-naturalists, such as Enoch (2011), but naturalist realists who deny that normative properties can be ascribed with descriptive predicates are also robust realists in this sense. Sturgeon (1986) argues that such a version of naturalist realism may be true.

6. Hobbes (1651, p. 39) and Hume (1737, p. 469) arguably put forward views along these lines, and Moore (1903, p. 15) uses such a view to illustrate the naturalistic fallacy. A contemporary version is defended by Lewis (1989).

7. This claim should not be read as saying that the predicate 'is wrong' always ascribes the same user-involving descriptive property, but as saying that the meaning of the predicate 'is wrong' is a Kaplanian character that makes which descriptive property the predicate 'is wrong' ascribes depend on who uses this predicate (see Dreier 2009, pp 79–81).

8. I here assume that that there is a sense in which Fred and Susan's normative judgements conflict even if (1) is true and their judgements are therefore both true. I also assume that Susan's judgement that lying is not wrong is equivalent to the judgement that lying is permissible and is therefore a normative judgement; for doubts about this, see Streumer (2017, pp. 107–108, 124–126) and Streumer and Wodak (2021, 2023). Finally, I assume that the users of the predicate 'is wrong' are Fred and Susan. I will drop this assumption in §3, where I will argue that reductive realists should not take the user to be the person who *makes* the relevant normative judgement (which would result in a view that is often called *speaker relativism*, but which McFarlane (2014) and many others now call *contextualism*), but instead the person who *assesses the truth-value of* the relevant normative judgement (which results in a view that is often called *assessor relativism*, which McFarlane (2014) and many others now simply call *relativism*). Assessor relativism can obtain either because the proposition expressed by a normative sentence is different for different people (a view MacFarlane (2014) calls *content relativism*) or because the truth-value of the proposition expressed by a normative sentence is different for different people even though this proposition is the same (a view MacFarlane (2014) calls *truth-value relativism*). There is also a version of relativism that I will not discuss: *agent relativism*, according to which the truth of a normative judgement depends on the standards of the person that the judgement is

Most reductive realists therefore now take normative predicates to ascribe descriptive properties that are not constituted by our attitudes. And instead of making semantic claims like (1), which tell us which descriptive property a normative predicate ascribes, most of them now only make metasemantic claims, which tell us what makes it the case that a normative predicate ascribes a certain descriptive property.[9] They have put forward two main views of this kind. The first appeals to causation: it says that

> (2) What makes it the case that the predicate 'is wrong' ascribes a certain descriptive property is that this property causally regulates the use of this predicate, in the sense that this property tends to cause users of this predicate to apply it to things that have this property.[10]

The second appeals to descriptive information: it says that

> (3) What makes it the case that the predicate 'is wrong' ascribes a certain descriptive property is that, after considering all relevant descriptive information, users

of this predicate would apply it to things that have this property.[11]

But suppose that Susan's community's use of the predicate 'is wrong' is causally regulated by the property of failing to maximise happiness and Fred's community's use of this predicate is causally regulated by the property of failing to comply with the categorical imperative. In that case, (2) implies that their conflicting normative judgements can both be true. Or suppose that after considering all relevant descriptive information, Susan would apply the predicate 'is wrong' to actions that fail to maximise happiness and Fred would apply this predicate to actions that fail to comply with the categorical imperative. In that case, (3) also implies that their conflicting normative judgements can both be true. These versions of reductive realism therefore still seem relativist.[12]

Is it a problem for reductive realists if their view is relativist? That depends on who you ask. Robust realists will say that it is: they will point out that we tend to think that

> (4) It is possible to be mistaken about whether something is wrong,

that we tend to think that

> (5) When one person thinks that something is wrong and another person thinks that this thing is right, at least one of them is mistaken,

and that when we think that something is wrong, we tend to think that

> (6) If we had not thought that this thing is wrong, it would still have been wrong.

---

about. Views of this kind are defended by Street (2008), though she calls her view 'Humean constructivism', and by Harman (1975) and Wong (1984, 2006), though they restrict their views in certain ways and also incorporate elements of other versions of relativism. For overviews of different kinds of relativism, see Kölbel (2015), Francén (2016), and Gowans (2021).

9. Of course, reductive realists who endorse (1) also need to make metasemantic claims. But (1) is compatible with a much wider range of normative views than semantic claims that take the predicate 'is wrong' to ascribe a descriptive property that is not constituted by our attitudes. For example, the semantic claim that the predicate 'is wrong' ascribes the descriptive property of failing to maximise desire-satisfaction is only compatible with utilitarianism, and the semantic claim that the predicate 'is wrong' ascribes the descriptive property of failing to comply with the categorical imperative is only compatible with Kantian views; by contrast, (1) is compatible with just as wide a range of normative views as the expressivist claim that the sentence 'Lying is wrong' expresses disapproval of lying (see §2).

10. Boyd (1988) defends a view along these lines, though his actual view is more complicated.

11. Jackson (1998) defends a view along these lines.

12. Naturalist realists can avoid relativism by endorsing a normative claim about what makes it the case that the predicate 'is wrong' ascribes a certain descriptive property: see, for example, Brink (2001, pp. 175–176). But I argue in Streumer (2017, pp. 55–57) that they can do this only if their view is not reductive.

Robust realism is clearly compatible with (4) to (6). But relativist views are not: if (1) is true, these claims seem false whenever we are not mistaken about our own attitudes of disapproval, if (2) is true, these claims seem false whenever we apply the predicate 'is wrong' to something that has the descriptive property that causally regulates our use of this predicate, and if (3) is true, these claims seem false whenever we apply the predicate 'is wrong' to something that we would apply this predicate to after considering all relevant descriptive information.

Of course, reductive realists could point out that robust realism faces serious problems of its own.[13] They may therefore regard rejecting (4) to (6) as a price worth paying for endorsing realism while avoiding these problems. Perhaps it is. But I think they can do better: I think reductive realists can show that, contrary to appearances, their view is compatible with (4) to (6).

2. How expressivists go quasi-realist

They can do this by following the example of *expressivists*, who take normative judgements to be non-cognitive attitudes, such as attitudes of approval or disapproval.[14] Reductive realists who endorse (1) take the sentence 'Lying is wrong' to express the belief that lying has the descriptive property of being disapproved of by the user of this sentence. By contrast, expressivists take this sentence to express disapproval of lying. As Mark Schroeder puts it, they take the sentence

'Lying is wrong' to stand to disapproval of lying the way the sentence 'Grass is green' stands to the belief that grass is green.[15]

Expressivists are sometimes charged with being relativists as well.[16] I agree with Schroeder that this is a mistake.[17] But what gives rise to this mistake may be that simple versions of expressivism face the same problem as relativist views: they seem just as incompatible with (4) to (6) as a relativist claim like (1) seems to be.[18] Unlike reductive realists, however, expressivists have a long-standing way to deal with this problem. They do this by making two moves. First, they interpret (4) to (6) as expressions of non-cognitive attitudes: for example, they may take (4) to express

(4*) Approval of being willing to revise attitudes of disapproval in response to new information,

they may take (5) to express

(5*) Disapproval of one person approving and another person disapproving of a single thing in response to the same facts,

and they may take (6) to express

(6*) Disapproval of doing-this-thing-in-circumstances-in-which-we-do-not-disapprove-of-this thing.[19]

---

13. For there are arguments that seem to show that normative properties can only exist if they are identical to descriptive properties: see Jackson (1998), McPherson (2012), and Streumer (2017, pp. 9–41, 2024a).

