

BETWEEN THE WILL AND THE HEART

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BOOK SYMPOSIUM: THE HEART AND ITS ATTITUDES

I. One More Dualism to be Overcome?

In his Dewey Lecture, Darwall spoke of overcoming many dualisms in philosophy:

- History of Philosophy vs. “Philosophy pure and simple”
- Analytic vs. Continental (and Phenomenology)
- Academic vs. Public Philosophy

And in *The Heart and its Attitudes*, Darwall rejects one more:

- Second-Personal Attitudes vs. Attitudes of the Heart

How does Darwall overcome this dualism? By seeing the second-personal as broader than the deontic, encompassing attitudes and phenomena of the heart.

But that rests on a committed dualism I want to challenge:

- The Deontic vs. the Heartfelt
- Demand vs. Hope/Invitation
- Respect vs. Love
- Relations of Accountability vs. Relations of Heartfelt Connection
- The Will vs. the Heart
- The value that calls for respect vs. the value that makes love fitting.

The difference between deontic and nondeontic reactive attitudes is this: whereas the former mediate mutual accountability and presuppose that both parties share a fundamental dignity or second-personal authority that entitles both to respect, the latter aim at heartfelt connection and presuppose that both parties have an intrinsic value of *a fundamentally different kind*. (p. 5, my emph.)

The insight that the heart is its own locus of ethical phenomena is compatible with thinking that the dualisms Darwall still embraces might be overcome—that the lines between them are porous, and maybe even impossible to draw cleanly.

Darwall is, of course, very sensitive to the interplay of the deontic and nondeontic elements of second-personal relations. For him:

- Relations of the heart must take place against a backdrop in which we are accountable to one another and relations of accountability are secured.

Cf. Kant’s dualism: The principle of **mutual love** admonishes them constantly to *come closer* to one another; that of **respect** they owe another, to keep themselves *at a distance* from another; and should one of these great moral forces fail, “then nothingness (immorality), with gaping throat would drink up the whole kingdom of (moral) beings like a drop of water.” (AK 6:449, emph. original, quoting the poet Haller)

- Disrespect threatens love; bad willing threatens heartfelt connection.
- Healthy heartfelt/intimate relationship = a relation of accountability + heartfelt connection.

But I want to argue this is still too dualistic.

1. Not two distinct realms of demand/right/accountability/wrong and non-deontic heartfelt attitudes.
2. Not two kinds of interpersonal relationships (the deontic and the heart-mediated) but just relationships, whose heart-based and will-based phenomena are inextricable.
3. Not two values (respectable/accountable, lovable) of humanity but one.

The upshot:

More modestly: an invitation to hear more about how Darwall understands two (fundamentally distinct) parts of our lives *interacting*.

More forcefully: a challenge not to the significance of the heart, but to the claim that it is *distinct* or *separable* as a seat of ethical phenomena.

II. Personal Anger and The Deontic

One of many insights in the book: responding to (personal) anger with justification is a mistake.

Personal anger is non-deontic in that:

1. It is not only appropriate when a culpable wrong has been committed; anger is concerned with damage to what we *care* about and how we care for those with whom we are in heart-felt connection. (Hence the inappropriateness of “defending” oneself with *justification*.)
2. Anger mediates heart-to-heart relations, unlike blame.
3. Anger is to *remorse* as blame is to guilt, and remorse is a heartfelt attitude.

So far, so good. But there is also the fact that, as Darwall acknowledges:

ANGER AT WRONGING We can be personally angry exactly because of a wrongdoing.

Why does this matter?

- Among (personal) anger’s fittingness conditions are *explicitly deontic* features, e.g., that I was *wronged* by a beloved.
- To respond to a beloved’s wronging-responsive anger without being able to *see the deontic* is infuriating!

Much of the argument here can be made about Darwall’s illuminating account of *hurt feelings*.

For Darwall, anger is not strictly an attitude *of* the heart but one that *protects* are hearts and so is implicated in the domain of the heart-felt in a different way from attitudes *of* the heart, which paradigmatically seek reciprocal connection.

