Blaming Appropriately

Janice Moskalik

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Reading Committee:

Jean Roberts, Chair

Sara Goering

William Talbott

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Abstract

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Janice Moskalik

Chair of the Supervisory Committee:
Professor Jean Roberts
Department of Philosophy

I argue for an account of blame as a reactive attitude, claiming that *respectful* blaming attitudes are affective, evaluative attitudes of disapproval directed at the wrongdoer, and are primarily about the wrongness of the attitudes or actions at issue. Understanding blame as, primarily, a form of moral address, entails that blaming attitudes ought to at least be capable of recognizing and engaging with wrongdoers' moral capacities, addressing them as competent moral agents. Attitudes of ill will, I contend, cannot do this as such attitudes are primarily concerned with hoping or ensuring that a wrongdoer suffers, rather than being concerned with what is wrong with her attitudes.

Like many others, I employ P.F. Strawson's basic framework to understand blame as an affective, attitudinal stance we take toward one whose quality of will we deem lacking. Our reactive attitudes constitute our recognition of another as a *person* – recognizing her actions and attitudes as *hers* – and, as such, constitute a form of *respect*. Blame is, in the main, a form of *moral appraisal*. As such, it attributes to a wrongdoer responsibility for the wrong, and may hope for her acceptance of responsibility for wrongdoing, and her acknowledgement of moral values that her wrongdoing failed to respect; appropriate blame does not simply contemplate the wrongdoer's feeling bad *per se.* Attitudes of ill will that respond to wrongdoing are *reactive* attitudes, and they can be *blaming* attitudes, as they recognize another's agency in her

wrongdoing; but such attitudes are not of the sort to engage with the wrongdoer's moral capacities and so they are not *respectful* blaming attitudes. Respectfully blaming wrongdoers requires more than simply recognizing a wrongdoer's agency by having a reaction to her; the *reaction itself* must actively recognize her agential capacities for moral understanding for blame to be respectful. My account thus not only shows how respectful blaming goes beyond a mere assessment of an agent as blameworthy, but it has the additional benefit of being able to show how reactivity as a form of respect need not ever be explained in terms that would, in the usual case, be understood as deeply disrespectful of personhood and agency.

In chapters 1 & 2, I outline my view of blame as a reactive attitude, and argue for my position that respectful blaming attitudes do not include ill will. To demonstrate my view, in chapter 3 I consider how contempt can constitute a respectful blaming attitude. In chapter 4, I consider how my view of blaming appropriately relates to criminal punishment. I defend the proposition that interpersonal blame and criminal punishment are less continuous than most people assume them to be, and argue that respect for persons need not entail that punishment be understood as the intentional infliction of suffering that is deserved, and that regarding an offender with non-reactive attitudes in the criminal context need not entail any disrespect.

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INTRODUCTION:

BLAME AND RESPECT

To blame someone is to disapprove of something about her – either of her actions, attitudes, or character – assigning responsibility to her for a wrong (or, for a perceived wrong). In blaming another, we may change the way we think of her – even if only momentarily – possibly expressing disappointment or anger with her, or demanding that she make amends to us. We take ourselves to be holding her responsible for what she has done – either for what she has done to us, or for what she has done to someone else. Blaming is normative, in the sense that we blame people when we suspect that they are not living up to certain specific, shared norms of one sort or another. And, in general, we hope to avoid being blamed ourselves, as we tend to think it unpleasant to be the object of others' blame.

Given this very basic description of blame, it is already clear that blame is more than a mere assessment or evaluation of another's moral activities; our bare assessment of another may be that she is *blameworthy*, but *blaming* her affects our regard for her and our interactions with her in a deeper sense. In blaming another, my feelings toward her may change for the worse and my relations with her may be worsened as a result; my attitudes toward her include the judgment "That's wrong!". In blaming another, I think that I am *right* to feel this way toward her. One who blames thinks, "She knows better!" or, at least, "She ought to know better!"; often, this thought is expressed to the wrongdoer (and perhaps to others as well), as she can understand exactly what is meant by the negative sentiments directed at her. In blaming, one usually wants a wrongdoer to feel bad for what she has done – and, in many cases, she will, sometimes without prompting. And in cases in which a wrongdoer does not seem to notice that she has mistreated us, blaming

her may nudge her toward noticing – and, toward caring about having more positive attitudes toward others.

In "Freedom and Resentment" (1962/2003), P.F. Strawson provides a description of our ordinary interpersonal interactions that can help in thinking about our blaming practices, at least in a general sort of way. Strawson says that our normal interactions with others involve assessments of their qualities of will toward us, and those assessments are part and parcel of our responding qualities of will toward them – these are called our reactive attitudes. For example, if a neighbor is kind to me, I may take her kindness to be an expression of her goodwill toward me and react with gratitude. Or, if a coworker is consistently dismissive of me during meetings, I may take her actions to be expressive of her ill will (or, at least, her indifference) toward me and react by resenting her. Such reactions are an essential part of our ordinary everyday lives, and are indicative of our participation in normal social relations and practices.

