

Responsibility and appropriate blame: The no difference view

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Abstract

How do the fact that an agent is morally responsible for a certain morally objectionable action and the fact that she is an appropriate target of blame for it relate to each other? Many authors inspired by Peter Strawson say that they necessarily co-occur. Standard answers to the question of why they co-occur say that the occurrence of one of the facts explains that the other obtains. This article presents a third option: that they are one and the same fact. There is no difference between the fact that a person is an appropriate target of blame for an objectionable action and the fact that she is morally responsible for it. This view has the advantage of being metaphysically more parsimonious and of answering, in an elegant and plausible way, an interesting question about which many standard theories of responsibility keep silent: what is it to be morally responsible *simpliciter*?

1 | INTRODUCTION

Imagine that Ann steps on my foot. She knows that my foot is there, she knows that stepping on it hurts me and that it has no good consequences, she could refrain from stepping on my foot, and she does not have the right to step on my foot. Nonetheless, she steps on my foot. Intuitively, the following now seems to be true: first, Ann is responsible for the morally objectionable act of stepping on my foot. Second, it is appropriate to blame Ann for it. The question I will discuss in this article is: how exactly are these two things related? That is, how do being an appropriate target of blame for an objectionable action and being morally responsible for it relate to each other? I will argue for the No Difference View, which says that there is absolutely no difference between the fact that Ann is responsible for the objectionable action and the fact that she is an appropriate target of blame for it.¹

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In the second section, I will refine the main question with reference to broadly Strawsonian accounts of responsibility. In the third section, I will present the No Difference View and two standard alternatives. In Section 4, I will argue that the No Difference View is superior to the standard accounts. In Section 5, I will defend the No Difference View against possible objections, and in Section 6 I will discuss possible replies on behalf of the standard views. Finally, in Section 7, I will discuss how the No Difference View relates to what seems to be its most powerful Strawsonian opponent, namely David Shoemaker's (2017) response-dependent theory of accountability.

2 | WHAT'S AT ISSUE?

Many authors, inspired by Peter Strawson's "Freedom and Resentment" (1962), believe that there is a very intimate relation between being morally responsible for some objectionable action and facts about our practice, such as being an appropriate target of blame for it. One of the guiding intuitions of Strawsonians is that moral responsibility is an important topic in our everyday lives and philosophical thinking because it is essentially interwoven with how people can appropriately relate to us. Being responsible, the thought goes, is not only about what agents do and what mental capacities they have when they do it. It is about how we appropriately respond to what we do to each other. According to this view, it is not a coincidence that Ann is both an appropriate target of blame for stepping on my foot and morally responsible for it—the idea is that these two facts are necessarily related to each other. I will call this view

Strawsonianism: Necessarily, an agent *S* is morally responsible for some morally objectionable action *x* if and only if it is appropriate to blame *S* for *x*.²

Let me say a bit more about what I will call Strawsonianism. First, some authors reserve the name "Strawsonianism" for a narrower family of theories, namely those that take facts about our responsibility practices to be somehow explanatory of responsibility.³ I will discuss this view in a moment. In what follows, I use "Strawsonianism" in a broader sense, because many authors who would accept the biconditional but not this explanatory view explicitly refer to Strawson (1962) when they develop their accounts of responsibility.⁴ Note, however, that nothing important hangs on what the view is called.

Second, Strawsonians are not only concerned with moral responsibility for objectionable actions. The basic idea can also be applied to neutral and good ones. A unified account of all actions would say that an agent is responsible for action *x* if and only if it would be appropriate to blame the agent for *x* if *x* is morally objectionable.⁵ Some may wonder why the unified account of responsibility for actions in general looks so complicated. Strawsonians can reply that this corresponds to how we actually think about responsibility in daily life. Responsibility typically becomes an issue for us when we ask ourselves how to respond to people who act badly. We rarely ask ourselves whether people are responsible for morally neutral actions such as choosing chocolate instead of vanilla. Thus, the complicated Strawsonian account of actions in general mirrors the primacy of responsibility for problematic actions in our everyday thinking. In this article, I will follow most Strawsonians and focus on the paradigmatic case of responsibility for objectionable actions. But everything I will say should be compatible with this way of making sense of responsibility for neutral and positive actions.

Third, to blame a person is, according to what I call Strawsonianism, at least partly to have a certain emotion, a so-called reactive attitude, toward her. Details aside, to blame someone else involves being angry at her in a specific way—sometimes called resenting her or being indignant toward her—and to blame oneself involves being angry at oneself in this specific way, or feeling guilty.⁶

Fourth, what I call Strawsonianism is open to different ways to spell out what a morally objectionable action is (in what follows, I take "objectionable" to be an abbreviation of "morally objectionable"). The relevant kind of

objectionability can be understood in terms of wrongness (Wallace, 1994, chap. 2), relationship impairment (Scanlon, 2008, chap. 4), or in terms of expressing a lack of good will (Graham, 2010). Thus, Strawsonianism can be combined with the independently best account of the moral standard for actions falling below which is necessary for being an appropriate target of blame.

Fifth, a complete Strawsonian account of responsibility would have to say how, exactly, to understand the notion of appropriateness at the heart of Strawsonianism.⁷ The common basic idea is that the relevant sense of appropriateness is sensitive to a very restricted class of considerations and insensitive to others. Very generally, the notion is sensitive to considerations about what the potential blamees did and what agential properties they had when they did it. For example, it may be relevant what quality of will the action expressed, what control the agents had, or what they knew when they performed the action. But the relevant notion of appropriateness is insensitive regarding considerations about the consequences of blaming the potential blamees, about whether they consented to certain norms in advance, regret what they did, or about whether certain blamers have the standing to blame them.⁸ Considerations of these kinds may explain why it is all-things-considered morally wrong to blame agents in certain situations even if it is appropriate to blame them in the sense which is relevant for Strawsonianism.

Different proponents of Strawsonianism spell out the notion of appropriateness in different ways. Some suggestions are fairness (Wallace, 1994, chap. 4), basic desert (Pereboom, 2014, chap. Introduction), apt candidacy (Fischer & Ravizza, 1998, chap. 1), or fittingness (Shoemaker, 2017).⁹ Importantly, however, what I will say does not presuppose any of these views. Thus, the following should be combinable with the best account of the relevant kind of appropriateness.