14. I say 'such as' because expressivists do not have to take these attitudes to be attitudes of approval or disapproval: Blackburn (1984, 1993) does this, but Gibbard (2003) takes them to be plans, and Timmons (1999) and Horgan and Timmons (2006) take them to be beliefs that do not represent the world. As Blackburn says, 'approval and attitude are natural terms to work with, but it would not matter if neither fitted exactly or if better terms for the state in question existed', as long as 'the state is worth distinguishing from belief, or at least from belief with representational truth conditions thought of realistically' (1993, p. 184).

15. See Schroeder (2008a, pp. 17–18, 2008b, 2010a, p. 72).

16. See Jackson and Pettit (1998), Peacocke (2004, pp. 208–217), and Suikkanen (2009).

17. See Schroeder (2014).

18. It is often noted that expressivism and relativism have something in common. For example, Dreier writes that relativism 'flows naturally from [emotivism and other non-cognitive metaethical theories], and speaker relativism is in a way their child' (1990, p. 14), that 'the indexical theorist says more or less the same things that the expressivist says, only in different words', and that 'the kinds of explanations available to each sort of theory are strikingly similar' (1999, p. 569). See also Kölbel (2002, pp. 110–115), Dreier (2009), and Francén (2016, p. 530).

19. I say 'may' because expressivists do not have to take (4) to (6) to express

If (4) to (6) express these attitudes, expressivism is compatible with these claims.[20]

You may think that (4) to (6) express true beliefs rather than non-cognitive attitudes. But expressivists' second move is to endorse minimalism: they take the sentence '"p" is true' to express the same mental state as the sentence 'p', they take a sentence to express a belief if and only if it can be true, and they take an object to have a property if and only if this property can be ascribed to it with a true sentence.[21] If minimalism is true, the sentence 'Lying is wrong' expresses a belief, expressivists can take this belief to be true, they can take lying to have the property of being wrong, and they can take (4) to (6) to express true beliefs.[22]

Moreover, expressivists can then also explain why we do not think that Fred and Susan's conflicting normative judgements are both true. For according to minimalism, the sentence '"Lying is wrong" is true' expresses the same attitude as the sentence 'Lying is wrong', which according to expressivism expresses disapproval of lying. Similarly,

according to minimalism, the sentence '"Lying is not wrong" is true' expresses the same attitude as the sentence 'Lying is not wrong', which according to expressivism expresses an attitude that is incompatible with disapproval of lying: call it toleration of lying.[23] They can therefore say that we do not think that Fred and Susan's conflicting judgements are both true because this would involve having two incompatible attitudes.[24]

These moves result in a more sophisticated version of expressivism that is known as *quasi-realism*. There are different versions of quasi-realism: instead of taking (4) to (6) to express higher-order attitudes of approval or disapproval like the ones described by (4*) to (6*), quasi-realists can also take (4) to (6) to express other non-cognitive attitudes, and instead of endorsing minimalism, they can also endorse a different expressivism-friendly account of truth, beliefs and properties.[25] And it is controversial whether these moves work. But suppose they do. Can reductive realists then answer the charge that their view is relativist by making quasi-realist moves as well?

3. How reductive realists can go quasi-realist

I think they can. Suppose they start by saying that

(1) The predicate 'is wrong' ascribes the descriptive property of being disapproved of by the user of this predicate.

---

higher-order attitudes like the ones described by (4*) to (6*). A higher-order attitude account of (6) was first proposed by Blackburn (1984), who took (6) to express disapproval of alternative versions of ourselves who do not disapprove of the relevant thing; see also Blackburn (1984, 1998, 1999). Blackburn's higher-order account has recently been developed in a promising way by Schroeder (2015), focusing on Blackburn's early solution to the Frege-Geach problem.

20. Schroeder (2014) argues that expressivists can show that their view entails (6) and a version of (5) by appealing to the claim that expressivism takes sentences like 'Lying is wrong' to stand to disapproval of lying the way the sentence 'Grass is green' stands to the belief that grass is green. But expressivists then still need to deal with (4) and still need to say which attitudes (5) and (6) express. In what follows I will assume, with quasi-realists such as Blackburn, that interpretations along the lines of (4*) to (6*) are therefore also needed.

21. I take minimalism about truth to be the view that that nature of truth is exhausted by the claim that 'p' is true if and only if p, and I take this view to entail that the sentence '"p" is true' expresses the same mental state as the sentence 'p'. Minimalism about properties can also be taken to be the view that the nature of properties is exhausted by the claim that X has the property of being F if and only if X is F.

22. See Blackburn (1993, 1998, 1999), Timmons (1999), and Gibbard (2003, 2011).

23. See Blackburn (1993, pp. 189, 195).

24. This explanation of why we do not think that two conflicting normative judgements are both true can also explain why we take (5) and (6) to be true, but not why we take (4) to be true. I use the term 'incompatible' to signal that the relation between these attitudes is what Schroeder (2008a, p. 48) calls 'B-type inconsistency' and what Baker and Woods (2015, p. 393) call 'discordance'. Whether expressivists can plausibly posit primitive B-type inconsistency or discordance is controversial: Schroeder argues that they cannot, but Baker and Woods argue that they can.

25. For example, they can endorse the expressivist account of truth proposed by Schroeder (2010b) or the ecumenically expressivist account proposed by Ridge (2014).

This seems to make reductive realism as incompatible with (4) to (6) as it can be. If reductive realists can answer the charge that their view is relativist while endorsing (1), they can surely also do so while endorsing (2) or (3).

Suppose next that reductive realists agree with quasi-realists that we have the following attitudes:

(4*) Approval of being willing to revise attitudes of disapproval in response to new information.

(5*) Disapproval of one person approving and another person disapproving of a single thing in response to the same facts.

(6*) Disapproval of doing-this-thing-in-circumstances-in-which-we-do-not-disapprove-of-this thing.