But, Strawson says, sometimes our interactions with others are such that they fall outside of the normal sphere of participation, and so we are not reactive; Strawson calls the stance we take in these situations the objective attitude. For example, if my baby keeps me up for the third night in a row, I may be frustrated and annoyed, but I am not frustrated and annoyed *at her*. I do not take her to be *willing* her actions, and so I do not have reactive attitudes. My baby has not yet developed her moral and rational capacities to be able to participate in our reactive practices, and I know this about her – she is not yet a moral agent, and it would thus be odd to react to her as though she is. She cannot understand the import of my reactions – since she lacks the capacities requisite for such understanding – so it would be odd for me interact with her as I do with those who can understand the judgment my reaction includes.

As an example of a somewhat different (and, slightly more complicated) case, imagine that I am not upset with my friend who screams in anger at me when I bring dinner to her house the day after her partner is killed in an accident. Ordinarily, I would be inclined to resent her, thinking her outburst indicates that she is not properly appreciating my thoughtfulness. But today I am not reactive to her. I was expecting her to be an emotional wreck; I imagine the shock of losing her partner is wreaking psychological havoc on her. I did not expect her to be her usual self, and my not reacting in this case is another version of the objective attitude. I still regard my friend as a moral agent, and I would be reactive towards her in my usual interactions with her. But, in this case, she is not herself. I do not take her treatment of me in this instance to be an expression of her quality of will toward me. She is overcome with grief, and I surmise that her lashing out at me is not about me at all. I may feel pity for her that she is going through such a painful time, and I may feel sad that I cannot help her more; but these are not reactive attitudes. She is not herself right now, and so we do not occupy the requisite stances for normal interpersonal relations at the moment. However, as my friend, I do expect her to apologize for treating me this way – not now, but very soon. I expect she will likely apologize by the next time I see her, as she will have had a chance to reflect upon this sudden bout of anger. If she doesn't bring it up when we first see each other, I'll remind her of it – I expect she will say something like "I'm so sorry, I was so upset, but it's no excuse to treat you that way!" If her response is, instead, "Well, what did you expect? I was upset!" I may react by resenting her after all.

Let's return to consider a case in which I *am* reactive. My neighbor's loud parties have kept me awake three nights in a row, and at ten pm tonight I hear the music going strong. I do not know him very well, but it strikes me that any reasonable person should understand that noise such as his party is generating will *bother* those of us who reside in close proximity and are

likely to have to work in the morning. I think he must be pretty thoughtless, and, while I make a note to talk with him tomorrow about this (when I am likely to be calmer), I sit at home tonight, awake, annoyed, and resentful of my neighbor. In this case, I *am* reactive: both my annoyance and my resentment are directed at my neighbor, as I *do* take his actions to be an expression of his thoughtlessness and disregard for me and our other neighbors.

Now imagine it is the following night at ten pm, and the music is going strong at my neighbor's house – *again*. Earlier in the day, I went over to his house and had a conversation with him about how disruptive his parties are to my sleeping habits. I thought that I had been respectful in delivering this message – not too judge-y, or curmudgeonly, just asking him to recognize that his – probably perfectly pleasant – gatherings also had some unpleasant side effects (specifically, for me). He seemed amenable to my suggestion that the music not be too loud past nine, and apologized (seemingly, genuinely) for inconveniencing me. But now I think he must have been laughing at me, as his behavior now makes me think he just enjoys flaunting his carefree life, bothering all of us who have to work for a living. Right now, I just wish that someone would go over and punch him in the face (although not me, I'm not tough enough, and anyway I'm kind of a pacifist).

Like many others, I employ Strawson's basic framework to understand blame as an affective, attitudinal stance we take toward one whose quality of will we deem lacking.[1] Reacting to another's quality of will marks our participatory relations with her in the moral community; when I do not react to another, it is because I take her to be incapable of normal participatory relations (either temporarily, or more globally). As such, blaming reactive attitudes are situated within our normal interpersonal moral practices. These practices are essential to our social

[1] See, for example, Bennett (2008 & 2013), Helm (2011 & 2014), Darwall (2006), Hieronymi (2004), Mason (2003), McGeer (2010), McKenna (1998, 2012 & 2013), Murphy (2003), Shoemaker (2007 & 2009), Smith (2005 & 2013), Watson (1987), Wolf (2011), and Wallace (1994 & 2011).

interactions with one another, and have a normative force and status that we all understand. Our reactive attitudes constitute our recognition of another as a *person*, and, as such, constitute a form of *respect*. So blaming wrongdoers is a way of respecting them as persons, since reacting by blaming recognizes their actions and attitudes as *theirs*.

However, continuing to follow Strawson's view closely raises a puzzle of sorts. Strawson famously claimed that negative reactive attitudes such as resentment and indignation recognize their targets as moral agents, since

> [t]he partial withdrawal of goodwill which *these* attitudes entail, the modification *they* entail of the general demand that another should, if possible, be spared suffering, is, rather, the consequence of *continuing* to view him as a member of the moral community; only as one who has offended against its demands (1962/2003, 90).