Finally, I will assume that Strawsonianism and the more specific versions that I will discuss in this article only concern worldly facts or states of affairs and properties about responsibility and appropriate blame. Thus, I will not be concerned with representations such as sentences or, on some views, propositions, and concepts. To give an example, I will be concerned with the fact that can be represented by saying "Palpatine is responsible for luring Anakin Skywalker to the Dark Side" and by saying "Darth Sidious is accountable for luring the later Darth Vader to the Dark Side." These representations differ in interesting ways, but they represent one and the same fact. And I will only be concerned with the factual level.

Let me flag that I will not try to vindicate this broadly Strawsonian picture of responsibility. This article is concerned with how to best spell out some important aspects of this idea, but not with justifying the idea itself.

So far, Strawsonianism only says that the fact that a person is morally responsible for an objectionable action is always accompanied by the fact that she is an appropriate target of blame for this action. But many philosophers believe that two facts can necessarily co-occur for different reasons. Therefore, many philosophers want to know more about how these facts relate to each other and why they co-occur. To illustrate this line of thought more colorfully, it is coherent to accept Strawsonianism and to believe that when God created the world, she created two completely different and independent properties, namely being morally responsible for an objectionable action and being an appropriate target of blame for it. And then she decided that these two completely different and independent properties would always pop up together.¹⁰ Nothing about Strawsonianism itself rules out this metaphysical picture. But Strawsonianism would lose much of its attractiveness if it is combined with a picture of this sort because Strawsonianism is typically presented as an account of the nature of responsibility, as a view that tells us something about what it is to be morally responsible. But on the picture I have just sketched Strawsonianism does not tell us anything about what it is to be morally responsible. It only says that being morally responsible is always accompanied by something else, namely being an appropriate target of blame.

Assume that Strawsonianism is true. How do the fact that an agent is morally responsible for an objectionable action and the fact that she is an appropriate target of blame for it relate to each other?

3 | THREE FACES OF STRAWSONIANISM

Interestingly, the most straightforward answer to the question of how being responsible for a bad action and its being appropriate to blame the agent for it relate to each other has not yet been discussed—at least not explicitly—in the literature. The most straightforward answer is that there is only one fact. This is what I call the

No Difference View: For *S* to be morally responsible for an objectionable action *x* just is for *S* to be an appropriate target of blame for *x*.

It is noteworthy that even if this formulation focuses on responsibility for objectionable conduct (which is the main topic of this article), the key idea of the No Difference View can also be applied to responsibility for good and neutral actions: agents' being responsible for their actions—regardless of whether they are bad, good, or neutral—just is their being such that if the actions are objectionable, it would be appropriate to blame the agents for performing them.

How are we to understand the No Difference View? Some authors who say “For *S* to be *x* just is for *S* to be *y*” indicate some kind of priority of the right side. In this article, however, just is statements claim that there is no difference between the two sides.¹¹ Thus the basic idea of the No Difference View is that there is absolutely no difference between the fact that a person is morally responsible for an objectionable action and the fact that she is an appropriate target of blame for it. The sentences “*S* is responsible for objectionable action *x*” and “*S* is an appropriate target of blame for *x*” refer to exactly the same fact and are made true by exactly the same worldly features. When God created the world and created the property of being morally responsible for an objectionable action she, thereby, also created the property of being an appropriate target of blame. She did not have to do anything else and nothing else needed to happen. This is how being morally responsible for objectionable actions *just is* being an appropriate target of blame for them.

Claims of this sort seem to be quite familiar. Take the claim that for a certain gas to be hot just is for it to have high kinetic energy, that to be water just is to be H₂O, or that to be a bachelor just is to be an unmarried man. More philosophically, proponents of the mind–brain identity theory hold that a person's experiencing a certain pain is identical with her brain's undergoing a certain process or being in a certain state. Naturalistic moral realists claim that something's being good just is its having some natural property, for example being such that our fully informed counterparts would desire it.¹²

A good model for the No Difference View is contractualism about wrongness. Very roughly, the contractualist says that an act's being wrong just is the act's being such that a certain response is appropriate (in the sense of reasonableness) to any principle that would permit it, namely rejection.¹³ Analogously, the No Difference View says that an agent's being responsible for an objectionable action just is the agent's being such that a certain response is appropriate (in the sense of fairness, basic desert, fittingness, or apt candidacy), namely blame.

Note that the relation picked out in these claims is symmetric: H₂O just is water and water just is H₂O. According to the No Difference View, being responsible for an objectionable action just is being an appropriate target of blame for it and being an appropriate target of blame for an objectionable action just is being morally responsible for it. But this does not make the account trivial. The No Difference View says that what we may take to be two distinct properties, namely being responsible for an objectionable action and being an appropriate target of blame, are, in fact, one and the same. This is a non-trivial and controversial claim.¹⁴

In order to evaluate the prospects of the No Difference View, it is essential to know its competitors. Typically, those who accept Strawsonianism offer or hint at two ways to interpret this view and both ways make Strawsonianism avoid the idea that the fact that one is responsible for an objectionable action and the fact that one is an appropriate target of blame for it are completely different and independent from each other: they say that one of these facts explains the other. The kind of explanation at issue is neither taken to be causal nor epistemological, but rather metaphysical. Recently, there has been a growing interest in how best to understand metaphysical

explanations, but the basic idea is that facts can be on metaphysically more or less fundamental levels such that facts on deeper levels can explain more derivative facts.¹⁵ Some argue, for example, that an act is pious because the gods love it, that a glass is fragile in virtue of its chemical microstructure, or that the fact that an agent has a normative reason to do something is (partly) grounded in the fact that she has certain desires.

In contrast to the just is relation, the explanatory relation is asymmetric, which means that the chemical microstructure of the glass can explain its fragility, but not the other way around. Therefore, one cannot combine a because claim with a just is claim, as I have sketched them here: if the chemical microstructure explains the glass's fragility but not the other way around, then this is a difference between the glass's having the microstructure and the glass's being fragile. But if there is a difference between the two, then it is not the case that the glass's having the micro-structure just is the glass's being fragile. Just is claims, as I understand them, state that there is absolutely no factual difference.

