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Hume's Reason

By David Owen

Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. viii+244.

This book is an exploration of Hume's account of reason and its role in human understanding, seen in the context of other notable accounts by philosophers of the early modern period. Owen argues that Hume had a conception of reasoning radically different from our own, a conception developed from that to be found in Descartes and Locke, who utterly rejected syllogism and its attendant mode of inference. Hume followed them in rejecting a formal deductive account of inference, in favour of a naturalistic account. Hume's starting-point is the refusal to go beyond experience, a methodological position which issues in the doctrine of impressions and ideas and the derivation of all ideas from impressions. Ideas can stand in various relations one to another. We reason from one idea to another; an instance of reasoning is constituted by a chain of ideas, each idea related to its neighbour in various ways. Owen claims that although any such instance of reasoning can be thought of in terms of propositions, premises and conclusions, the fundamental work is done at the level of ideas and their relations. Our concept of a deductively valid argument has little to do with Hume's conception of demonstration. Two ideas are intuitively related if the relation between them is immediately conceived. They are demonstratively related if the relation between them is conceived, not immediately, but via other intermediate ideas, and where the link between each pair of adjacent ideas in the resulting chain is intuitive.

Given this background, Owen argues, Hume can claim to know in advance that two ideas cannot be demonstratively related if we can conceive one without the other, and that therefore the causal maxim is neither intuitively nor demonstratively known. If we were determined by reason in making the inference from a present impression to an unobserved idea, something, such as the idea of necessary connection or the principle of uniformity, would have to serve as the intermediary through which we get from impression to idea; but no such idea or principle is available to us prior to our engaging in probability reasoning. So inferences from the observed to the unobserved are not explained by appeal to the faculty of reason. The picture of reason as an independent faculty is replaced by an explanation of reasoning in terms of properties of the imagination, and of belief as belonging more to the sensitive than to the cognitive part of our natures.

Owen's account of how the conception of reason with which Hume, and Locke and Descartes before him, operated differs from our own is certainly interesting and informative, and is worked out in considerable detail. Nevertheless, I have serious doubts about his whole enterprise. Owen confesses to being 'entranced' by the picture presented in the *Treatise* (174),

and this has resulted in a treatment of Hume which anyone less entranced will see as simply not engaging with the difficulties in Hume on which other commentators have dwelt. Thus, in the initial treatment of Hume's doctrine of impressions and ideas (Chapter 4), Owen criticizes Hume only for describing ideas as faint *images* of impressions, on the grounds that the word 'image' strongly suggests a relationship of dependence. What Hume should have said, he claims, is that ideas are faint *representations* of impressions. (68) That apart, the treatment is almost wholly sympathetic, even to the extent, apparently, of accepting Hume's claim that the reason why we think impressions are the cause of ideas and not vice versa is that impressions constantly precede ideas in our experience. Obvious, and familiar, doubts arise here which are not touched on. Why, if the priority of impressions is a contingent one, would it be *absurd*, as Hume admits, to try to give anyone an impression of orange by first giving them the corresponding idea? Why can't someone blind from birth have ideas of colour, if these are mental items which resemble impressions of colour? How can the distinction between impressions and ideas be construed as one in terms of different degrees of force or vivacity, or any variant of these notions? Isn't it clear that Hume also suggests, however inconsistently, that the dependence of ideas on impressions is a *logical* one, especially where he talks of the test of whether a term has any clear *meaning* being whether it is derived from an impression?

Similar doubts arise over Owen's treatment of the idea of necessary connection, in which he accepts without serious qualification Hume's claim that this idea is the result of constant conjunction of cause and effect and the consequent association of the two in our minds, such that 'when the impression of one becomes present to us, we immediately form an idea of its usual attendant' (*Treatise*, 92). If Hume's claim is that all we find in objects is constant conjunction, and therefore nothing that can serve as the impression of necessary connection then, as Passmore long ago pointed out, it is difficult to see how looking to the associative link between impressions and their attendant ideas can help, since the passage from the impression of the cause to the idea of its usual effect is itself merely another constant conjunction. Some discussion of this central problem is surely essential if one wishes to defend Hume's account.