Here we see the claim that reactivity marks agency. But understanding blaming attitudes as involving a "partial withdrawal of goodwill" and as modifying "the general demand that another should, if possible, be spared suffering" makes it seem as though blame is, at its core, a kind of retributive response. So if I blame you for not caring enough about me, I may do so by caring less about you. Or my blame of a murderer may consist in my hope that he hangs for his evil deed. Many have assumed that this mirroring of blame to blameworthy attitudes is, generally, right, and that blaming attitudes can thus sometimes be particularly harsh attitudes to take toward those we blame.[2] However, I find this particularly puzzling.

The puzzle is this. In general, on this retributive interpretation of Strawson's view, we all ought to regard one another with a certain degree of goodwill, and ought not to make others suffer – but only in the default case. Blameworthy attitudes are those that lack adequate goodwill, and perhaps include those that aim at others' suffering. And *blame* is a reactive attitude that withdraws goodwill; and, in blaming, we no longer think our target ought to be spared

[2] See, for example, Murphy (2003), French (2001), and Sommers (2013).

suffering. So blaming consists of the very sort of attitudes that, in the ordinary case, one would be morally blameworthy for holding. So, why is it morally appropriate – respectful, even – to blame wrongdoers with the same lack of goodwill for which they are being (properly) held responsible? To resolve the puzzle, one must either show why it is morally appropriate for blaming attitudes to take a form that is otherwise morally unacceptable, or abandon the notion that blame consists in attitudes that withdraw goodwill (or, that bear a wrongdoer ill will) in favor of another conception of blame.

I choose to resolve the puzzle via the latter solution – that is, by abandoning the notion that blame consists in attitudes that withdraw goodwill (or, that bear a wrongdoer ill will) – and show how we can understand blame itself differently than the retributive interpretation suggests. However, my choosing to defend a "gentler" view of blame – even before I set out what that view is – may raise worries that such a view may only amount to a mere assessment of another's actions or attitudes, and thus fall short of properly explaining blame. In other words, some may worry that without the possibility of blaming with ill will, blame will lose its special force. However, as I will show, we can blame others *via* our reactive attitudes without withdrawing all (or, in some cases, perhaps any) goodwill, without that blame losing its special force and meaning in our moral lives and relations with others.

I offer an analysis of the good- and ill will involved in blaming, and explain that to make sense of Strawson's mentions of "goodwill" requires understanding that there are different senses in which the term goodwill is employed. We demand goodwill of all others and may be warranted in blaming in those cases in which that demand is not met. What is entailed by a demand for goodwill is dependent upon the relational context in which it is situated; in some kinds of cases, the goodwill demanded may be a general sort of well-wishing, and in cases of

intimate relations what is demanded may be that one share in and support the other's projects. But in at least some cases, the sort of goodwill demanded must be different from either the sense of goodwill as general well-wishing, or of goodwill as sharing in and helping with others' projects. I argue that in the context of participatory interactions, to have the appropriate quality of will – in all cases – is to regard others *respectfully*.

Many have utilized the Strawsonian framework to develop the idea that blaming attitudes constitute a form of moral address.[3] The basic idea is this: blaming attitudes recognize that a wrong has been done and that the wrongdoer is the one responsible. Such attitudes are – when expressed – implicitly addressed to wrongdoers, seeking their acknowledgement of their responsibility. These attitudes thus must be capable of being understood by other moral agents as calling out disrespectful attitudes and actions, as demanding that wrongdoers take responsibility for those disrespectful attitudes or actions, and as demanding that wrongdoers accordingly apologize or make amends, and that their attitudes be revised so as to be respectful.

I argue that understanding blame as, primarily, a form of moral address, entails that blaming attitudes ought to at least be capable of recognizing and engaging with wrongdoers as competent moral agents, and thus ought never to bear her ill will. Blame is an emotionally charged evaluative attitude toward a person we take to have done wrong by devaluing us (or others), as seen through her actions. When we think that our expectations that others regard us with goodwill is not met, blame is the way that we react, and is the way that we can engage with others' moral sensibilities – just as we understand the meaning of blame, so do those we blame. So blame is an active, participatory attitude within our ongoing interactions with others, and as such is different from *simply judging* that a person has done something wrong because her

[3] See, for example, Pettit and Smith (1996/2003), Watson (1987), Darwall (2006), Shoemaker (2007 & 2009), McKenna (1998, 2012 & 2013), Smith (2013), Bennett (2008 & 2013), McGeer (2010), and Fricker (2014).

actions do not track the "rules"; we take the person being blamed to be responsible for her actions and attitudes in a deep sense. Blaming attitudes are made appropriate by what a wrongdoer has *done*, or by *who* she is. So blame can be understood in terms of desert – blame is appropriate in those cases in which she has earned it. And, because we blame within a relational context, we can understand why blame has the force that it does – we *care* about what others think of us, and it matters to us when they disapprove of us for our failing to properly regard them as moral equals, and it affects our relations with others. But to do all of this properly, blaming attitudes ought to recognize a wrongdoer's ability to appreciate moral reasons and to be critical of her wrongdoing in moral terms – all of which is distinct from hoping that things go badly for a wrongdoer. So to blame a wrongdoer respectfully it is not enough to simply recognize a wrongdoer's agency by having a reaction to her; the *reaction itself* must actively recognize her agential capacities for moral understanding.