Strawsonianism can now be extended by introducing a claim about the metaphysical explanatory relation between the two sides of the biconditional. Then we get two views: first, the

Responsibility First View: Necessarily, it is appropriate to blame agent *S* for an objectionable action *x* if and only if and because *S* is morally responsible for *x*.¹⁶

This picture is not compatible with the claim that being an appropriate target of blame and being morally responsible are completely different and independent from each other. Rather, the Responsibility First View says that being an appropriate target of blame is grounded in or explained by or obtains in virtue of being morally responsible for an objectionable action. Moreover, it says that nothing else has to be added in order to make a person an appropriate target of blame. When God created the world, she only needed to create the property of being morally responsible for objectionable actions. And when a person is morally responsible for such an action, then her having this property, perhaps together with the laws of metaphysics, makes it the case that she is an appropriate target of blame for it.¹⁷

The Responsibility First View is typically assumed to be the standard and natural way to extend Strawsonianism. However, there is an alternative to it: namely the

Blameworthiness First View: Necessarily, an agent *S* is morally responsible for an objectionable action *x* if and only if and because it is appropriate to blame *S* for *x*.¹⁸

This picture also rules out the possibility that being an appropriate target of blame and being morally responsible are completely different and independent from each other. The Blameworthiness First View says that being morally responsible is grounded in or is explained by or obtains in virtue of being an appropriate target of blame—and nothing more. When God created the world, she only needed to create the property of being an appropriate target of blame. And when a person is an appropriate target of blame for an objectionable action, then her having this property, perhaps together with the laws of metaphysics, makes it the case that she is morally responsible for it.

These are, then, the three faces of Strawsonianism.¹⁹ Assuming that the fact that a person is morally responsible for an objectionable action necessarily co-occurs with the fact that she is an appropriate target of blame for it, this co-occurrence can be explained by claiming that one of these facts grounds the other or by claiming that there is, in truth, no difference between them. Only one of the explanations can be true. Which one is it?

4 | IN FAVOR OF THE NO DIFFERENCE VIEW

The No Difference View has two interesting advantages over both versions of the explanatory project. The first is that it is metaphysically more parsimonious. Both explanatory versions of Strawsonianism assume that there are two distinct facts, namely the fact that an agent is morally responsible for an objectionable action and the fact that she is

an appropriate target of blame for it. The No Difference View, on the other hand, says that there is only one fact and this fact can be referred to both by saying that she is morally responsible for the objectionable action and by saying that she is an appropriate target of blame for it. Thus, if you care about a parsimonious ontology, then the No Difference View is at least *prima facie* more attractive than both explanatory accounts.²⁰

This is, of course, not a very strong argument in favor of the No Difference View. But there is another—which has some similarities with G. E. Moore's (1903, chap. 1) open question argument—that is closely connected with the insight that the explanatory projects assume that the fact that one is responsible is distinct from the fact that one is an appropriate target of blame. The No Difference View answers an interesting metaphysical question in an elegant and plausible way about which both explanatory accounts are silent: what is it for a person to be morally responsible for an objectionable action *simpliciter*? Let me elaborate.²¹

In the colorful pictures painted above in an explanatory spirit, God creates one property which then, perhaps together with the laws of metaphysics, makes it the case that another property obtains. Now, assume that the Blameworthiness First View is correct and that we know this to be so. Then we know what makes it the case that some agents are responsible and some are not. But we may still want to know what it is for some agent to be morally responsible *simpliciter*, that is, over and above being an appropriate target of blame. This is so because, according to the explanatory accounts, the fact that one is an appropriate target of blame is one fact and the fact that one is morally responsible is another. And the Blameworthiness First View only says that the second obtains because of the first. But it does not say what it is to simply be morally responsible for objectionable actions, that is, independently of its being explained by appropriate blame.

The Responsibility First View has the same problem. So far, it does not say anything about what it is to simply be morally responsible. It only says that being morally responsible grounds being an appropriate target of blame. And it assumes that both facts are distinct.

The distinction I am driving at is familiar from other philosophical debates. A contractualist about wrongness, for example, could argue that the fact that a particular act is wrong is grounded in the fact that it is a breaking of a promise. But an act's being wrong just is, according to contractualism, its being, roughly, permitted by a principle that can be reasonably rejected. This version of contractualism is not a theory about the grounds of wrongness; instead, it "is intended as an account of what it is for an act to be wrong" (Scanlon, 1998, p. 391, n. 21), or, in the terminology adopted here, as an account of being wrong *simpliciter*.²² Thus, on this view, there is an important distinction between the grounds of being wrong and being wrong *simpliciter*.

Similarly, a naturalist realist about goodness could say that the fact that it's good for Lonnie to drink water is completely grounded in facts about his being dehydrated and certain natural properties of water.²³ However, she may hesitate to say that the fact that it's good for Lonnie to drink water just is the fact that Lonnie is dehydrated and that water has these properties. Alternatively, she could say that the fact that it's good for Lonnie to drink water just is the fact that his ideally rational and fully informed self would want him to drink water. Thus, according to this picture, there is a significant difference between the grounds of something's being good for an agent and what it is for something to be good for her *simpliciter*.

Here is another example: a Moorean about goodness can insist that the property of being good is not identical with and does not contain as a part any natural property such that there is no true claim of the sort "the fact that A is good just is the fact that A is n" where n is replaced by a description of a natural property. However, the Moorean can admit that the property of being good is completely grounded in natural properties such as the tendency to maximize overall happiness. On this view, again, there is a major distinction between the complete grounds of a property and what that property is *simpliciter*. And this is exactly the distinction I am driving at.

The general idea is that claims about the complete grounds of a certain property do not necessarily tell us everything metaphysically relevant that we want to know about this property. When somebody answers the question "what makes it the case that A is x?" she thereby tells us something about the grounds of A's being x. But this leaves another question unanswered, namely "what is it for A to be x *simpliciter*, that is, over and above its being grounded in something else?" Sometimes, claims that answer the latter question are not very controversial or interesting, such

as the claim that being a bachelor just is being an unmarried man.²⁴ But sometimes, these claims are more interesting, such as the claim that being in pain just is having a certain brain state or that being wrong just is being reasonably rejectable.

It is important to see that the line of thinking presented here is relevant for a wide variety of accounts of responsibility and not only for, say, those who believe that responsibility is a response-dependent property. Proponents of in other respects very different theories of responsibility agree that the properties of being morally responsible for an objectionable action and of being an appropriate target of blame for it are necessarily connected to each other (see Section 1). They are all confronted with the question of why this is so. Many authors suggest that one of the properties metaphysically explains that the other obtains. Then, however, they are confronted with a new question that has, so far, been overlooked, namely: what is it to be responsible for an objectionable action *simpliciter*? So far, they have not given an answer. The No Difference View, however, elegantly explains why being responsible for an objectionable action and being an appropriate target of blame for it are necessarily connected *and* what it is to be responsible *simpliciter*. Therefore, the No Difference View has an important advantage over many other accounts of responsibility.