Owen discusses Hume's worry about the nature of belief in the Appendix to the *Treatise*, which centres on whether it can be distinguished from imagination in terms of a greater degree of '*force*, or *vivacity*, or *solidity*, or *firmness*, or *steadiness*' (*Treatise*, 629). He notes that Hume appears to claim in this passage that the *effects* of belief are more similar to the effects of impressions than to the effects of ideas of the imagination, rather than to hold to the idea that belief itself differs from imagination in terms of vivacity or force. Owen claims that Hume would have been better advised to 'retain the similarity in feeling between beliefs and impressions', even at the cost of abandoning the characterization of the difference between impressions and ideas in terms of force and vivacity (174). But it is quite unclear what it can mean to claim that my belief that it will be warmer in June *feels like* my present impression of my garden on the other

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side of the window in front of me. Hume's attempt to construe the special nature of belief in terms of any variety or degree of feeling looks totally misguided. Once again, the obvious and familiar sceptical reaction to Hume's account is left undiscussed. Another example of Owen's over-indulgent approach to Hume is evident in his discussion of Hume's claim that 'reason alone can never be a motive to any action of the will'. An individual who lacks all passions or sentiments would, he claims, be unable to conclude that Sarah is virtuous (200). Possibly, but even if our having some passions or sentiments is a necessary condition of our being able to come to this conclusion, our so doing may nevertheless be the result of a process of reasoning of a Kantian type, rather than one based on sentiment in the Humean manner.

A widely-held view of Hume's philosophical system is that a great deal of it must be recast, and some of it discarded altogether, if it is to be seen to have value. This is not Owen's view, but his failure to engage with those who take a more sceptical approach to Hume will mean that his book is unlikely to appeal to any but those who are similarly 'entranced with the picture presented in the *Treatise*'.

Geoffrey Madell

Ruling Passions

by Simon Blackburn

Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1998, pp. x+334.

Those who have followed Simon Blackburn's work in meta-ethics will welcome this rich contribution to a wide range of issues in contemporary moral theory. Blackburn's new book is ambitious, unrelenting and comprehensive, yet comparatively successful in avoiding the dryness and convoluted expression of so much 'cutting edge' work in moral theory. His project is to develop the thoroughgoing naturalism of his mentor Hume, taking it into a range of concerns related to ethics. The work offers a distinctive and sometimes unfashionable perspective on issues ranging from game theory to Cornell realism, and from sociobiology to the Frege problem of indirect contexts. In broad outline it takes the reader from the relationship between deontological, consequentialist and virtue ethics, onto the analysis of the moral proposition, the nature of motivation, Humean and Kantian approaches to freedom and rationality, and finally the issues surrounding the authority of morality and the challenges of relativism and postmodernism—especially as manifested in the bogeyman of Rorty.

It will come as no surprise that Kantian rationalism, and all other departures from naturalism, emerge as dubious friends of the moral enterprise, and Blackburn tries to pinpoint the psychological as well as the metaphysical sources of their alleged errors. It is also interesting that although he would uphold a clear distinction between first- and second-order ethical questions, allowing those in the Humean tradition as much moral rigour and seriousness as their opponents, nevertheless various non-logical connections seem to emerge between his 'sentimentalist' approach and certain moral stances. Blackburn inveighs here and there against big-

otry and excessive ethical dourness, warning that people who moralize too readily can be horrible and dangerous. This comes out, for example, in his interesting discussion of the differences between sin, guilt and shame (pp. 16–21). It also emerges in Chapter 8, where he defends a basically Rawlsian political liberalism, while conceding to its critics that it has no credible *a priori* derivation, and that it cannot avoid having its own definite conception of the good. Although this conception, like its communitarian rivals, cannot claim to have the imprimatur of Reason, nevertheless, ‘The whole point of the Enlightenment was to enlarge people’s visions beyond and away from the closed, prejudiced, stifling and often cruel certainties of unexamined small-town moralities’ (p. 276). However, there is a mean to be observed. Blackburn is rightly suspicious of the view that guilt should be done away with altogether, and later on also warns of the moral dangers of aestheticism and postmodernist irony.