I argue that understanding blame as a form of moral address further entails that appropriate blame should include at least some goodwill toward a wrongdoer, in the sense that the blaming attitude is one that takes the wrongdoer to be one who can respond to the moral demands issued. For blame to properly be capable of issuing a moral demand for respectful treatment and regard, it must be – primarily – in a form that constitutes a moral protest against the wrongdoer's bad attitudes and actions. I argue that blaming attitudes themselves must be capable of communicating moral wrongness so giving the wrongdoer moral reason to reflect upon and reconsider his moral attitudes toward others. To constitute *respectful* moral address, then, it is not enough to claim that blaming attitudes respond to an agent's wrongdoing; to be respectful, such attitudes must also be of a kind that can engage with a wrongdoer's moral capacities. Attitudes of ill will, I contend, cannot do this – they are primarily concerned with hoping or

ensuring that a wrongdoer suffers, rather than being concerned with what is wrong with her attitudes. Attitudes of ill will that respond to wrongdoing are *reactive* attitudes, and they are *blaming* attitudes, so they recognize another's agency in her wrongdoing; but such attitudes are not of the sort to engage with the wrongdoer's moral capacities, and so they are not *respectful* blaming attitudes.

Respect for persons thus places limits on the forms that appropriate blaming attitudes can take, since appropriate blaming attitudes must be of the kind capable of being understood as providing moral reasons against another's attitudes and actions to one who can understand those moral reasons. Goodwill involves respect for persons, I argue, in the sense that the demands for goodwill reactive attitudes make include demands to respect others' moral capacities and be willing to engage in moral conversations with them – even when they have done wrong. My account thus not only shows how such blaming attitudes go beyond a mere assessment of an agent as blameworthy, but it has the additional benefit of being able to show how reactivity as a form of respect need not ever be explained in terms that would, in the usual case, be understood as deeply disrespectful of personhood and agency.

In chapter one, "A Reactive Account of Blame", I begin to argue for my account of blaming appropriately, to show how and why moral agents blame *via* some of the reactive attitudes, and how these attitudes recognize agents' responsibility for their attitudes and actions. In doing so, I develop particular aspects of Strawson's account of the reactive attitudes as set out in "Freedom and Resentment" (1962/2003) into an account of blame, drawing also on some aspects of R. Jay Wallace's account of the normative competence required for moral agency (1994) and on some aspects of T.M. Scanlon's account of the importance of relationships for understanding moral agency and reactivity (2008 & 2013). In describing our reactions to others' perceived goodwill

(or, lack thereof) in our personal and moral relationships – and, in our relations with ourselves – Strawson's account provides a basic picture of human interactions, showing the importance we attach to others' attitudes toward us, how it is that we are responsible, what it is that we are responsible for, why others' attitudes toward us have a certain kind of force, and some sense of how reactive attitudes can be appropriate responses to others (or, not). Strawson's account thus provides a suitable framework upon which to build my more detailed account of blame. And although I think that neither Wallace's account nor Scanlon's account fully captures all that is needed for an adequate account of blame, each makes important contributions to understanding blame as a reactive attitude: Wallace provides a careful description of the depth of understanding involved in moral agency; Scanlon provides insight into the importance of relationships in understanding blame.

In chapter one I also explore the concept of quality of will, especially its role in blameworthy attitudes and in blaming attitudes. Quality of will is *central* to explaining what blame is on a reactive account and to understanding what it is about others that we are assessing when we blame them. But the literature on blame does not pay close enough attention to what good- and ill will *are*, despite the fact that many accounts claim that quality of will is central to blaming, and that Strawson understands at least some negative reactive attitudes as involving "partial withdrawals of goodwill". [4] But understanding blame as a reactive attitude requires understanding the role of quality of will in blaming wrongdoers, so such an exploration is particularly helpful. This discussion is important to my argument in chapter two, since I claim that some accounts of blame conflate ill will with blaming appropriately.

[4] Exceptional within the literature on this point are accounts that defend vindictive reactive attitudes or vengeance, as morally appropriate responses to wrongdoing: cf. Murphy (2003) and French (2001).