As we have seen, quasi-realists take (4) to (6) to express these attitudes. Since reductive realists are not expressivists, they cannot say this. But they can do something else: they can take the same relation to obtain between (4) to (6) and these attitudes that (1) takes to obtain between the sentence 'Lying is wrong' and disapproval of lying. They then first need to reformulate (4) to (6) as follows:

(4′) Things are such that it is possible to be mistaken about whether they are wrong.

(5′) Things are such that when one person thinks a thing is wrong and another person thinks this thing is right, at least one of them is mistaken.

(6′) Things that are wrong are such that if we had not thought that this thing is wrong, it would still have been wrong.

And they can then make the following claims:

(4†) The predicate 'is such that it is possible to be mistaken about whether this thing is wrong' ascribes the descriptive property of being such that the user of this predicate approves of being willing to revise an attitude of disapproval of this thing in response to new information.

(5†) The predicate 'is such that when one person thinks this thing is wrong and another person thinks it is right, at least one of them is mistaken' ascribes the descriptive property of being such that the user of this predicate disapproves of one person approving and another person disapproving of this thing in response to the same facts.

(6†) The predicate 'is such that if we had not thought that this thing is wrong, it would still have been wrong' ascribes the descriptive property of being such that the user of this predicate disapproves of doing-this-thing-in-circumstances-in-which-this-user-does-not-disapprove-of-this thing.

What (4†) to (6†) say about these predicates is similar to what (1) says about the predicate 'is wrong'. And if (4†) to (6†) are true, reductive realism is compatible with (4) to (6). This is analogous to what quasi-realists do: just as quasi-realists take (4) to (6) to stand to the attitudes described by (4*) to (6*) the way they take normative sentences to stand to attitudes of approval or disapproval, reductive realists who endorse (4†) to (6†) also take (4) to (6) to stand to the attitudes described by (4*) to (6*) the way they take normative sentences to stand to attitudes of approval or disapproval.

The analogy between these views can be brought out in a different way as well. Mark van Roojen has argued that if quasi-realism is true, the attitudes described by (4*) to (6*) can also be expressed with the following claims:

(4″) It is right to be willing to revise attitudes of disapproval in response to new information.

(5″) It is wrong for one person to approve and another person to disapprove of a single thing in response to the same facts.

(6″) It is wrong to do-this-thing-in-circumstances-in-which-we-do-not-disapprove-of-this thing.[26]

Quasi-realists can therefore be regarded as taking (4) to (6) to be equivalent to (4″) to (6″) and then applying what expressivism says about a sentence like 'Lying is wrong' to (4″) to (6″). Reductive realists who endorse (4†) to (6†) can be regarded as applying reductive realism in the same way.

Should reductive realists who endorse (4†) to (6†) also endorse minimalism? They do not need to. For if (4†) to (6†) are true, (4) to (6) already express beliefs that ascribe properties, and if we have the attitudes described by (4*) to (6*), the things to which (4) to (6) ascribe these properties already have these properties, which means that the beliefs that (4) to (6) express are already true. But as we have seen, minimalism also allows quasi-realists to explain why we do not think that Fred and Susan's conflicting normative judgements are both true. Can reductive realists explain this as well?

26. See van Roojen (1996) and Schroeder (2010a, pp. 120–122). I here assume that quasi-realists take the claim that something is right to express approval of this thing and take the claim that something is wrong to express disapproval of this thing, and that quasi-realists take high-order approval and disapproval to be attitudes of the same kind as those expressed by claims about rightness and wrongness. Van Roojen and Schroeder take this to be a problem for higher-order attitude accounts like Blackburn's, in which case it is also a problem for reductive realists who endorse (4†) to (6†). But it fits with the idea that (4) to (6) are covert normative claims, which quasi-realists often appeal to in order to motivate their view. Moreover, if this is a problem for these higher-order attitude accounts, it is a problem not only for reductive realists who endorse (4†) to (6†) but also for quasi-realists. It therefore does not threaten my claim that *if* these quasi-realist moves enable expressivists to show that their view is compatible with (4) to (6), *then* they also enable reductive realists to answer the charge that they are relativists.

That depends on who the term 'user' in (1) refers to. If it refers to the person who *makes* the relevant normative judgement, (1) says that the predicate 'is wrong' ascribes the descriptive property of being disapproved of by the person who makes the judgement that this thing is wrong.[27] This implies that Fred and Susan's conflicting normative judgements are both true. But reductive realists can avoid this implication by taking the term 'user' in (1) to refer the person who *assesses the truth-value* of the relevant normative judgement: in other words, by taking (1) to say that

(1′) The predicate 'is wrong' ascribes the descriptive property of being disapproved of by the person who assesses the truth-value of the judgement that this thing is wrong.[28]

27. Such views are often called *speaker relativism*, but McFarlane 2014 and many others now call them *contextualism*.

28. As before, (1′) should not be read as saying that the predicate 'is wrong' always ascribes the same assessor-involving descriptive property, but as saying that the meaning of the predicate 'is wrong' is a Kaplanian character that makes which descriptive property the predicate 'is wrong' ascribes depend on who assesses the truth-value of a sentence that contains this predicate. In other words, (1′) should be read as saying that when Fred assesses the truth-value of the sentence 'Lying is wrong', the predicate 'is wrong' ascribes the descriptive property of being disapproved of by Fred, and that when Susan assesses the truth-value of the sentence 'Lying is wrong', the predicate 'is wrong' ascribes the descriptive property of being disapproved of by Susan. (1′) is a version of what MacFarlane calls *content relativism*, according to which assessor relativism obtains because the proposition expressed by a sentence is different for different assessors, rather than a version of what he calls *truth-value relativism*, according to which the truth-value of the proposition expressed by a sentence is different for different assessors even though this proposition itself is the same. MacFarlane argues that content relativism is inferior to truth-value relativism (2014, pp. 72–76); if so, reductive realists should not appeal to (1′) but to its closest truth-value-relative analogue. My reason for not appealing to truth-value relativism is that I agree with Evers (2021) that truth-value relativism commits us to the existence of strange states of affairs. Note also that (1′) differs from what Schroeder calls *rigidified speaker subjectivism*, according to which 'when a speaker who disapproves of stealing says 'stealing is wrong', she says something that is true at every possible world' (2014, p. 285; see also 2012, p. 707): unlike (1′), rigidified speaker subjectivism entails 'that "if I didn't disapprove of stealing, then were I to say, 'stealing is not wrong', what I said would be true" expresses a truth' (2014, p. 286).