Chapter 2 approaches the ‘Things that Concern Us’ by offering insights into how those concerns are best structured by moral theory, in particular the competing claims of deontology, virtue ethics and consequentialism. Blackburn avoids artificially rigid distinctions, skilfully showing how each approach fills the *lacunae* left by the others, and without giving the impression that any one of these theories is wholly and exclusively correct. Deontology is best thought of as the ethics of police and law courts; consequentialism is the ethics of planning and managing; virtue ethics is the ethics of educators and schoolteachers. Just as we need courts, managers and teachers, so we need some of the insights of each of these approaches. But the general drift is close to indirect consequentialism, with the best insights of other theories mostly subsumed within it. The problem with pure deontology, for Blackburn, is that it is not always sufficiently sensitive to circumstance, and while this theory is correct about the importance of agency, it is not good at handling conflicts between duties. To rank the different *prima facie* obligations when they clash requires defence of ‘some conception of the rules involved as neither purely self-justifying, nor as mere means to an independent end, and this is not easy to do’ (p. 40). Moreover, the duties it enjoins sometimes have an arbitrary air, as the theory cannot always tell us why any particular thing should be an absolute duty.

The virtue tradition, while having some points in its favour, also encounters difficulties. Recognition of traits of character cannot provide the sole basis of moral thought, since we must have some prior idea of the value of the situations these traits promote or avoid. We also need an account of why specific traits are virtues or vices, and when (for example) pride becomes vanity. Virtue ethics can be psychologically ill-informed and prone to fantasy, ignoring the empirical evidence that we act more from moods than from settled dispositions of character. However, Blackburn’s account points, perhaps unintentionally, to one way in which virtues might operate, namely by informing judgments about when to stick with deontologically-inspired ways of thinking, and when to switch to consequentialist ways. For although Blackburn is sensitive to the external benefits of sticking to a ‘participant’ rather than ‘reflective’ stance (much as in

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a game), he refuses to banish consequentialist thoughts altogether. This stance, in turn, comes from a strongly naturalistic account of the function of rules and prohibitions, to deny which is 'hard to regard ... as intellectually respectable' (p. 46). Such a judgment may strike the reader as overdogmatic, and as providing a fickle basis for the limited respect the author thinks we ought to accord to deontological thinking; nevertheless, Blackburn has identified a mire of problems which are, for all we know, insoluble.

The naturalism which so far has operated in the background comes into its own when the author turns to the more central themes of the book. Valuing is not a matter of describing things, though the state of mind of valuing is a natural and describable state. There is no point looking for truth conditions if we want to understand the ethical; we must instead understand ourselves as valuing things, and this we can do. However, the negative part of the project is easier to achieve than the positive part. For all the subtlety of the author's quasi-realist position—he constantly grapples with a contrary position whose appeal and strength he can see well enough—one is left with the impression of a stalemate rather than a victory.

It must be admitted that he deals plausibly with the Frege/Geach problem, mooting that if we can refer to propositions without believing them, and continue to see the logical connections between them, then the same should be possible for attitudes as well. He also nicely confronts neo-Wittgensteinian moral realism, bringing out the distinction, blurred by its advocates, between the normativity involved in any exercise of thought, and the special, irreducibly practical normativity of the ethical. He ploughs on, dealing in Chapter 4 with McDowell's attempts to forge a position in between Platonism and subjectivism, pointing out in reply that the requisite communities of shared judgment may not exist; that many evaluative expressions (including non-moral ones like derogatory references to a person's fatness) may fail to pick out distinct concepts with truth conditions for their application; and that the attempt to fuse the cognitive and the passional (which gave birth to McDowell's hybrid notion of 'besire') is artificial and fails to pull any weight in the cognitive rather than the passional direction.

All this, and much more, is deftly done. But underlying it is the Humean theme of the essentially practical and (furthermore) motivating nature of moral judgments, to which Blackburn constantly appeals but which, though it is probably correct, he doesn't secure against all possible attack. Ultimately Blackburn is a weak internalist. He thinks that there is an internal, conceptual connection between judging something good or obligatory, and being disposed to pursue it. However, he recognizes all kinds of apparent counterexamples, as in the literary characters of Othello and Milton's Satan. Satan famously declares 'Evil be thou my Good', which (if representing a possible state of mind) disproves internalism. But Blackburn construes Satan's attitude to God as similar to that of a jealous lover, like Othello; as one who can manage the pain of his expulsion from heaven only by trying to hurt and wound God. Rather than *simply* rejecting what he knows to be good, Satan is in a state of acute and terrible conflict.

Turning to more prosaic cases, Blackburn is surely right to imply that states like temptation and self-deception do not disprove the internalist thesis, since that need claim only that all sincere moral judgments motivate to action, not that they are the *only* motivating states. Wayward temptations, obviously enough, can motivate us as well. However, we might wonder whether he takes another possibility seriously enough, which is to accept Hume's claim that beliefs alone cannot motivate, but also allow that moral judgments *are* beliefs, and as such unable to motivate us on their own. That would give us a form of externalism clearly at odds with expressivism, but which still helps to remove the slightly *ad hoc* flavour of Blackburn's treatment of the apparent counterexamples to internalism, as well as preserving the ruling passions as the springs of action. Perhaps he is so wedded to the expressivism that this other, partially Humean possibility does not get a look-in.