In chapter two, "The Limits of Appropriate Blaming Attitudes", I argue that respect for persons places limits on which of the blaming reactive attitudes can count as appropriate blaming responses. What sets us apart as moral agents are our rational, moral capacities; these capacities enable us to recognize the moral law for ourselves, to autonomously will our actions, and to understand moral reasons when they are offered to us by others. That we possess these capacities makes us worthy of respect. Respectful engagement with others manifests in a variety of ways in our interpersonal practices involving reactive attitudes. Goodwill in the usual case – that is, appropriate quality of will toward others – entails regarding others with the respect that persons ought to be accorded. I show that respectful blaming attitudes do, indeed, still *blame* the wrongdoer and thus hold her *responsible*, and argue that the respect entailed in regarding others with a certain kind of goodwill is morally required – even when blaming them. Attitudes that include ill will – even in response to those who themselves have particularly objectionable attitudes toward others – are in fact disrespectful of their status as persons. Blaming attitudes that include ill will can engage with a wrongdoer as the individual who has done wrong, but such attitudes cannot properly address the wrongdoer in moral terms. As a result, attitudes of ill will cannot engage with a wrongdoer's *moral* capacities and so cannot function as respectful forms of blaming reactive attitudes.

Having set out my view of blaming appropriately in theoretical terms, it seems useful to examine how my view might work in application. Contempt is an attitude of moral superiority, one that involves cutting off at least some of the usual interpersonal relations with the one regarded as morally inferior; it is a very strong attitude of disapproval, and is very close to the boundary between respectful and disrespectful blaming attitudes. As such, it is perfect candidate attitude to examine in relation to my view of what is required for blaming appropriately. In

chapter three, "Contempt: A Case Study", I consider different cases involving contempt to demonstrate under what conditions contempt can be a respectful, appropriate blaming attitude. As in other cases of attitudes that can be blaming reactive attitudes, there are cases of unjustified and disrespectful contempt, some of which are not cases of blame at all; but in those cases in which a wrongdoer has shown herself to be unwilling to respect others, contempt may be justified. The attitude itself – its judgment that its target is a horrible person, evidenced by a "turning away" from him – is one that others can understand as blame, in moral terms. The attitude is about the wrong itself – in contrast with attitudes that desire wrongdoers suffer harm – so under appropriate circumstances, contempt constitutes a respectful form of moral address.

As I have argued against attitudes of ill will as respectful blaming attitudes – where ill will is the desire that a wrongdoer be made to suffer for her wrongs – one might yet worry that I have also ruled out the possibility of justified criminal punishment. Indeed, punishment is most often understood – by definition – as a deliberate infliction of suffering (or, at least, a deliberate deprivation) that does not meet my description of blaming appropriately. In chapter four, "Blame, Criminal Punishment, and Non-Reactive Attitudes", I show how criminal punishment relates to my view of blame as a reactive attitude. Some might think that for punishment to be justifiable entails that blaming with ill will must be morally permissible; indeed, wanting someone to suffer punishment for what she has done might even seem to some to be identical with thinking punishment in a given case is morally justified. I argue that such an understanding is mistaken; blame and punishment belong in different relational contexts and thus are less continuous than they are often assumed them to be.

I argue that criminal punishment can be justified without appealing directly to reactive attitudes, and that understanding blame and punishment as occurring in different relational

contexts reconciles the apparent tension between punishment and respect for persons. Criminal punishment occurs in a relational context that is somewhat akin to Strawson's objective attitude: punishment marks a kind of *stopping* of ordinary interpersonal relations with a wrongdoer, and the state (and, individuals acting on its behalf) acts appropriately when it is not reactive toward the wrongdoer. The state metes out justice from non-reactive standpoint. But, unlike when we are non-reactive in the context of ordinary interpersonal relationships, the state recognizes the wrongdoer as a responsible moral agent – indeed, as the one responsible for the action in question, and as responsible for whatever explanations she offers during the criminal process. The wrongdoer is thus respected, and the moral relationship remains intact – albeit remaining largely in the background for much of the criminal process. In sentencing a wrongdoer to criminal punishment, the state acknowledges the need to simply stop the wrongdoer from engaging in normal interpersonal relations with other citizens, both to stop him from continuing to disregard the value of others, and to allow him time to reflect on his attitudes and decide whether he can amend them to properly participate with other citizens again; but the state simultaneously addresses the wrongdoer in moral terms regarding how and why she is to be punished. Within the criminal context, I argue, punishment can thus be respectful of a wrongdoer's agency without reactivity, and it need not be justified as an expression of ill will.

CHAPTER ONE:

A REACTIVE ACCOUNT OF BLAME

In this chapter, I begin to argue for my account of blame. P.F. Strawson famously claimed in "Freedom and Resentment" (1962/2003) that our proneness to reactive attitudes – including resentment and indignation – is indicative of our engagement in normal interpersonal practices with others. The nature of our interpersonal relationships are varied, but all involve reacting to our perception of others' regard for us:

> In general, we demand some degree of goodwill or regard on the part of those who stand in these relationships to us, though the forms we require it to take vary widely in different connections. The range and intensity of our reactive attitudes towards goodwill, its absence or its opposite vary no less widely. I have mentioned, specifically, resentment and gratitude; and they are a usefully opposed pair. But, of course, there is whole continuum of reactive attitude and feeling stretching on both sides of these and – the most comfortable area – in between them. (76-7)

In contrast, sometimes we do not have reactive attitudes toward another – either because we see her as outside normal interpersonal relations, or because we judge that she has some excuse for her actions or attitudes; Strawson calls this stance the objective attitude. Given the distinction, we see how the reactive attitudes themselves constitute recognition of their targets as moral agents.