This gives rise to the same pattern of truth-value ascriptions as the combination of expressivism with minimalism. Reductive realists who interpret (1) as (1′) can therefore agree with quasi-realists that we do not think that Fred and Susan's conflicting normative judgements are both true because this would involve having two incompatible attitudes.[29] More generally, they can give the same account of normative disagreement as quasi-realists. For they can say that Fred and Susan's disagreement consists in their incompatible attitudes towards lying, which give rise to a pattern of truth-value ascriptions that is characteristic of disagreement: Fred takes his own judgement to be true and Susan's judgement to be false, and Susan takes Fred's judgement to be false and her own judgement to be true.[30]

Suppose that reductive realists make all of these moves: suppose they take (4) to (6) to stand to the attitudes described by (4*) to (6*) the way they take normative sentences to stand to attitudes of approval or disapproval, and suppose they interpret (1) as (1′) in order to obtain the same pattern of truth-value ascriptions as the combination

---

29. As before, this explanation of why we do not think that two conflicting normative judgements are both true can also explain why we take (5) and (6) to be true. But reductive realists then still need to deal with (4) and still need to say which properties (5) and (6) ascribe. In what follows I will therefore assume that interpretations along the lines of (4†) to (6†) are also needed, just as I did for quasi-realism (see note 20).

30. It is crucial here that reductive realists endorse (1′) rather than (1): if they endorsed (1) they could not say this, since (1) gives rise to a very different pattern of truth-value ascriptions. You may think that reductive realists who endorse (1′) still face a lingering problem of disagreement, since you may think that if (1′) is true Fred and Susan can each correctly claim, by their own lights, that they are right in using the predicates 'is wrong' the way they do. But reductive realists who endorse (1′) and who do not both disapprove of and tolerate lying will deny that Fred and Susan's different uses of the predicate 'is wrong' both result in a true normative judgement about lying. In this respect they are similar to expressivists who endorse minimalism and who do not both disapprove of and tolerate lying. There is then still a weak sense in which Fred and Susan can each correctly claim, by their own lights, that they are right in using the predicates 'is wrong' the way they do: they can each correctly claim that they are not making a conceptual or linguistic mistake in using the predicate 'is wrong' in this way. But even robust realists will have to allow that this is the case.

---

of expressivism with minimalism. They then become what we can call *quasi-quasi-realists*: they become reductive realists who incorporate quasi-realist moves into their view. If these moves enable expressivists to show that their view is compatible with (4) to (6), they also enable reductive realists to show that their view is compatible with (4) to (6). And I think these moves then also enable reductive realists to answer the charge that their view is relativist, since what gave this charge its bite was that it seemed to make reductive realism incompatible with (4) to (6).[31]

Robust realists may doubt that reductive realists can answer this charge in this way. I will return to this in §5. And reductive realists may not want to become quasi-quasi-realists. But they will then either have to accept that their view is relativist or find a different way to make their view compatible with (4) to (6).

4. The assumptions of quasi-quasi-realism

To be able to make these moves, quasi-quasi-realists must make certain assumptions. The first is that we have the attitudes described by (4*) to (6*). This assumption is shared with standard quasi-realism.[32] If standard quasi-realism is right that (4) to (6) express these attitudes, the fact that we tend to endorse (4) to (6) indicates that we have these attitudes. In the same way, if quasi-quasi-realism is right that (4) to (6) ascribe the properties that (4†) to (6†) say they ascribe, the fact that we tend to endorse (4) to (6) also indicates that we have these attitudes.

The second assumption is that (4) to (6) ascribe the properties that (4†) to (6†) say they ascribe. This assumption does not seem more farfetched than standard quasi-realists' assumption that (4) to (6) express the attitudes described by (4*) to (6*). Standard quasi-realists often motivate this assumption by taking (4) to (6) to be covert normative

---

31. Of course, there is a sense in which reductive realists are then still relativists, since their starting point is a relativist claim like (1). But this is then as harmless as the sense in which quasi-realists are still expressivists.

32. Here and in what follows I call the expressivist version of quasi-realism 'standard quasi-realism'.

claims.[33] Quasi-quasi-realists can do this as well. The only difference is that whereas standard quasi-realists relate (4) to (6) to the attitudes described by (4*) to (6*) with expressivist machinery, quasi-quasi-realists relate (4) to (6) to these attitudes with reductive realist machinery. Of course, whether (4†) to (6†) are true is partly an empirical question, but whether (4) to (6) express the attitudes described by (4*) to (6*) is also partly an empirical question.

Moreover, quasi-quasi-realists can drop the first two assumptions by rejecting (4†) to (6†) and instead making claims that are analogous to (2) or (3): in other words, by saying that

> (2†) What makes it the case that the predicates 'is such that it is possible to be mistaken about whether this thing is wrong', 'is such that when one person thinks this thing is wrong and another person thinks it is right, at least one of them is mistaken', and 'is such that if we had not thought that this thing is wrong, it would still have been wrong' ascribe certain descriptive properties is that these properties causally regulate the use of these predicates, in the sense that these properties tend to cause users of these predicates to apply them to things that have these properties,

or that

> (3†) What makes it the case that the predicates 'is such that it is possible to be mistaken about whether this thing is wrong', 'is such that when one person thinks this thing is wrong and another person thinks it is right, at least one of them is mistaken', and 'is such that if we had not thought that this thing is wrong, it would still have been wrong' ascribe certain descriptive properties is that, after considering all

relevant descriptive information, users of these predicates would apply them to things that have these properties.

They then no longer need to endorse (1) and no longer need to appeal to the attitudes described by (4*) to (6*). But quasi-quasi-realism's core move remains the same: just as (4†) to (6†) say which properties these predicates ascribe by treating them the way (1) treats normative predicates, (2†) and (3†) say which properties these predicates ascribe by treating them the way (2) and (3) treat normative predicates.

The third assumption is that the structure of a predicate need not reflect the structure of the property it ascribes. For example, if (4†) is true, the predicate

> 'is such that it is possible to be mistaken about whether this thing is wrong'

ascribes the property of

> being such the user of this predicate approves of being willing to revise an attitude of disapproval of this thing in response to new information,

which does not seem to have the same structure as this predicate.[34] But standard reductive realism already assumes this: for example, if (1) is true, the predicate 'is wrong' ascribes the property of being disapproved of by the user of this predicate, which does not seem to have the same structure as this predicate either.[35] More generally, reductive views assume that a single entity in the world can have different modes of presentation and that the structure of a mode of presentation need not reflect the structure of this entity.

---

33. It can also be motivated in other ways: for example, by appealing to the global expressivism defended by Price (2011) and (2013).

34. I say 'does not seem to have' because if a single entity can have different modes of presentation, as reductive views assume, it may not make sense to take properties to have a structure.

35. Similar claims apply if (2) or (3) is true. Here and in what follows I call the version of reductive realism that does not incorporate quasi-realist moves 'standard reductive realism'.