The problems of how, and by what, we are motivated are taken up in the chapters that follow. Chapter 5 is a cogent dissection of the fallacies involved in thinking that only self-interest can, or should, drive us. It mentions Bishop Butler with approval and certain sociobiological pundits with disapproval. Blackburn also mentions the empirical evidence of the importance of the emotions in decision making, with reference to the work of Damasio, who has apparently shown that higher-order decision making has to harness the brain's limbic system (the physical centre of the 'ruling passions') if it is to work at all (p. 129). It is thus refreshing to see that the defence of the empiricist Hume need not be purely *a priori*. Chapter 6 looks at the contribution of game theory to the problem of rational choice. Its basic upshot is that the theoretical possibility of situations like the prisoners' dilemma do not pose an insuperable problem for co-operation, since they are merely situations where 'one set of concerns suggests one course of action, and a different set of concerns suggests another. ... There is no tribunal in which those concerns are certified or disqualified at the bar of reason' (p. 198).

The problems of impartiality and the 'common point of view' are taken up in Chapter 7, in which Hume's and Adam Smith's accounts of how we acquire concern for these things are defended against Aristotle, Kant and to a lesser extent Hare. Aristotle is over-briefly dismissed as being unable to ground anything besides smug, local moral concerns, while Kant's famous attempts to derive specific duties from a purely formal principle are debunked. This is entertaining and often cogent, though two problems might be better distinguished: that of whether we can derive any first-order ethic from such theories, and that of whether we can get a suitably 'impartial' ethic from them. Blackburn endorses a position in between Hare's impartialism and the partialism ascribed (perhaps misleadingly) to communitarians. Hume's 'sensible knave' whose 'refutation' poses such difficulties, turns out to be a partialist as much as an immoralist, a point which provides a certain bridge to the briefer remarks on the merits of political liberalism near the end of the book.

A short review cannot do justice to the richness of this work and the many interconnected ideas. As well producing intricate, if not always com-

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pletely unified insights, it carries the implicit observation that the contemporary ‘industry’ supporting Kantian rational choice has a lot to do with the psycho-social profile of many practising philosophers. If Blackburn does not have quite the last word, we still find here an approach that the Kantians and Aristotelians will be unable to ignore.

Piers Benn

Value ... And What Follows

By Joel Kupperman

New York: Oxford University Press, £25.00

Here are some faults commonly found in works of moral philosophy: ideological bias; prejudice; wilful misinterpretation; exaggeration; carelessness in argument; pretentiousness; waywardness; attention to unnecessary detail; lack of attention to necessary detail; lack of insight; long-windedness; repetitiveness; excessive narrowness of scope. One remarkable feature of Joel Kupperman’s book is that it pretty much lacks all of these qualities.

The book falls into three parts. Part one (‘Axiology’) concerns the nature of values and our acquaintance with them. Part two (‘Axiology and Conduct’) spells out Kupperman’s evaluatively based normative theory, which amounts to a rather qualified form of consequentialism. The final part (‘Axiology and Social Choice’) is a discussion, in the light of Kupperman’s acceptance of evaluative pluralism, of the debate between liberalism and perfectionism, in which Kupperman defends a limited perfectionism. Each part is largely self-contained, and does not rest closely on the details of the arguments of the others. It is rather that the general conclusions and outlooks of the parts form a whole.

Part one is perhaps the most interesting. It occupies over half of the book, and amounts to a comprehensive theory of the metaphysics and epistemology of value. Kupperman says that he has not found much of the philosophical literature on value helpful (v). He explicitly criticizes the classical utilitarians and Moore, but it is not clear whether the Austro-Hungarian phenomenologists—especially Brentano, Meinong, Scheler, and Hartmann—are not discussed because Kupperman has not found them helpful or because he has not consulted them. Given the overlap between their epistemological views and his, and the fact that these authors have been regrettably largely ignored by analytic philosophers in the UK and the US since Moore, the latter is the more plausible explanation. It is a pity, too, that T. M. Scanlon’s challenging ‘buck-passing’ account of value in his *What We Owe to Each Other* had not appeared in time for Kupperman to consider it. Though I am more sympathetic to Kupperman’s overall story than Scanlon’s, Scanlon is more aware of the importance of the distinction between values and reasons to a precise account of value and of consequentialism.