Strawson's account does not provide enough detail to account for blame as a reactive attitude, but, using Strawson's framework, I begin here to flesh out what I take to be the required details. I show how the blaming attitudes can be understood as situated within the Strawsonian reactive attitudes that are constitutive of our interpersonal interactions and relationships, and explain how we can assess whether blame is appropriate (or not) from within the normative framework of the moral community that engages in the interpersonal practices that are central to Strawson's view.

I develop an account that explains what blaming attitudes are, addressing Strawson's claim that some negative reactive attitudes can be understood as entailing a "partial withdrawal of goodwill" that modifies the "general demand that a wrongdoer be spared suffering"; in doing so, I provide more detail regarding the role of good- and ill will in blaming, in anticipation of showing – *contra* others' interpretations of blaming attitudes – that blaming is not primarily a matter of partially withdrawing goodwill. In what follows, I lay the groundwork for my account, exploring, in particular, the concepts of moral agency, relationships, and quality of will on an account of the reactive attitudes.

R. Jay Wallace and T.M Scanlon have each developed rich accounts of blame as a reactive attitude, and I consider relevant parts of each of their accounts of blame in this chapter, showing what useful tools each provides for understanding the social practice of blame as a reactive attitude within human relationships and communities, and evaluating how each account meets the requirements of an adequate account of blame. Each contributes important insights for an account of blame as a reactive attitude, Scanlon's focus on the importance of relationships – particularly the moral relationship – and Wallace's focus on the normative competence of moral agents that leads to moral, affective responses, identify central features of an account of blame as a reactive attitude; but each of their individual accounts of blame moves away from Strawson's account in significant respects by leaving out the central aspect of the other's account. In other words, Scanlon's account does not include our affective responses in blaming, and Wallace's account does not include our expectations of goodwill within the moral relationship. My account draws on certain of the strengths of each of Wallace's and Scanlon's accounts to develop a view of blame as a reactive attitude that I think is still fairly closely aligned with Strawson's original description of the reactive attitudes. My view of blame as a reactive attitude aims to explain the

importance of relationships to human interactions, the central role of goodwill in participatory interactions, and how conditions for appropriateness of blaming attitudes (as well as for all reactive attitudes) can be found within our normative interpersonal practices.

Since I will build on Strawson's basic framework to develop my account of blame, in §1, I outline Strawson's description of the reactive attitudes and their role in our interpersonal practices and relationships. In §2, I discuss the moral competence of agents on an account of the reactive attitudes, drawing on importance insights from Wallace's account of agency. In §3, I discuss the role of relationships on an account of the reactive attitudes, especially the role of the moral relationship. In §4, I begin exploring the role of quality of will in reactive attitudes, to clarify what each of good- and ill will is (especially noticing that good- and ill will may not mean the same thing in all contexts) and to think about the relationship between respect for persons and quality of will on an account of the reactive attitudes.

§ 1: P.F. STRAWSON'S ACCOUNT OF THE REACTIVE ATTITUDES

In "Freedom and Resentment" (1962/2003), P.F. Strawson provides some of the basic framework for an account of blame as a reactive attitude. Strawson himself seems unconcerned with precisely articulating the limits of acceptable blaming attitudes – indeed, "blame" is never specifically considered in "Freedom and Resentment". Instead, Strawson's aim is to deflate worries about whether free will is necessary for interpersonal responsibility. His strategy is to describe our interpersonal moral practices in order to argue that we would continue to engage with one another in these ways *even if* we were to discover that determinism is true. But despite the fact that it was not his aim, Strawson's rich description of our interpersonal moral practices provides helpful insights into how to flesh out an account of blame as a reactive attitude that can

meet the requirements of an adequate account of blame. We get a general picture of the reactive attitudes and their role in our interpersonal relationships, with withdrawals of goodwill being sometimes an appropriate part of those practices, and perhaps even being related to punishment. So a careful consideration of the relevant aspects of Strawson's account provides a good beginning to a comprehensive account of blame and is a natural starting point on the way to understanding much of the shared framework among otherwise differing accounts of blame.

Reactivity, on Strawson's account, is the mark of interactions between fellow members of the moral community; to be susceptible to reactive attitudes in our interactions with others *just is* to recognize their moral agency (1962/2003, 90). Strawson claims that, in general, we have "an expectation of, and demand for, the manifestation of a certain degree of goodwill or regard on the part of other human beings towards ourselves; or at least on the expectation of, and demand for, an absence of the manifestation of active ill will or indifferent regard" (1962/2003, 84); the reactive attitudes thus are our "natural human reactions to the good or ill will or indifference of others [or ourselves], as displayed in their attitudes and actions" (1962/2003, 80). They include the "non-detached attitudes and reactions of people directly involved in transactions with each other" and "the attitudes and reactions of offended parties and beneficiaries [such as] gratitude, resentment, forgiveness, love, and hurt feelings" (1962/2003, 75). Additionally, the reactive attitudes partially constitute standing demands for the goodwill of others. Our reactive attitudes confirm that we view others as fellow moral agents, and are holding them responsible for their attitudes toward us and toward others.