Quasi-quasi-realism's claims about the properties that (4) to (6) ascribe may seem counterintuitive. But if a single entity can have different modes of presentation, which property a predicate describes can be a surprising discovery. Moreover, students who encounter standard quasi-realism for the first time often find its claims about the attitudes that (4) to (6) express similarly counterintuitive. To the extent that standard quasi-realism's claims seem less counterintuitive, this may simply be because we are more familiar with this view than with quasi-quasi-realism. And whether standard quasi-realism or quasi-quasi-realism is true should be settled by considering these views as a whole rather than by our intuitive responses to some of their claims.

The fourth and final assumption is that which property a predicate ascribes can depend on who assesses the truth-value of a sentence that applies this predicate. Though this assumption is controversial, it is independently defensible.[36] Which property a predicate ascribes can depend on who utters a sentence that applies it: for example, which property the predicate 'has the property that I am currently thinking about' ascribes depends on who utters a sentence that applies this predicate. Which property a predicate ascribes can also depend on who reads a sentence that applies it: for example, which property the predicate 'has the property that the reader of this sentence is currently thinking about' ascribes depends on who reads a sentence that applies this predicate. This suggests that it should similarly be possible that which property a predicate ascribes depends on who assesses the truth-value of a sentence that applies it. For it suggests that the meanings of predicates can be Kaplanian characters that make which property a predicate ascribes depend on different features of the context: who utters a sentence that applies this predicate, who reads a sentence that applies this predicate, or who assesses the truth-value of a sentence that applies this predicate.

Of course, none of this shows that quasi-quasi-realists' assumptions are true. But I think it does show that these assumptions are either shared with standard quasi-realism, or no more far-fetched than a similar assumption made by quasi-realism, or already made by standard reductive realism, or independently defensible. I therefore think that these assumptions do not threaten my claim that *if* quasi-realist moves enable expressivists to show that their view is compatible with (4) to (6), *then* such moves also enable reductive realists to answer the charge that their view is relativist.

Moreover, quasi-quasi-realism also has two advantages over standard quasi-realism. First, it does not need to appeal to minimalism or to any other expressivism-friendly account of truth, beliefs and properties. For as I have said, if (4†) to (6†) are true, (4) to (6) already express beliefs that ascribe properties, and if we have the attitudes described by (4*) to (6*), the things to which (4) to (6) ascribe these properties already have these properties, which means that the beliefs that (4) to (6) express are already true. Second, it does not face the Frege-Geach problem to the same extent as standard quasi-realism.[37] Like standard quasi-realists, quasi-quasi-realists may need to explain why disapproval is incompatible with toleration, which is often regarded as part of the Frege-Geach problem.[38] But since quasi-quasi-realists are cognitivists, explaining this is enough for them to solve this problem. By contrast, standard quasi-realists need to do much more.

Quasi-quasi-realists can make the moves I have described whether or not standard quasi-realists take (4) to (6) to express higher-order attitudes like the ones described by (4*) to (6*). For any version of standard quasi-realism is going to say that (4) to (6) express certain attitudes, and quasi-quasi-realists can make claims about these attitudes

---

36. See Dreier (2009, pp 79–81). MacFarlane (2014) also discusses views of this kind, though the view he ultimately endorses is truth-value-relativist rather than content-relativist (see note 28).

37. For an overview of the extensive literature about this problem, see, for example, Schroeder (2008c) and Woods (2017). Dreier (1996) shows that endorsing minimalism is not enough to solve the problem.

38. I say 'may' because Baker and Woods (2015) argue that this kind of incompatibility (which they call 'discordance') can be taken to be primitive. According to Schroeder (2008a), however, this incompatibility (which he calls 'B-type inconsistency') does need to be explained.

that are analogous to (4†) to (6†) no matter what these attitudes are.[39] Quasi-quasi-realists can therefore make the moves I have described no matter which version of quasi-realism is most defensible. Moreover, as we have seen, they can make their key move even if they reject (1) and endorse (2) or (3) instead, since they can then endorse (2†) or (3†) rather than (4†) to (6†). Quasi-quasi-realists can therefore make their key move no matter which version of reductive realism is most defensible. But if reductive realists can answer the charge that their view is relativist while starting from (1), there may be no need for them to start from (2) or (3) instead. For in that case taking normative predicates to ascribe descriptive properties that are constituted by our attitudes, as early reductive realists often did, is much more defensible than it may have seemed.[40]

Some expressivists have recently moved towards reductive realism by incorporating the claim that normative properties are descriptive properties into their view.[41] Quasi-quasi-realists are reductive realists who move towards these expressivists from the opposite direction, by incorporating quasi-realists moves into their view. These expressivists and quasi-quasi-realists are therefore travelling to similar destinations. But they use different machinery and make different assumptions along the way.

5. Robust realists' doubts about quasi-quasi-realism

Robust realists may doubt that reductive realists can answer the charge that their view is relativist by becoming quasi-quasi-realists: they may feel that there is 'a deeply uneasy gap … between the spirit of the theory itself and the spirit it supposedly justifies', as Bernard Williams

puts it in a different context.[42] They may therefore regard quasi-quasi-realism as merely mimicking what robust realists say.

But since robust realists have the same doubt about standard quasi-realism, this does not undermine my claim that *if* quasi-realist moves enable expressivists to show that their view is compatible with (4) to (6), *then* they also enable reductive realists to answer the charge that their view is relativist. Moreover, if standard quasi-realists are right that (4) to (6) express the attitudes described by (4*) to (6*), their view does not merely mimic what robust realists say but really incorporates it. The same applies to quasi-quasi-realists: if they are right that (4) to (6) ascribe the properties that (4†) to (6†) say they ascribe, their view really incorporates what robust realists say.

This will not satisfy robust realists, since they will deny the antecedents of these conditional claims: they will say that

(7) (4) to (6) do not express the attitudes described by (4*) to (6*)

and that

(8) (4) to (6) do not ascribe the properties that (4†) to (6†) say they ascribe.

How should quasi-quasi-realists respond to this denial? This is a large question that I cannot settle here. But I think there are at least two possible responses. One is to agree with Jamie Dreier that quasi-realist moves only aim 'to vindicate ordinary moral thought and language'.[43] Quasi-quasi-realists can then reject (8) by denying that this claim is part of ordinary normative thought. But it may be difficult to draw a

---

39. For example, they can make such claims just as easily about Gibbard-style plans as about Blackburn-style higher-order attitudes.

40. As I said note 6, Hobbes (1651, p. 39) and Hume (1737, p. 469) arguably took normative predicates to ascribe such properties, and Moore (1903, p. 15) uses a view of this kind to illustrate the naturalistic fallacy.

41. See Gibbard (2003, pp. 94–102), Golub (2022), and Bex-Priestley (2024). They formulate their views in terms of natural properties, but these properties can be ascribed with descriptive predicates.