Proponents of the explanatory accounts could reply that the No Difference View and what I have said in its favor are themselves problematic, or they could try to extend their views in such a way that they give an answer to the question “what is it to be responsible for objectionable actions *simpliciter*?” I will discuss these replies in the following two sections.

5 | IN DEFENSE OF THE NO DIFFERENCE VIEW

There are at least four groups of objections against the No Difference View: first, that the main argument in its favor is flawed, second, that this account is not a real alternative to the Blameworthiness First View, third, that the No Difference View is simply false, and fourth, that it is itself incomplete.

5.1 | The nonsense or uninformative objection

Proponents of the explanatory projects could contend that the main argument in favor of the No Difference View rests on a confused question. They could claim that there cannot be an answer to the question “what is it to be responsible *simpliciter*?” and, therefore, it is not a vice of the explanatory projects that they do not give one.

However, when we think and talk about objects, making no difference claims is very common and unproblematic. The morning star just is the evening star in the sense that there is no worldly difference between what we refer to by saying “the morning star” and by saying “the evening star”. In everyday discourse, it also makes sense to make structurally identical claims about properties such as being the morning star or being a bachelor. And many philosophers make claims of this sort about being wrong, being good, being water, being hot, or being in pain.²⁵ If one agrees that it makes sense to make no difference claims, then why should it be confused to ask no difference questions, that is to ask “what is it to be *x simpliciter*?” As far as I can see, there is no good answer to this question.

Proponents of the explanatory project may agree that it makes sense to ask the question. But they may contend that there is no claim of the form “being responsible just is being *x*” which is true and informative. All statements of this form will be philosophically uninformative, like the claim “being responsible just is being *responsable* [the French word],” or false.

But what is the argument for this? It seems to be open whether one will succeed in finding a claim of the form “being responsible just is being *x*” which is true and informative, just as it is open whether one will find a true and informative sentence of the form “being hot just is being *x*.” And the proponent of the No Difference View has a

proposal to test, namely that there is no factual difference between being responsible for an objectionable action and being an appropriate target of blame for it. As I said above, this claim is informative because it states that what we may take to be two distinct properties are in fact one and the same. Moreover, the No Difference View is philosophically interesting because, if it is true, then the Responsibility First View and the Blameworthiness First View are false. Of course, the No Difference View may, itself, be false. But the opponent needs to give an argument for why it is false. She cannot simply assume that it is.

Some may think that it makes sense to ask “what is it to be responsible for an objectionable action *simpliciter*?” and that there is a true and informative answer, but they insist that the best way to answer it truly and informatively is to give an explanatory account of the grounds of responsibility. If this were so, then proponents of the explanatory projects would have a serious advantage.

I will discuss attempts to answer the question in an explanatory spirit in detail in Section 6. At this point, I only want to make it plausible that it is not confused to ask it, and that the No Difference View could be true.

5.2 | The old hat objection

Assume that the opponent of the No Difference View agrees that it is not confused to ask “what is it to be responsible *simpliciter*?” She could now argue that the No Difference View is not a real alternative to the Blameworthiness First View. This objection comes in at least two versions. The first version of this objection says that a close reading of the relevant authors suggests that they accept the No Difference View. If this is so, then they can give the same answer to the question of what it is to be responsible *simpliciter* that is given by the No Difference View.

However, the relevant authors put their points in terms of an asymmetric explanatory relation. But the No Difference View is symmetric. Therefore, the relevant authors should not be interpreted as accepting it. For example, in “Responsibility and the Limits of Evil,” Gary Watson focuses on the “explanatory priority” (Watson, 1987, p. 222) of responsibility practices. An explanation of this kind is asymmetric: it goes from the practice to being responsible and not the other way around.²⁶ Similarly, Jay Wallace argues that “we must interpret the relevant [responsibility] facts as somehow dependent on our practices of holding people responsible” (Wallace, 1994, p. 89). And he says that responsibility “facts are fixed by the answer to the question of when it is appropriate to hold people responsible” (Wallace, 1994, p. 93). Here, Wallace accepts an asymmetric fixing relation between being responsible on the one hand and being an appropriate target of certain responses on the other. Thus, Watson’s and Wallace’s accounts are clearly asymmetric and, therefore, in conflict with the No Difference View. (Recall that I will discuss David Shoemaker’s Strawsonian account in Section 7.)

The second version of the objection that the No Difference View is not a real alternative to the Blameworthiness First View says that proponents of the No Difference View need to proceed in exactly the same way in which proponents of the Blameworthiness First View proceed. Therefore, the objection goes, the two views are too similar to each other to be real alternatives. The idea behind this objection can be illustrated in the following way: imagine that you ask a proponent of the No Difference View what it is to be responsible. She will say: “being responsible for an objectionable action just is being an appropriate target of blame for it.” Then, she will probably go on and tell you something about what grounds being an appropriate target of blame. And this is just what proponents of the Blameworthiness First View do. They give an account of what it is to be responsible in terms of what it is to be an appropriate target of blame.

It is true that this is how the proponent of the No Difference View can proceed. However, she can also proceed in others ways. When she is asked what it is to be an appropriate target of blame, she will say: “being an appropriate target of blame for an objectionable action just is being responsible for it.” And then she can go on and tell us something about what grounds being responsible. From this perspective, she looks very different from the proponent of the Blameworthiness First View. Moreover, when somebody directly asks her what the grounds of being responsible are, she does not need to say anything about the appropriateness of blame. She can directly present her explanatory

story of being responsible. Thereby, she will, according to the No Difference View, also give a metaphysical explanation of what it is to be an appropriate target of blame. But she does not need to focus on this aspect of the property she is examining. This way of proceeding is very different from the way in which proponents of the Blameworthiness First View typically make sense of responsibility for objectionable actions. Thus this argument to the conclusion that the No Difference View is not a real alternative is not successful.

5.3 | The simply false objection

Opponents of the No Difference View may contend that being responsible for objectionable actions has features that being an appropriate target of blame lacks, or vice versa. They conclude that the No Difference View is simply false.

I will not be able to discuss all possible objections of this form, but let me focus on a particularly interesting one. It says that being responsible for objectionable actions is an on-off property which does not come in degrees. But being an appropriate target of blame for actions comes in degrees. Therefore, the No Difference View is false.