What does Kupperman take values to be? A value is ‘what is worth having or being, taken purely for its own sake, or what is such that (taken by

itself, apart from anything it causes) it is preferable that it exist rather than not exist. Negative values will be what it is advisable, if one discounts all causal relations, not to have to be, or what is such that it is better that (taken by itself) it not exist' (3). I am fairly happy with this Moorean account, though the equivocation between 'it is preferable that' and 'it is better that' which emerges here is disappointing. If we are told that value is to be explained in terms of preferences (here, preferences which are called for by the object), various questions will arise as to whose preferences, whether they must be informed, and so on. Those questions can be avoided by using the 'it is better that' locution. Further, since there can be reasons for preferring things that have nothing to do with their value, definitions in terms of preferability are false. Imagine that an evil demon will inflict severe pain on me unless I prefer this saucer of mud; that makes the saucer well worth preferring. But it would not be plausible to claim that the saucer of mud's existence is, in itself, valuable; rather, my pain will be 'dis-valuable'.

One of the faults Kupperman finds in Bentham and Mill is their hedonism, which he finds 'simplistic and preposterous' (v). He is likely to find agreement among many of his readers, of course, but his arguments could perhaps have been weightier. Kuppermann suggests that the things most of us value most fall under three headings: features of our lives (e.g., love, a sense of achievement), particular experiences (e.g., moments of euphoria), or things (e.g., money) (5). These seem tailor-made for a hedonistic explanation: it is the pleasantness of the experiences of love and euphoria that makes them worth having, and money and other objects are valuable in so far as they promote such pleasantness. Nor need the hedonist be too concerned also with happiness, joy, bliss, ecstasy, and so on (8–9). 'Pleasure' has always been intended by the most important hedonists to cover all such states. There does remain a serious question whether pleasantness, even understood broadly, can serve as the only 'good-making' property. But that claim cannot be dealt with in the space of a few pages, nor has it been dealt with satisfactorily yet in the history of philosophy: this is one place where Kupperman, who is often justifiably tentative, might have been a little more so.

Kupperman's 'method of isolation' (he does not use this phrase) does make an advance on Moore's, which will not permit relational qualities to be good-making. Kupperman rightly accepts that whether a redwood forest is valuable in any world may depend on whether other such forests are located elsewhere in that world. It may be that Moore could handle relational qualities by reconstruing them non-relationally (for example, by bringing into the description of the individual forest its rareness or otherwise in the world in which it exists), but this certainly requires going beyond his text.

How do we know about values? How are we acquainted with them? Kupperman says that in philosophical thought we must begin with 'ordinary thought' (4). But like Aristotle, who makes a similar claim for his own dialectical use of the views of 'the many and the wise', Kupperman prefers rather to use philosophical argument informed by, corrected by, and

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checked against common opinion, rather than systematically sort through the confusion of common sense. Further, he recommends appeal to one's emotional reactions as a source of independent understanding of value. Kupperman's discussion of the emotions and their epistemological role is one of the highlights of the book. His penetrating and measured analysis contrasts strongly with much of the somewhat overwrought work in this area over the last few decades.

The kind of emotional state Kupperman has in mind includes, for example, admiration and contempt (34). As one might expect, his acceptance of their deliverances is merely *pro tanto*. But there is a reason for doubt about our emotions which Kupperman does not face up to: they are shaped by our upbringing, culture, and the morality of common sense itself. This has particularly important implications for anyone who accepts a consequentialist normative theory. Such theories deny the importance of the distinction between acts and omissions, whereas that distinction, because it is built into our common sense morality, dominates our emotional reactions. We admire the person who accomplishes the great artistic work, not the person who stands back to allow them to do so. We feel contempt for the person who vandalizes it, not the person who fails to contribute to charities that preserve such works. In other words, our emotions themselves must be held up to the light of rational assessment, and the ultimate source of our judgments of value must be reason, not emotion. We may 'witness' certain values (47), but whether we can justifiably claim to have done so depends on reflective consideration of judgments based on such witnessing, consideration of a kind which has been to the fore in the rational intuitionist tradition in ethics, rather than in that of sentimentalism.