42. Williams (1985, p. 108). Williams makes this remark about indirect utilitarianism.

43. Dreier (2015, p. 287). See also Blackburn (1993, p. 151), Gibbard (2011, pp. 45, 47), Dreier (2012, p. 274 n. 16), Ridge (2014, pp. 5–6), Bex-Priestley (2018, pp. 1061–1062), Köhler (2021, p. 206), and Sinclair (2021, pp. 78–81).

clear line between claims that are part of ordinary normative thought and claims that are not.[44]

Alternatively, they can keep making quasi-realist moves. I have argued elsewhere that standard quasi-realists can take (7) to express

> (7*) Disapproval of taking (4) to (6) to express the attitudes described by (4*) to (6*).[45]

If so, quasi-quasi-realists can similarly say that

> (8†) The predicate 'does not ascribe the properties that (4†) to (6†) say they ascribe' ascribes the property of being such that the user of this predicate disapproves of taking these predicates to ascribe the properties that (4†) to (6†) say they ascribe.

Robust realists could also express their doubts about quasi-quasi-realism in more general ways. For example, they could say that if quasi-quasi-realism is true, it is not the case that

> (9) Reality determines which normative judgements are correct.

But I have argued elsewhere that standard quasi-realists can take (9) to express

> (9*) Approval of forming attitudes of approval or disapproval in response to facts.[46]

If so, quasi-quasi-realists can similarly say that

> (9†) The predicate 'is such that reality determines whether it is correct' ascribes the property of being such that the user of this predicate approves of forming attitudes of approval or disapproval towards it in response to facts.

And they can keep making such moves in response to any other claim that robust realists could make to express their doubts.[47]

I have argued elsewhere that if standard quasi-realists keep making such moves, they end up with an extreme version of their view that we can call *super-quasi-realism*. If quasi-quasi-realists do the same, they end up with a similarly extreme version of their view that we can call *super-quasi-quasi-realism*. Since anyone who tries to endorse super-quasi-realism will endorse every claim that robust realists endorse and reject every claim that robust realists reject, anyone who tries to endorse this view will become a robust realist. But I have argued that this does not mean that super-quasi-realism is false or that it collapses into robust realism. Instead, it merely means that anyone who tries to endorse super-quasi-realism will end up believing a different view.[48] I think the same applies to super-quasi-quasi-realism.[49]

Since super-quasi-realism and super-quasi-quasi-realism both use anti-realist building blocks to enable us to endorse (4) to (9), robust realists may continue to think that these views are not realist enough. But these views do enable us to say everything robust realists say. They are therefore as close to robust realism as it is possible for anti-realist views to get.

---

44. See Streumer (2024b, pp. 934–935). They could also say that (7) and (8) are metaethical claims and that quasi-realist moves only aim to vindicate normative claims. But quasi-realists themselves blur this distinction: whereas robust realists take (4) to (6) to be metaethical claims, most quasi-realists defend their interpretations of (4) to (6) by taking (4) to (6) to be normative claims. That makes it hard for them to insist on this distinction when it comes to (7) or (8).

45. See Streumer (2024b).

46. See Streumer (2024b, p. 931).

47. Of course, the relevant attitudes need not be approval or disapproval, as long as they are non-cognitive attitudes of some kind.

48. See Streumer (2024b).

49. I argue in Streumer (2024b) that if standard quasi-realists do not want to end up believing robust realism, they can instead take (7) and (9) to express (7*) and (9*) without themselves having these attitudes. If quasi-quasi-realists want to avoid coming to believe robust realism, they can similarly endorse (8†) and (9†) without themselves having these attitudes.

6. Is the remaining difference between these views important?

Suppose there are two exactly similar communities, except that in one of them standard quasi-realism is true and in the other a version of quasi-quasi-realism that starts from (1) is true. There will then be many similarities between these communities: which attitudes of approval or disapproval people have will be the same, which normative sentences they endorse or reject will be the same, and which truth-values they ascribe to these sentences will be the same. Moreover, in both communities people will have the following attitudes:

(4*) Approval of being willing to revise attitudes of disapproval in response to new information.

(5*) Disapproval of one person approving and another person disapproving of a single thing in response to the same facts.

(6*) Disapproval of doing-this-thing-in-circumstances-in-which-we-do-not-disapprove-of-this thing.

And in both communities they will endorse the following claims:

(4) It is possible to be mistaken about whether something is wrong.

(5) When one person thinks that something is wrong and another person thinks that this thing is right, at least one of them is mistaken.

(6) If we had not thought that this thing is wrong, it would still have been wrong.

The only difference between these communities will be the machinery that relates people's attitudes of approval or disapproval to their endorsement or rejection of normative sentences, to their ascription of truth-values to these sentences, and to their endorsement of (4) to (6): in the standard quasi-realist community this will be the expressivist

machinery I outlined in §2, but in the quasi-quasi-realist community this will be the reductive realist machinery I outlined in §3.

Suppose that you know you belong to one of these communities, but that you do not know which one. How could you find out which community is yours? Not by finding out which attitudes of approval or disapproval people in your community have, or which normative sentences they accept or reject, or which truth-values they ascribe to these sentences, or whether they endorse (4) to (6). For these things will be exactly the same in both communities. Moreover, if there is a solution to the Frege-Geach problem, you also cannot find out which community is yours by asking people to make normative inferences. For these inferences will then also be exactly the same in both communities.

You may think you could find out which community is yours by asking people whether lying is wrong because they disapprove of it. As quasi-realists often point out, people in the standard quasi-realist community will deny this: they will say that lying is wrong because of the descriptive facts that make it wrong, such as the fact that lying undermines trust, and they will deny that these facts include the fact that they disapprove of lying. But people in the quasi-quasi-realist community will say exactly the same thing. For if (1) is true, having the descriptive property of being disapproved of by the user of the predicate 'is wrong' is *what it is* to be wrong, which means that the fact that lying has this descriptive property cannot also be among the descriptive facts that *make* lying wrong. People in this community will therefore agree that lying is wrong because of other descriptive facts, such as the fact that lying undermines trust.[50]

You may also think you could find out which community is yours by investigating whether people are motivated to act in accordance with

50. You may object that people in the quasi-quasi-realist community can nevertheless find out whether lying is wrong by finding out whether they disapprove of lying. But to find out whether they disapprove of lying, they will have to consider the descriptive facts on which approval or disapproval of lying can be based. These facts will be the same descriptive facts that people in the standard quasi-realists community will consider, such as the fact that lying undermines trust. How people find out whether lying is wrong will therefore also be the same in both communities.

their normative judgements. For whereas in the standard quasi-realist community people who think lying is wrong disapprove of lying, which seems closely connected to motivation, in the quasi-quasi-realist community people who think lying is wrong believe that they disapprove of lying, which seems less closely connected to motivation. But for standard quasi-realism to be plausible it must posit a fairly weak connection between disapproval and motivation: it must say that people are generally but not always motivated to act in accordance with their normative judgements. This difference will therefore probably be too small to enable you to find out which community is yours.