As a reply, it should first be noted that it is controversial whether being responsible comes in degrees.²⁷ Thus, even if the No Difference View was committed to a view in this debate, this would not show that it is clearly false. More importantly, however, the No Difference View is neutral with regard to whether responsibility comes in degrees. This is so because the notion of appropriateness can be understood in ways that are such that appropriate blame is not gradual. Assume, for example, that appropriate blame is spelled out in terms of being an apt candidate for blame which is then understood, as John Martin Fischer suggests, as being “in the ballpark” for such a response (Fischer, 2004, p. 158). Apt candidacy in this sense seems to be a non-gradual notion: you cannot be more or less in the ballpark; you are in or out. Thus, combining this account of appropriate blame with the No Difference View yields an account which says that responsibility for objectionable actions does not come in degrees. But if one spells out appropriate blame in terms of fairness, adds the plausible idea that blaming a person can be more or less fair, and combines this with the No Difference View, then responsibility for objectionable actions turns out to be a gradual property.²⁸

As the No Difference View can be combined with the independently best account of the notion of appropriateness relevant for “appropriate blame,” the view is neither committed to the claim that responsibility is gradual nor to its denial. Admittedly, it may turn out that the best account of “appropriate blame” yields that it comes in degrees, while some independent argument proves that being responsible is non-gradual. Then, the No Difference View would be false. However, I do not know of any argument to these conclusions.²⁹ In the meantime, I take the account to be defended against this version of the simply false objection.³⁰

5.4 | The incompleteness objection

Let me briefly discuss a final objection. According to proponents of the No Difference View, the main problem for the explanatory projects is that they do not tell us anything about what it is to be responsible for an objectionable action *simpliciter*. Proponents of the explanatory project may protest that the No Difference View is itself only partial: the view may tell us something about what it is to be responsible *simpliciter*, but it does not tell us anything about the grounds of responsibility for objectionable actions.

This is true, but it is not a decisive problem. Proponents of the No Difference View can say that the fact that an agent is responsible for an objectionable action and, thereby, an appropriate target of blame for it is grounded in some fact about her control *c* and in some fact about what she does, can, or should know *k*. Importantly, proponents of the explanatory projects, at some point, need to tell a similar story. The Responsibility First View does not say anything about the grounds of being responsible and the Blameworthiness First View does not say anything about

the grounds of being an appropriate target of blame. Proponents of both views need to supplement their accounts by saying something about further grounds. And the typical and plausible way to do so is to give an account of *c* and *k*. Thus, a complete theory of responsibility would combine the No Difference, the Blameworthiness First, or the Responsibility First View with the best account of *c* and *k*.

So far I have discussed possible objections against the No Difference View. Let us assume that my defense is successful and let us in particular assume that it makes sense to ask “what is it to be responsible for an objectionable action *simpliciter*?” Can proponents of the explanatory project give a satisfactory answer?

6 | FUNCTIONALISM ABOUT BEING RESPONSIBLE *SIMPLICITER*

As I said above, some may argue that the best way to answer the question “what is it to be responsible for an objectionable action *simpliciter*?” is based on an account of the grounds of being responsible. And indeed, the explanatory projects can be extended to provide an answer to this question. As this answer has some similarities with functionalism in the philosophy of mind, I will call it functionalism about being responsible *simpliciter*.

The main idea is this: proponents of the Responsibility First View could say that the fact that *S* is responsible for *x* just is the fact that grounds the fact that *S* is an appropriate target of blame for *x*. And they could add that the fact that *S* is responsible for *x* is grounded in some facts about *S*'s control and knowledge. According to a view of this kind, to be responsible just is to have a property that is grounded in some facts about one's control and knowledge and that grounds one's being an appropriate target of blame.

Similarly, proponents of the Blameworthiness First View could say that the fact that *S* is responsible for *x* just is the fact that is grounded in her being an appropriate target of blame for *x*. And they may add that being responsible grounds some other facts *f*. Then, to be morally responsible just is to have a property that is grounded in one's being an appropriate target of blame and that grounds some further facts *f*. Being responsible is nothing over and above this.

As classic functionalism in the philosophy of mind accounts for the nature of mental states such as being in pain in terms of their causal functions, these two views account for the nature of responsibility for objectionable actions in terms of its metaphysical function. They say that to be responsible is to have a property that is grounded in some fact f^1 and that grounds some fact f^2 . And all we can say about what it is to be responsible *simpliciter* is to specify this metaphysical function. From this perspective, the No Difference View has similarities with the identity theory in the philosophy of mind. This view accounts for the nature of mental states by identifying them with brain states or processes. And the No Difference View accounts for the nature of being responsible for objectionable actions by identifying it with being an appropriate target of blame.

The functionalist accounts are more complex than the No Difference View. Are there good reasons to accept them, nonetheless? In what follows I will discuss three possible arguments in favor of functionalism about being responsible *simpliciter*. I will argue that none of them shows that functionalism is a better account of being responsible for objectionable actions *simpliciter* than the No Difference View.

6.1 | The multiple realizability of responsibility

One reason for adopting functionalism rather than the identity theory in the philosophy of mind is the multiple realizability of mental states. Roughly, one and the same state of mind, such as being in pain, can be realized by different states of the brain. Therefore, being in pain cannot be identical with a particular state of the brain.³¹ A good theory of the mind should take this into account, and a promising way to do so is to account for mental states by their causal functions. Is there something similar that speaks in favor of metaphysical functionalism about being responsible *simpliciter*?

One way to understand multiple realizability here is to say that one fact can have different grounds on a more fundamental level.³² Take the fact that Ann is responsible for stepping on my foot and assume that it is grounded in her control *c* and in, say, what she should have known *k*. Then, *c* and *k* are grounded in other facts which plausibly involve facts about Ann's brain and some more basic normative facts about reasons or values. And some of these facts are then, plausibly, grounded in other facts. Facts about her brain may be grounded in facts about atoms, particles, and so on. Assuming that the grounding relation is transitive, we get the conclusion that Ann's being responsible for stepping on my foot is partly grounded in some facts about atoms, particles, and so on. Now, it is quite plausible that Ann's being responsible for stepping on my foot can be realized by different facts on the level of how certain atoms and particles are arranged. Then, her being morally responsible for this action is multiply realizable.

Importantly, however, this kind of multiple realizability of Ann's being morally responsible for stepping on my foot is not a problem for the No Difference View. The No Difference View only says that there is no difference between Ann's being responsible for what she does and her being an appropriate target of blame for it. That Ann is responsible and an appropriate target of blame can be grounded in whatever other facts there are. Thus proponents of the No Difference View have no problem making room for this kind of multiple realizability.