Imagine I tell my friend that his sharing my embarrassing story at the party was a *betrayal*. He feels deep *remorse* for the *hurt* he has caused me and sincerely expresses that remorse. I respond “yes, it hurt. But do you also see that what you did was *wrong*? That it wasn’t just hurtful but a betrayal?” He says “I don’t see that, no. But I am terribly remorseful for hurting you.” (Maybe he even says he’ll endeavor to understand why I feel wronged.)

The challenge for Darwall: personal anger looks like it can be essentially *about* or *responsive to* the deontic.

This stands alongside another one of personal anger’s features that Darwall explicitly calls attention to:

(UN)ENTITLED ANGER I can have, and can lack, standing and entitlement to be personally angry at you.

Suppose I am *inappropriately* angry with you. Can you resent me for that? I think so. Can you demand I stop? Yes.

As Darwall would, I think, agree, you can at least resent my *expressing*.

But anger is an *expressive* attitude.

- P1. Anger is fully manifested in its *expression*.
 - P2. Anger’s expression can be the content of a (deontic) claim.
 - P3. Anger’s full manifestation can be the content of (deontic) claim.
- C. Anger is subject to deontic standards.

Upshot: personal anger is essentially sensitive to deontic phenomena and can fall within the realm of the deontic (it’s subject to demands).

III. Wrongful Violations of Trust

NB: Some phenomena that we might call “trust” are not what Darwall has in mind.

Imagine I plagiarize a paper. I have lied. I have in some sense violated trust. Darwall sees this as a violation of the trust that underlies the basic relation of accountability that we all stand in with one another as persons. You can demand that I not plagiarize—that I be honest more generally, that I “tell the truth!,” and that I keep to the commitments I made in joining a profession.

In addition to that accountability-linked notion of trust (which generates demands, etc.) Darwall articulates a notion of *personal trust*. Such trust mediates heartfelt connections and intimate relationships.

[T]rust, or at least the form trust takes in personal relationships (personal trust) is not a deontic attitude. Unlike deontic attitudes trust neither presupposes nor

Remorse is a non-deontic attitude of the heart.

Darwall might here draw a distinction between the anger I feel at the hurt and the blame I feel at the wrong; but the moral phenomenology is not of two attitudes but one—one *frustrated* inasmuch as its deontic basis is not acknowledged. Anger straddles the supposed divide between will and heart.

“‘What gives *you* the right to get angry at me,’ one might say to a stranger who is bent out of shape by one’s inattention to their personal concerns” (59).

Another way of putting this: anger’s expression isn’t separable from the anger itself, so the evaluation of the expression and the attitude are connected.

Among the grounds of anger’s normative status are deontic phenomena; and anger is among the grounds of further deontic phenomena.

And here I mean the real deal, lying, wrongful kind of plagiarism.

entails any authority to demand that the trusted act as they are being trusted to do, nor consequently any authority to hold them accountable for doing so. In this way it is like love, to which it is intimately related. When we give others our love or friendship, or more generally, when we place our trust in them, we lay ourselves open to them in distinctive second-personal ways that do not thereby involve the authority to make claims and demands of them. We open our hearts to them in the hope that theirs will be open to ours in return. Trust and hope, I argue, are second-personal attitudes of the heart. (86)

And it seems completely right that there is an invitation to trust which falls short of offering a deontic claim to another.

My objection: the trust constitutive of heart-to-heart relationships *can* entail distinctive authority to demand of the trusted person and standing to hold them *accountable*:

Imagine I have recently been diagnosed with cancer. I don't want anyone to know about it. I don't tell any of you, nor do I tell my close friends, nor do I tell my wife (for months, say).

Three claims:

- I do not wrong you or other non-intimates. (So the accountability that comes just with being a person does not make my withholding this information wrongful.)
- I do wrong my wife; I have been dishonest with her. She could have *demand*ed I tell her.
- Whether or not I wrong my friends depends on what kind of friends we are (i.e., we can fill the case out in very different ways). Contrast a very intimate friend with whom I speak every day, and a very casual friend.