Your only remaining option seems to be to ask people in your community how their attitudes of approval or disapproval are related to their endorsement or rejection of normative sentences, to their ascription of truth-values to these sentences, and to their endorsement of (4) to (6): is this the expressivist machinery I outlined in §2 or the reductive realist one I outlined in §3? But the vast majority of people will have no idea what you are talking about. And those who do understand what you are talking about will be philosophers whose answers to such questions will be just as divided as they are among actual philosophers. There therefore does not seem to be any way for you to find out whether you belong to the standard quasi-realist community or the quasi-quasi-realist community.[51]

Moreover, robust realists will take the same thing to be missing from both communities. They can make this clear by appealing to John

51. MacFarlane (2014, pp. 172–175), notes that there are many similarities between his truth-value relativism and Gibbard's version of expressivism, but argues that there are two differences. First, the 'expressivist view makes it *conceptually impossible* to think that something whose taste one knows firsthand is tasty while not liking its taste, while the relativist view allows that one could be in such a state' (p. 174). There is a similar difference between standard quasi-realism and quasi-quasi-realism, but if quasi-quasi-realism is true it will still be a highly unusual mistake to think that lying is wrong without disapproving of lying, which will in practice be hard to distinguish from a conceptual mistake. Second, the 'relativist view can explain why speakers tend to retract earlier taste assertions when their tastes change', but it is unclear whether expressivism can do this (p. 175). I think this underestimates the quasi-realist moves that are available to expressivists like Gibbard.

MacFarlane's distinction between *preclusion of joint accuracy*, according to which

> the accuracy of my attitudes (as assessed from any context) precludes the accuracy of your attitude or speech act (as assessed from that same context),

and *preclusion of joint reflexive accuracy*, according to which

> the accuracy of my attitudes (as assessed from my context) precludes the accuracy of your attitude or speech act (as assessed from your context).[52]

Robust realism precludes joint reflexive accuracy, but MacFarlane argues that relativism at most precludes joint accuracy.[53] Robust realists will say that the combination of expressivism with minimalism also at most precludes joint accuracy: they will say that this combination does not make it impossible that conflicting normative judgements are both true when their truth-values are assessed from different people's normative perspectives.[54] We can mark this similarity between relativism and the combination of expressivism with minimalism by regarding them as versions of a more general view that we can call *perspectivalism*.

52. MacFarlane (2014, pp. 129–130).

53. MacFarlane (2014, p. 130). See also (Dreier 2009, pp. 99–100) and Francén (2010). MacFarlane himself thinks that expressivism does not even preclude joint accuracy (2014, p. 137), but the version he focuses on is not combined with minimalism.

54. This does not mean that there is an available perspective from which two conflicting normative judgements are both true. Both standard quasi-realists and quasi-quasi-realists will deny that there is such a perspective, in standard quasi-realists' case because they combine expressivism with minimalism, and in quasi-quasi-realists' case because they endorse (1'). Instead, it merely means that it can be the case that a certain normative judgement is true when its truth-value is assessed from one person's normative perspective and that a conflicting normative judgement is true when its truth-value is assessed from a different person's normative perspective, even if quasi-realist moves prevent us from occupying a perspective from which this can be seen to be the case.

Quasi-Realism for Realists

Quasi-realist moves affect these versions of perspectivalism in the same way: they make what is in fact only preclusion of joint accuracy look from within people's normative perspectives like preclusion of joint reflexive accuracy. These moves therefore make it hard to see from within people's normative perspectives that perspectivalism is true, and instead make it look from within people's normative perspectives as if something approaching robust realism is true instead. And super-quasi-realism and super-quasi-quasi-realism do this to the greatest possible extent: they make people conflate preclusion of joint accuracy with preclusion of joint reflexive accuracy from within their normative perspectives. That is how these views make those who try to endorse them reject perspectivalism and endorse robust realism instead.

Suppose I am right that these views are both versions of perspectivalism that use different machinery to relate our attitudes of approval or disapproval to our endorsement or rejection of normative sentences, to our ascription of truth-values to these sentences, and to our endorsement of (4) to (6). And suppose I am right that they both use this machinery in similar ways to make it hard or even impossible to see from within our normative perspectives that this is what is going on. Is the difference between standard quasi-realism and quasi-quasi-realism then philosophically important? Perhaps it is not: perhaps what is philosophically important is only whether perspectivalism is true. Perhaps we should leave the question which version of perspectivalism is true to linguistics. And perhaps linguistics will tell us that these two versions of perspectivalism are equally admissible interpretations of the same worldly and mental facts and linguistic data.

7. Conclusion

I conclude that if the quasi-realist moves that many expressivists make work, reductive realists can copy these moves to answer the charge that they are relativists. Reductive realists should welcome this conclusion. But so may robust realists. For they may say that if quasi-realist moves enable even a view with a clearly relativist starting point like (1)

to answer the charge that it is relativist, we should not conclude that this charge has really been answered. Instead, robust realists may say, we should conclude that there is something wrong with these moves. And they may take this to show that there is something wrong with these moves when expressivists make them as well.

Acknowledgements

References

Baker, Derek, and Jack Woods. 2015. 'How Expressivists Can and Should Explain Inconsistency'. *Ethics* 125 (2): 391–424.

Bedke, Matthew. 2017. 'Cognitivism and Non-Cognitivism'. In Tristram McPherson and David Plunkett, eds., *The Routledge Handbook of Metaethics*. London: Routledge, 292–307.

Bex-Priestley, Graham. 2018. 'Error and the Limits of Quasi-Realism'. *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 21 (5): 1051–1063.

Bex-Priestley, Graham. 2024. 'Expressivists Should be Reductive Naturalists'. In Russ Shafer-Landau, ed., *Oxford Studies in Metaethics*, *Volume 19*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 105–128.

Blackburn, Simon. 1984. *Spreading the Word*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Blackburn, Simon. 1993. *Essays in Quasi-Realism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Blackburn, Simon. 1998. *Ruling Passions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Blackburn, Simon. 1999. 'Is Objective Moral Justification Possible on a Quasi-Realist Foundation?' *Inquiry* 42 (2): 213–227.

Boyd, Richard. 1988. 'How to Be a Moral Realist'. In Geoffrey Sayre-McCord, ed., *Essays on Moral Realism*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 181–228.

Brink, David. 2001. 'Realism, Naturalism, and Moral Semantics'. *Social Philosophy and Policy* 18 (2): 154–176.

Dreier, Jamie. 1990. 'Internalism and Speaker Relativism'. *Ethics* 101 (1): 6–26.