The No Difference View is ruled out if one understands multiple realizability as involving the claim that there are cases in which an agent is responsible for an objectionable action and in which she is not an appropriate target of blame for it or the other way around. In that case, then, there must be a difference between both properties. However, if there are cases of this sort, then this does not only refute the No Difference View but also any kind of Strawsonianism and, thereby, the explanatory projects. This is because Strawsonianism says that being responsible and being an appropriate target of blame necessarily co-occur. Thus, this kind of multiple realizability of responsibility also cannot motivate the explanatory projects and their functionalist accounts of being responsible for objectionable actions *simpliciter*.

6.2 | Is responsibility *sui generis*?

Proponents of the functionalist accounts of what it is to be responsible for objectionable actions *simpliciter* could propose that identifying the functional roles of this property is the only thing we can do in order to illuminate it. They could say that the fact that an agent is morally responsible for an objectionable action is *sui generis* in a way that makes it impossible to say something true and informative about it over and above that it plays a certain metaphysical role.

This view has similarities with the Moorean account of goodness sketched above: just like the property of being good, the property of being responsible for an objectionable action cannot be identified with what we may take to be another property. But we can, according to this view, illuminate these properties by saying what their grounds are and what they ground.

Note, however, that the traditional Moorean about goodness makes a much weaker claim than the one I have just presented. She says that being good cannot be identified with a *natural* property. But the traditional Moorean may admit that being good can be identified with what we may take to be another normative or evaluative property, such as being choiceworthy. The Moorean about responsibility has to say that being responsible for objectionable actions cannot even be identified with a normative property. This is so because the No Difference View about responsibility does not claim that being responsible for objectionable actions just is having some natural property. It identifies being responsible for objectionable actions with the normative property of being an appropriate target of blame for them.

Why should we believe that the property of being morally responsible for an objectionable action is *sui generis* in the strong sense that it cannot even be identified with a normative property? As far as I can see, there is no good argument for this claim. And the No Difference View offers a *prima facie* plausible alternative. It says that being responsible for an objectionable action is identifiable with something that may look like another property, namely

being an appropriate target of blame. The burden of proof seems to be on the side of the Moorean about responsibility. She has to make her claim plausible that the No Difference View is false and that being morally responsible is *sui generis* in the strong sense.

6.3 | Indirect support for functionalism

Proponents of the explanatory project could agree that there is no direct reason to accept the functionalist accounts of what it is to be responsible *simpliciter*. However, they could claim that there is indirect support for it: there are very good reasons to accept one of the explanatory accounts of responsibility. As these accounts are incompatible with the No Difference View about what it is to be responsible *simpliciter*, this view should be rejected. And once we have accepted one of the explanatory projects, the corresponding functionalist picture about what it is to be responsible *simpliciter* is very attractive. Thus there is good indirect support for the functionalist account.

But what are these good reasons to accept one of the explanatory accounts of responsibility for objectionable actions? Proponents of the Responsibility First View are typically happy with pointing out that their view is intuitively more plausible than the Blameworthiness First View. But even if this is so, it does not show that it is more plausible than the No Difference View. And it is not easy to see why the Responsibility First View should be intuitively more plausible. If claims like “Ann is responsible for stepping on my foot and, therefore, it is appropriate to blame her” were part of our everyday thinking, then this would support the Responsibility First View. However, we rarely talk or think this way. Usually, we explain a person's being morally responsible by pointing to the underlying facts about her control and about what she does, can, or should know. We say or think something like “Ann knew that my foot was there and she could easily have refrained from stepping on it. Therefore, she is responsible for stepping on my foot.”³³ But this way of talking and thinking is clearly compatible with the No Difference View. Thus it is not clear what the good reason to accept the Responsibility First View rather than the No Difference View is. What, then, about the Blameworthiness First View?

Wallace, supports his view by claiming that his opponents are committed to the thesis that “there is a fact of the matter about responsibility ‘in itself’, a fact about what it is to be *genuinely* or *really* responsible, and that this fact is prior to and independent of our practice of treating people as morally responsible agents” (Wallace, 1994, p. 87 italics in original). And he objects that he “cannot see how to make sense of the idea of a prior and independent realm of moral responsibility facts,” that is, of facts “inhering in the fabric of the world completely independently of our activities and interests” (Wallace, 1994, p. 88).

Let us grant the proponents of the Blameworthiness First View that it is implausible that there are prior and independent responsibility facts and that this speaks against the Responsibility First View. However, it does not speak against the No Difference View. This is because the No Difference View says that being responsible just is being an appropriate target of blame. Thus it is not committed to there being responsibility facts that are prior to and independent of facts about our practices of treating people as morally responsible. Once again, it is not clear what the good reason to accept the Blameworthiness First View rather than the No Difference View is supposed to be.

As an intermediate conclusion, functionalism about being responsible looks like an initially promising way for proponents of the explanatory accounts to make sense of being responsible for objectionable actions *simpliciter*. However, this view is not supported by strong arguments and, compared to the No Difference View, it looks unnecessarily complex. Therefore, the No Difference View is the more attractive option.

7 | SHOEMAKER-STYLE STRAWSONIANISM

Above, I discussed Wallace and Watson as two classic proponents of the Blameworthiness First View. Recently, David Shoemaker has developed a fascinating version of this account. It deserves a closer look because it is quite

subtle, hotly discussed, and, especially important for the aims of this article, his main thesis implies, on a natural interpretation, that the No Difference View is false.³⁴ Thus, his view seems to pose a major challenge for the account presented here. I will defend the No Difference View by showing that the conclusion of Shoemaker's main argument is, despite appearances to the contrary, compatible with the No Difference View. Those who are not interested in Shoemaker's account, however, can skip this section.

Officially, Shoemaker argues for the following claim:

The blameworthy (in the realm of accountability) *just is* whatever merits anger (the anger-worthy); that is, someone is blameworthy (and so accountable) for X if and only if, *and in virtue of the fact that*, she merits anger for X (Shoemaker, 2017, p. 508, italics in original).

How does this view relate to the accounts discussed in this article? Shoemaker puts his view in terms of being blameworthy/accountable and meriting anger rather than in terms of being responsible and appropriate blame. But it is very plausible in this context that his view is a version of what I call Strawsonianism. At first sight, Shoemaker's just is claim seems to suggest that he accepts the No Difference View. However, I think that this is not the correct interpretation. First, we should keep in mind that some authors use "x just is y" to indicate that y is prior to x. Second, Shoemaker makes an in virtue claim which explicitly states a factual priority of the right side: meriting anger factually explains being accountable. And the just is and the in virtue of claims are connected with "that is" which suggests that both are meant to express the same idea. Therefore, his account can reasonably be interpreted as a version or close cousin of the Blameworthiness First View.