In contrast to reactive attitudes, Strawson says that the objective attitude marks our interactions with those whom we do *not* – at least, not currently – regard as fellow members of the moral community. We simply fail to be reactive to those we do not think responsible for their

attitudes: "…a thoroughgoing objectivity of attitude, excluding as it does the moral reactive attitudes, excludes at the same time essential elements in the concepts of *moral* condemnation and *moral* responsibility" (1962/2003, 89). While we may have trouble sustaining the objective attitude over long periods of time – because it is unnatural for us to disengage from others in this way – it is an option in more than just those cases in which a person is incapable of engaging in the ordinary ways with us; it is available should we need to "use it: as a refuge, say, from the strains of involvement; or as an aid to policy; or simply out of intellectual curiosity" (1962/2003, 79-80).[5]

Relationships are central to Strawson's account of reactive attitudes: our relationships with other persons – both our close relationships with particular others and the more general sort of moral relationship we have with all other persons – provide the various bases for the demands for goodwill that Strawson says we make of one another (and, sometimes, of ourselves). Strawson tells us that the *moral* reactive attitudes are those regarding moral expectations; negative moral attitudes respond to failures to meet expectations of the moral relationship. We stand in a moral relationship with all other persons, so our expectation of other persons *qua* persons does not vary from person to person; the expectation of goodwill that motivates the moral reactive attitudes is the demand for goodwill that we all have of one another in virtue of our being fellow members of the moral community. We make the moral demand of all others, and the demand is the same on all others. In other words, just as we demand of others that they interact with us with the appropriate quality of will, we also demand of (all) others that they interact with (all) others with the appropriate quality of will. However, unlike the personal reactive attitudes, what justifies a

[5] Strawson notes that it may be easier to suspend moral reactive attitudes than it is to suspend personal reactive attitudes because our personal relationships are more involved than (mere) moral relationships, but we are less likely to be motivated to suspend the moral reactive attitudes because there are fewer "strains" (1962/2003, 86). Whether it can be morally appropriate to regard nonexempt persons objectively is a question that Strawson does not address.

particular moral response as appropriate will not vary from relationship to relationship; the moral relationship and its demands for goodwill remain the same for all persons. The moral relationship places demands – and, thus, universal obligations – on all persons in the moral community.

Strawson spends much of his discussion on the personal reactive attitudes. He explains moral reactive attitudes in terms of their relation to personal reactive attitudes, and appears to think that personal relationships are also a good starting place for his discussion of the fittingness of attitudes (presumably because we are already reasonably familiar with thinking about reactive attitudes in the context of our personal relationships). Strawson reminds us to reflect on what we already know about our own relationships, to motivate what he has to say about personal relationships and their relationship to personal reactive attitudes. While we care to some degree about what *anyone* thinks of us, Strawson points out that in the case of the personal reactive attitudes, our caring about the intentions and attitudes of others towards us is dependent upon the particular relationships we have with those others; what we expect from others in the way of regard is (at least partially) determined by the nature of our particular relationships with them.

Thinking of the various sorts of relationships we might have with others is also meant to help us understand that the having – and, the appropriateness – of the personal reactive attitudes is tied to the particular relationship within which reactive attitudes occur. Personal reactive attitudes are responses to whether another's quality of will meets, exceeds, or falls short of one's expectations within the context of a given relationship. Since particular relationships provide the basis for the kinds of personal reactive attitudes that can count as appropriate, if the nature of a relationship changes, so will the appropriate (or expected) personal reactive attitudes within the relationship. Further, personal attitudes like resentment and gratitude are the kinds of attitudinal

responses I may have in response to my perception of another's quality of will toward *me*, more specifically, whether her quality of will meets my expectations given my particular relationship with her. Strawson tells us that resentment is a "reaction to injury or indifference" (83); we may react by resenting those whom we judge to have failed to accord us the goodwill we demand and expect from them. Just as I may resent someone whom I take to regard me with inadequate goodwill, I may feel gratitude toward one whom I take to have been particularly kind to me (if I take her kindness to reveal the excellent quality of her will toward me). In either case, my attitude – insofar as it is a response to another's quality of will toward me and how it relates to the expectations I have for her as a party to our particular relationship – is a personal reactive attitude.