Dreier, Jamie. 1996. 'Expressivist Embeddings and Minimalist Truth'. *Philosophical Studies* 83 (1): 29–51.

Dreier, Jamie. 1999. 'Transforming Expressivism'. *Noûs* 33 (4): 558–572.

Dreier, Jamie. 2009. 'Relativism (and Expressivism) and the Problem of Disagreement'. *Philosophical Perspectives* 23 (1): 79–110.

Dreier, Jamie. 2012.'Quasi-Realism and the Problem of Unexplained Coincidence'. *Analytic Philosophy* 53 (3): 269–287.

Dreier, Jamie. 2015. 'Explaining the Quasi-Real'. In Russ Shafer-Landau, ed., *Oxford Studies in Metaethics, Volume 10*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 273–298.

Dunaway, Billy. 2015. 'Supervenience Arguments and Normative Non-Naturalism'. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 91 (3): 627–655.

Enoch, David. 2011. *Taking Morality Seriously*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Evers, Daan. 2021. 'Relativism and the Metaphysics of Value'. *British Journal of Aesthetics* 61 (1): 75–87.

Francén, Ragnar. 2010. 'No Deep Disagreement for New Relativists'. *Philosophical Studies* 151 (1): 19–37.

Francén, Ragnar. 2016. 'Some Varieties of Metaethical Relativism'. *Philosophy Compass* 11 (10): 529–540.

Gibbard, Allan. 2003. *Thinking How to Live*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Gibbard, Allan. 2011. 'How Much Realism? Evolved Thinkers and Normative Concepts'. In Russ Shafer-Landau, ed., *Oxford Studies in Metaethics, Volume 6*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 33–51.

Golub, Camil. 2022. 'Quasi-Naturalism and the Problem of Alternative Normative Concepts'. *Journal of Moral Philosophy* 19 (5): 474–500.

Gowans, Chris. 2021. 'Moral Relativism'. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Available at: https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2021/entries/moral-relativism/.

Harman, Gilbert. 1975. 'Moral Relativism Defended'. *Philosophical Review* 84 (1): 3–22.

Hobbes, Thomas. 1651. *Leviathan*, edited by Richard Tuck. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Horgan, Terry and Mark Timmons. 2006. 'Cognitivist Expressivism'. In Terry Horgan and Mark Timmons, eds., *Metaethics After Moore*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 255–298.

Hume, David. 1737. *A Treatise of Human Nature, Second Edition*, edited by L. A. Selby-Bigge and P. H. Nidditch. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978.

Jackson, Frank. 1998. *From Metaphysics to Ethics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jackson, Frank, and Philip Pettit. 1998. 'A Problem for Expressivism'. *Analysis* 58 (4): 239–251.

Köhler, Sebastian. 2021. 'How to Have Your Quasi-Cake and Quasi-Eat It Too'. *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 51 (3): 204–220.

Kölbel, Max. 2002. *Truth Without Objectivity*. London: Routledge.

Kölbel, Max. 2015. 'Moral Relativism'. *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Available at: https://www.rep.routledge.com/articles/thematic/moral-relativism/v-2.

Lewis, David. 1989. 'Dispositional Theories of Value'. Reprinted in David Lewis, Papers in Ethics and Social Philosophy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, 68–94.

MacFarlane, John. 2014. *Assessment Sensitivity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Moore, G.E. 1903. *Principia Ethica*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959.

Peacocke, Christopher. 2004. *The Realm of Reason*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Price, Huw. 2011. *Naturalism Without Mirrors*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Price, Huw. 2013. *Expressivism, Pragmatism and Representationalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Railton, Peter. 1986. 'Moral Realism'. Reprinted in Peter Railton, *Facts, Values and Norms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, 3–42.

Ridge, Michael. 2014. *Impassioned Belief*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Schroeder, Mark, 2008a. *Being For*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Schroeder, Mark. 2008b. 'Expression for Expressivists'. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 76 (1): 86–116.

Schroeder, Mark. 2008c. 'What is the Frege-Geach Problem?' *Philosophy Compass* 3–4: 703–720.

Schroeder, Mark. 2010a. *Noncognitivism in Ethics*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Schroeder, Mark. 2010b. 'How to Be an Expressivist about Truth'. In Nikolaj Pedersen and Cory Wright, eds., *New Waves in Truth*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 282–298.

Schroeder, Mark. 2012. 'Philosophy of Language for Metaethics'. In Gillian Russell and Delia Graff Fara, eds., *The Routledge Companion to the Philosophy of Language*. Abingdon: Routledge, 705–715.

Schroeder, Mark. 2014. 'Does Expressivism Have Subjectivist Consequences?' *Philosophical Perspectives* 28 (1): 278–290.

Schroeder, Mark, 2015. 'Higher-Order Attitudes, Frege's Abyss, and the Truth in Propositions'. In Robert N. Johnson and Michael Smith, eds., *Passions and Projections*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 228–245.

Sinclair, Neil. 2021. *Practical Expressivism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Street, Sharon. 2008. 'Constructivism About Reasons'. In Russ Shafer-Landau, ed., *Oxford Studies in Metaethics, Volume 3*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 207–245.

Streumer, Bart. 2017. *Unbelievable Errors*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Streumer, Bart, and Daniel Wodak. 2021. 'Why Formal Objections to the Error Theory Fail'. *Analysis* 81 (2): 254–262.

Streumer, Bart, and Daniel Wodak. 2023. 'Do Formal Objections to the Error Theory Overgeneralize?' *Analysis* 83 (4): 732–741.Streumer, Bart. 2024a. 'Standing Up for Supervenience'. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 109 (1): 138–154.

Streumer, Bart. 2024b. 'Superspreading the Word'. *Noûs* 58 (4): 927–947.

Sturgeon, Nicholas. 1986. 'What Difference Does It Make Whether Moral Realism is True?' *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 24 (Spindel supplement): 115–141.

Suikkanen, Jussi. 2009. 'The Subjectivist Consequences of Expressivism'. *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 90 (3): 364–387.

Timmons, Mark. 1999. *Morality Without Foundations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

van Roojen, Mark. 1996. 'Expressivism and Irrationality'. *Philosophical Review* 105 (3): 311–335.

van Roojen, Mark. 2018. 'Moral Cognitivism vs. Non-Cognitivism'. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Available at: https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2018/entries/moral-cognitivism/.

Williams, Bernard. 1985. *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*. London: Fontana, 1993.

Wong, David. 1984. *Moral Relativity*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Wong, David. 2006. *Natural Moralities*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Woods, Jack. 2017. 'The Frege-Geach Problem'. In Tristram McPherson and David Plunkett, eds., *The Routledge Handbook of Metaethics*. London: Routledge, 226–242.