I do not insist that this is the only plausible reading of this passage. But let us assume that his official account says that a person's meriting angry blame for an objectionable action factually explains her being responsible for it in the sense of accountability. Then, his view would imply that the No Difference View is false. Now, what is his main argument?

Shoemaker begins with the observation that in our everyday thinking, we take agents to be blameworthy for very different things (e.g., being oblivious, spontaneous emotional reactions, failing to adopt another person's perspective) and in very different situations (including moral luck cases). Then Shoemaker asks what all these things and cases have in common such that it is in fact appropriate to blame the agents. He discusses the standard proposals which say that a certain kind of control, a certain kind of knowledge, a certain quality of will and so on are the unifying features that make the agents blameworthy. But he confronts each proposal with cases which do not fit: cases in which the agents lack, say, the relevant kind of control but still seem to be blameworthy, or cases in which they fulfill all the conditions identified by a certain theory but still seem not to be blameworthy. Thus assuming that all the agents are blameworthy in the diverse cases and for the different things, the standard accounts have problems giving a unifying explanation of why this is so. Shoemaker then argues that the best unifying explanation is "that our *emotional responses themselves* are what impose unity on the list" (Shoemaker, 2017, p. 508 italics in original).

A unifying explanation of blameworthiness is available, Shoemaker says, when we realize that human beings are "built to respond" (Shoemaker, 2017, p. 510) with a certain kind of anger to actions by agents with certain properties. Our anger sensibilities have evolved in such a way that agents with certain properties trigger them and agents with other properties do not. According to Shoemaker, properties that trigger the anger sensibilities are those properties that make the agent a fitting target of angry blame for what she does.³⁵ And, importantly, these properties make the agent a fitting target of angry blame because they trigger the anger sensibilities. When Ann voluntarily, knowingly and so on steps on my foot in order to hurt me, these properties make her a fitting target of angry blame because they "are just the sorts of properties to which humans are built to respond" (Shoemaker, 2017, p. 510) with the relevant kind of anger. Shoemaker says that "to the extent that control, knowledge, voluntariness [...] are indeed among the fitmakers, they are so *in virtue of* their triggering our anger sensibilities" (Shoemaker, 2017, pp. 509–510, italics in original). This account, he says, best makes sense of the variety of things we are blameworthy for.

This is an attractive attempt to spell out the Strawsonian idea that being responsible depends on facts about our emotions. But the important point for the purposes of this article is that the main conclusion is not in conflict with the No Difference View. The upshot of the line of thinking presented here is that an agent's being a fitting target of angry blame for something is grounded in her having certain properties—such as having a certain kind of control and knowledge—and, importantly, that these properties ground her being a fitting target of angry blame because they trigger the anger sensibilities. This is compatible with the No Difference View. Proponents of the No Difference View would add that there is no difference between being a fitting target of angry blame for an objectionable action and being morally responsible for it.

Shoemaker's account would rule out the No Difference View if it said that the agent's being a fitting target of angry blame makes it the case that she is responsible (in the sense of accountability). This is what I take to be the most natural reading of his official main thesis cited above. However, this claim does not follow from the main argument. What follows is that facts about our anger sensibilities make it the case that certain properties of the agent make her a fitting target of angry blame. But this is, as I said, compatible with the No Difference View.

This brief discussion cannot do full justice to the subtleties of Shoemaker's account. But the point I wanted to make clear is that, despite appearances to the contrary, his main line of reasoning does not pose a challenge for the No Difference View.

8 | CONCLUSION

How do the fact that Ann is morally responsible for the objectionable action of stepping on my foot and the fact that she is an appropriate target of blame for it relate to each other? Strawsonianism says that they necessarily co-occur. Standard answers to the question of why they co-occur say that one of the facts explains that the other obtains. In this article, I presented a third option, namely that they are one and the same fact. There is no factual difference between being an appropriate target of blame for an objectionable action and being morally responsible for it. This view has the advantage of being metaphysically more parsimonious and of answering, in an elegant and plausible way, an interesting question about which standard versions of Strawsonianism keep silent: what is it to be responsible for an objectionable action *simpliciter*?³⁶

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ENDNOTES

¹ For stylistic reasons, I use “it is appropriate to blame S for x” and “S is an appropriate target of blame for x” interchangeably. Those who hear a difference in these expressions should focus on the first one. The main theses will be put in terms of “appropriate blame,” not in terms of “appropriate target of blame.” I will further clarify the notion of appropriateness in Section 2.

² I take Strawsonianism to be a specific version of Wallace's more general schema (N): “S is morally responsible (for action x) if and only if it would be appropriate to hold s morally responsible (for action x)” (Wallace, 1994, p. 91). Wallace accounts for holding responsible in terms of being ready to blame agents who act morally objectionably or to judge that blame would be appropriate (see Wallace, 1994, p. 66). Roughly, Strawsonianism can be thought of as an application of (N) to objectionable actions. Proponents of similar views include Watson (1996), Fischer & Ravizza (1998, I will come back to Fischer's view in note 9), Darwall (2006), Schulte (2014), and Pereboom (2014). These authors and Strawsonians more generally focus on what is often called responsibility as accountability. For other kinds or notions of responsibility see, for example, Watson (1996), Fischer and Tognazzini (2011), and Shoemaker (2015). Some may object that Strawsonianism must be false because we can be responsible for objectionable actions even though it would be inappropriate to blame us for them because we have an excuse. Strawsonians reply that excuses show that the agent was not responsible (“I was pushed”) or that the action was not morally objectionable in the relevant sense (“I only wanted to help”; for discussions see Wallace, 1994, chap. 5).