Kupperman claims to know that pain is bad, and I believe him. His discussion provides a fine counterpoint to the various claims concerning competing conceptions of the good, incommensurability, relativism, traditions, and so on, which have been prominent in political, and to a lesser extent moral, philosophy since the 1960s. Nearly everyone knows that pain is bad, nearly everyone agrees that pain is bad, but nearly everyone in political philosophy seems unaware of both of these facts when they come to constructing their theories. Again rightly, Kupperman's support for other values, such as those of contemplation, is more tentative. His dismissal of hedonism, indeed, seems particularly odd at this point in his argument.

Kupperman claims that value itself is not 'relative', and that this 'primary' sense of value is that on which his inquiry focuses (27). Secondary value might be, for example, the pleasure felt by a football supporter when her team wins; such value may have no 'value for' me, partly because I support the other team, and partly because the pleasure is not mine. But I can recognize that that pleasure has the same value (as opposed to value-for) as my own pleasure at my own team's winning would have.

Here we see again Moore's influence, and it is one I myself am quite happy with. The point of view from which we assess value should indeed be that of the universe, to use Sidgwick's phrase. But we should not be as ready as is Kupperman to establish a direct link between value, in the pri-

mary sense, and our reasons for action (87). This indeed is the fundamental flaw in consequentialism. I agree that my own pain is of no greater disvalue than yours. But the idea that the fact that some pain is heading my way gives me no special reason to avoid it seems so at odds with 'ordinary thought' that I cannot see any reason to accept it. Only a philosopher in the grips of a theory could take that view; and I know of no philosopher who has lived anywhere near the kind of life which it would require. Kupperman allows that someone on whom the demands of consequentialism are pressing may plausibly ask: 'Why me?' (97). What he ought to allow is someone's saying: 'Why anyone?'. Keeping reasons and values apart permits us to recognize that value may ground certain reasons, but that where value is to be instantiated may ground others.

Kupperman's consequentialism is subtle. But, like most consequentialists who accept that our acceptance of common sense morality itself may be justified on consequentialist grounds (see chs 7 and 8, *passim*), Kupperman fails to notice that he may have argued consequentialism as a *moral* theory out of existence. This is especially the case when one claims, as does Kupperman, that there is a strong evolutionary account of the origin of morality (66–7), according to which morality has emerged to prevent harm, and to assist in co-ordination (113). Such a view 'instrumentalizes' the practices of morality, including those of holding responsible, blaming and praising, and punishing. Since those practices themselves are up for consequentialist analysis (95, 104), it is hard to see what is meant by suggesting that consequentialism is a moral theory at all, as opposed to a theory about what we have most reason to do. This may in fact not matter greatly, but it does mean that consequentialists and non-consequentialists may not be playing the same game they seem to think they have been playing. It also raises questions about whether the deliverances of common sense morality should be given quite the weight Kupperman gives them, and about whether he is entitled to make non-ironic use of claims within common sense morality (such as those concerning fairness in the 'Why me?' argument) in building up his moral and political theory.

Just as the relation of consequentialism to common sense morality remains somewhat unclear, so we are left unsure as to Kupperman's considered view on the metaphysical status of values. What a fact is, according to Kupperman, is controversial, so we should avoid the term (61–2). We should also steer clear of the notion of truth (77). Further, there is no obvious way to decide between the causal stories told by moral realists on the one hand, and anti-realists on the other (64–5). But one might have thought that Kupperman's powerful arguments that pain is bad might be taken to demonstrate the fact that pain is bad, the truth of the claim that pain is bad, and to explain our belief that pain is bad as resting on that truth. Further, Kupperman, as I have mentioned, does accept an evolutionary story about morality, which will involve its own causal stories. It is one thing to be tentative, on the ground that we have no philosophical consensus on the correct theory of, say, facts. But it is another to claim that we should avoid controversial terms altogether.

I shall say little here of Kupperman's final section, which argues for a

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moderate perfectionism, plausible as it is. My own feeling is that liberals have moved beyond the somewhat crude recommendations of neutrality in the early Rawls and Dworkin (indeed, Rawls and Dworkin have moved on), and the case for perfectionism has been made more fully by Raz, in *The Morality of Freedom*. But that is not to say that there is not something to learn from Kupperman's final chapters.

To sum up. This refreshingly unpartisan book is full of careful argument on several central issues in moral philosophy, and should be read in particular by anyone working on the theory of value.

Roger Crisp