A challenge to Darwall's Dualism:

- The trust between me and my wife is a matter of the heart.
- Part of what *constitutes our intimacy* is the *standing* we have to know things about each other's personal lives. (Not all romantic partnerships are like this! But many are.)
- Violating that trust is wrongful; that trust is *in part* constituted by claim rights and duties.

Now I think Darwall is *completely* correct in calling attention to the many ways in which trust is *not* merely a matter of claims. My betrayal is something that speaks to more than a violation of a norm of accountability; but it is that, *too*.

The key upshot: personal trust can shape norms of accountability to one another (contra the strong quote above). Trust is (in part) a deontic phenomenon even if it is not *wholly* one.

Another highlight of the book is Darwall's calling attention to the locution "you'll just have to trust me" which can *deny* its addressee a deontic relation.

All of this is defended in much greater detail in my "Honesty and Discretion."

On my view, it is a matter of all kinds of norms, deontic and non-deontic both!

If I'm right about this, how could I square this with Darwall's argument that trust's non-deontic character is revealed in the coherence of expressions like "I am not promising I'll ϕ ; you'll just have to trust me"? I've spent the past year or so thinking about that in a manuscript defending the existence of *non-deontic* normative powers, cousins of consent, promise, and command.

Healthy interpersonal relationships \neq healthy accountability relationship + intimacy/trust.

Intimacy itself is in part a matter of accountability.

IV. Love, Respect, and the Value of Humanity

What, if anything, would Darwall be giving up if he gave up the claim that attitudes of the will and heart respond to *fundamentally* different values? I think (and hope) very little!

Even if he maintains his sharp distinction between deontic and the non-deontic second-personal attitudes, he could accept the thought that one value underlies both: that of humanity. The difference is not in *what* is responded to, but in the *response*.

Why think the distinctiveness of the heart needs to be reflected in a distinct *value* instead of a distinct way of *valuing*?

VALUE MONISM: That which makes respect mandatory and love fitting are one and the same value: the value of humanity.

VALUE DUALISM: Respect is a response to the value of the will; love to the value of the heart.

Another way of putting this basic idea turns to the features of our humanity in virtue of which we command respect and are eligible to be loved: our will and our heart. The monist sees these as inextricably linked:

HEART-WILL UNITY: That we have a will and that we have a heart are not independent features about us.

Defending Value Monism

Actions which are disrespectful are ipso facto unloving.

If I know that your new boyfriend is bad news and I lie or coerce you into breaking things off, that is wrongful and at the same time *unloving*. My behavior seems to fall short of a standard not just of accountability but of love itself.

That calls out for explanation: why would acting in a way that fails to respond adequately to your status as a free agent *at the same time* fail to respond to the value that makes love and intimacy appropriate? One simple answer: they are the same value! (A more complicated one: the two values are somehow necessarily connected. But how?)

I don't think this needs to be put in terms of *value*. It could instead be recast into other normative idioms: e.g., of reasons or fittingness conditions.

For those who have/will read the book: Darwall cites Blum's wonderful astronaut case; but notice that while there is an astronaut with a conscience and no heart, it is harder (I think impossible) to imagine an astronaut with a well functioning heart and no conscience—to be insensitive to matter of conscience seems ipso facto *heartless*.

In my "Love First," I use this as an argument for the view that respect is *derivative* of love. (I there mainly seek to defend the possibility of a love-based foundation for deontology.)

Defending Will-Heart Unity

The faculties by which we act, feel, see, and relate to one another deontically and lovingly are one and the same faculty (or at least totally inseparable).

Imagine someone who makes a promise, *justifiably* breaks it causing damage, and then *feels no remorse*. That seems not only pathological, but like the promisor did not *fully* appreciate the (deontic) normative relation he was in.

A suggestion: part of what constitutes full commitment isn't just a susceptibility to second-personal accountability attitudes, but also a sensitivity to matters of the heart—like damage to the other.

The deontic relation of the promise was *always already* one that implicated non-deontic dimensions (like damage) that call for (but do not *require*) heart-felt response.

A *heartless will* might be thought of as *defective qua will*.

Even if it isn't a conscience or will doing *wrong*, it is one that is not manifesting the full goodness of the will, a goodness whose standards always already included a recognition of standards of the heart.