- ³ See, for example, Watson (2014).
- ⁴ See, for example, Fischer & Ravizza (1998, chap. 1) and Brink and Nelkin (2013).
- ⁵ Shoemaker (2015, chap. 3) and Pereboom (2014, chap. Introduction) propose similar accounts. However, they add that responsibility for good actions is essentially connected with the appropriateness of praise or gratitude. This raises difficult questions about whether the conditions for appropriate blame and praise/gratitude are symmetrical or not, and diving into them requires much more space than I have here (proponents of the asymmetry thesis include Wolf, 1990, chap. 3; Nelkin, 2011, chap. 2; Mayr, 2019). In order to bracket this discussion, my formulation focuses on appropriate blame. Thanks to an anonymous referee for pressing me on this.
- ⁶ See, for example, Wallace (1994), Wolf (2011), and Menges (2017b). Note, however, that the arguments in the remainder of the paper are in principle compatible with every account of the nature of blame.
- ⁷ Thanks to an anonymous referee for pressing me to clarify how I use the notion of appropriateness.
- ⁸ For important discussions of some of these issues, see Lenman (2006) and A. Smith (2007).
- ⁹ It seems possible that being appropriate in one of these senses requires fulfilling one set of conditions while being appropriate in another sense requires fulfilling another set of conditions. For example, it may be *fitting* to blame agents for their actions as soon as these actions express a lack of good will. However, more may be required for its being *fair* or *deserved* to blame them, such as some kind of control over their lack of good will. Similarly, it may be sufficient to fulfill some minimal control and knowledge requirement for being an *apt candidate* for blame for what one does, while more demanding conditions need to be fulfilled for one's *deserving* blame for the same action. This may explain why some authors, like Fischer, contend that, as they use "the term 'moral responsibility', an agent can be morally responsible for a morally wrong action and yet not blameworthy for it" (Fischer & Tognazzini, 2011, p. 401; see also McKenna, 2012, chap. 1). For Fischer, being an apt candidate for blame is sufficient for being responsible in the sense he is concerned with. However, apt candidacy may not be sufficient for being worthy of blame in a more demanding sense like desert or fairness (see Fritz, 2014 for a critical discussion of views of this kind).
- ¹⁰ Some may object that if two properties necessarily have the same extension, then they are identical (for an overview see Orilia and Swoyer, 2017, sec. 6). This idea is compatible with the main thesis that I am going to argue for (the No Difference View), but it would immediately rule out the other versions of Strawsonianism that I will discuss. Therefore, I will assume, for the sake of the argument, that two properties can be distinct even if they necessarily have the same extension.
- ¹¹ Here I follow Rayo (2013, chap. 1) and Correia and Skiles (2019).
- ¹² See, for example, Railton (1986).
- ¹³ See, for example, Scanlon (1998, chap. Introduction) and Stratton-Lake (2003).
- ¹⁴ See for example, Parfit (2016, sec. 139) for trivial and nontrivial identity statements.
- ¹⁵ See, for example, the introduction to and the essays in Correia and Schnieder (2012) and the overview in Bliss and Trogdon (2016).
- ¹⁶ As this view is typically taken to be the standard, it is rarely explicitly embraced. But see Brink and Nelkin (2013), Nelkin (2014), and M. Smith (2019).
- ¹⁷ See Wilsch (2015) for an account of the laws of ground.
- ¹⁸ See, for example, Watson (1987), Wallace (1994, chap. 4), and Shoemaker (2017) for a view of this kind. See also Vargas (2004), McKenna (2012, chap. 2), Todd (2016), and Menges (2017a) for further discussions.
- ¹⁹ McKenna (2012) can be read as developing a fourth face of Strawsonianism. According to him, there is an interdependence relation between the appropriateness of blame and responsibility such that both explain each other. However, it is not clear whether McKenna is concerned with the same sort of metaphysical explanation or grounding that I am focusing on and whether this kind of explanation can be interdependent. See, for example, Manata (2019) for discussions.
- ²⁰ Admittedly, one could reply with Schaffer (2015) that parsimony is only a virtue with respect to ungrounded facts.
- ²¹ The following is inspired by Rayo (2013, chaps. 1–2).
- ²² See Stratton-Lake (2003).
- ²³ See Railton (1986) for a view of this kind and the example.
- ²⁴ Note that I do not mean to suggest that all a priori just-is claims are uninteresting.
- ²⁵ Consider, for example, the recent debate about metaethical naturalism between Railton (2017) and Parfit (2011, chap. 26; 2016, sec. 139). See also, again, Rayo (2013, chap. 1) and Correia and Skiles (2019).
- ²⁶ Watson's recent interpretation of Strawson comes closest to the No Difference View: "to be responsible is just to be a (possible) fit target of" reactive attitudes (Watson, 2014, p. 16). However, it is not clear whether Watson takes this claim

to describe a symmetric or asymmetric relation. Moreover, his main (exegetical) concern in this paper is with different claims, namely that responsibility is integral to our social nature and that responsibility practices cannot be externally justified. These theses are independent of the No Difference View.

²⁷ For example, Nelkin (2016) and Coates and Swenson (2013) argue that responsibility is gradual, Fischer (2004) argues that it is not.

²⁸ See, for example, Wallace (1994, chap. 4).

²⁹ Thanks to an anonymous referee for pressing me on this.

³⁰ One of the editors of EJP raised the following case as a potential problem for the No Difference View: “I am blaming Ann, and she asks ‘why are you blaming me?’ and I respond: ‘because you are responsible for the pain in my foot’.” Is this explanation of blame compatible with the No Difference View? I think that it is. Proponents of this view would point out that one can offer at least two responses to Ann’s question that refer to exactly the same worldly features. The first is the one suggested by the editor: “because you are responsible for the pain.” The second says: “because it is appropriate to blame you for causing pain” or, perhaps more naturally, “because you deserve blame for causing pain.” According to the No Difference View, the first explanation refers to exactly the same worldly feature the second explanation refers to. Both explanations are compatible with the No Difference View.

³¹ See Bickle (2016) for an overview and possible replies.

³² See, for example, Schaffer (2013).

³³ See Menges (2017a, p. 19) for this line of thinking.

³⁴ See, for example, Heyndels and De Mesel (2018).

³⁵ Note that Shoemaker cashes out meriting an emotional response in terms of the fittingness of the emotion (see Shoemaker, 2017, p. 488).

³⁶ I am grateful for very helpful comments by Hannah Altehenger, Vuko Andric, David Beglin, Daniele Bruno, Frank Hofmann, Laurenz Huddetz, Sebastian Köhler, Susanne Mantel, Lorenzo Rossi, Peter Schulte, Chandra Sripada, and Tobias Wilsch. I presented earlier versions of this paper in Berlin in 12/2016 and in 9/2017. Many thanks to the audiences for helpful discussions. Thanks to Claire Davis for proofreading and helpful suggestions and to Michael Haiden for help with the manuscript. Finally, thanks to an anonymous referee for and an editor of EJP and to several referees for other journals for careful and constructive feedback.

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