On Strawson's view, there is a psychological connection between the personal and moral reactive attitudes: the moral reactive attitudes

> rest on, and reflect, exactly the same expectation and demand [for goodwill as in personal relationships, but] in a generalized form…the demand for the manifestation of a reasonable degree of goodwill or regard, on the part of others, not simply towards oneself, but towards all those on whose behalf moral indignation may be felt, i.e. as we now think, towards all men. (Strawson 1962/2003, 84)

The moral reactive attitudes – also called *vicarious* attitudes – are the impersonal correlates to the personal reactive attitudes. Indignation, Strawson tells us, is a moral reactive attitude that correlates to resentment: feeling indignant toward someone is an appropriate response if in her treatment of another (or, of me) she failed to accord the goodwill demanded by and for all members of the moral community.[6] But while I might resent a friend for not inviting me to her

[6] Some talk about resentment as the reactive attitude that constitutes moral blame (for instance, Murphy (2003), Wallace (1994), and many others). On such accounts, when we take another to have breached a moral obligation – that is, when we take her to have done something that is prohibited of all moral agents – we resent her; if she has, in fact, breached a moral obligation and has no reasonable excuse for doing so, we may be justified in resenting her. But on Strawson's account resentment is a *personal,* rather than a *moral,* reactive attitude, related to failures regarding the norms and expectations of *particular* relationships rather than failures of the more general obligations

birthday celebration – because I expect my friends to include me in their birthday celebrations – it would not be appropriate for me to feel indignant toward her for excluding me; although friends generally do invite each other to parties, she is not *morally* obligated to invite me to her birthday party. On the other hand, if the same friend betrays my confidence by telling someone else my secrets that she had promised to keep, I may appropriately feel indignant toward her for violating a moral obligation to keep my confidences; breaking a promise to keep secrets is a moral obligation incurred by *anyone* who makes such a promise. Further, since breaking her promise to keep my secrets is a breach of a *moral* obligation, it is also appropriate for others to be indignant toward her for telling my secrets.

Strawson notes that it is somewhat misleading to call the moral reactive attitudes "vicarious", since he notes that these moral attitudes need not only be felt on behalf of others. As in the case of my friend not keeping her promise to me, "one can feel indignant on one's own account" (1962/2003, 84), since she failed to meet the demands for goodwill of the moral relationship. However, moral reactive attitudes are, in some sense, always somewhat impersonal, as all agents are equally entitled to be indignant in response to wrongdoing, regardless of their relationship to the object of the failure of goodwill in question. In other words, since the moral relationship

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owed to anyone. Strawson clearly states that you can feel indignant toward another who has failed to meet her moral obligations to you; the vicarious, moral attitude of indignation can be felt on one's own behalf when one is the victim of wrongdoing. So perhaps in equating resentment with moral blame, others are simply describing Strawson's indignation; perhaps while the labels are different, the content may be the same, with others' resentment the same impersonal attitude as Strawson's resentment.

On the other hand, Strawson would probably agree that at times we incur moral obligations within the context of particular personal relationships. For instance, we morally owe it to our friends to keep their secrets, and we are morally obligated to care for our children; when I borrow money from you, I owe it to you (rather than to someone else) to pay it back. These sorts of expectations are *moral* rather than *personal* because they are universally understood to be required of anyone in standing in that particular relationship rather than expectations generated by particular agreements between the parties to particular relationships. As such, breaches of moral obligations – even those incurred within the context of particular relationships – may appropriately incur indignation on Strawson's account. Perhaps some theorists who equate resentment with moral blame take resentment to be a response to moral failures that occur within personal relationships. But this is not Strawson's view.

provides the expectations to which the vicarious attitudes are reactions, anyone – not just the individual who has been disrespected – can appropriately feel indignant toward the one who disrespects another. So Strawson favors calling these attitudes "vicarious"; indignation indicates that one views an agent as having wronged a fellow member of the moral community by failing to accord her the appropriate quality of will *qua* person, even when an agent is indignant on her own behalf.

Strawson's participant reactive attitudes also include self-reactive attitudes, which reflect our evaluations of our own interactions with others. We make demands on ourselves – that is, we *expect* ourselves – to regard those with whom we interact with the appropriate quality of will. We make these demands based on both our personal relationships with others, and the moral relationship we have with all persons (*qua* persons): so we expect ourselves to regard others (and ourselves) with the goodwill adequate to the nature of each particular relationship. The self-reactive attitudes thereby involve one's assessment(s) of her quality of will measured against the demands she makes of herself regarding her treatment of others. Reactive attitudes relating to these expectations include feeling compunction, feeling obliged to others, feeling responsible, guilt, remorse, and shame (Strawson 1962/2003, 84-5). If we fail to interact with the appropriate good will toward others, our self-reactive attitudes will be negative; we will feel badly (that is, we will feel guilty, or remorseful, or shameful) at our own inadequate – and therefore inappropriate – attitudes toward others. On the other hand, we may also have positive self-reactive attitudes; for instance, we may feel pride when we interact with others in a particularly lovely way.

Given that self-reactive attitudes are responses to both personal and moral expectations we have of ourselves, some self-reactive attitudes will be moral responses, and some will not. Take,

for instance, guilt. I may have high expectations of myself as a friend and expect myself to notice when my friend changes her appearance; as a result, I may feel guilty for not noticing that she has cut six inches off her hair. My guilt is a response to a failure to meet an expectation that I have of myself within our friendship; however, this expectation is not a moral expectation, so the guilt I feel is not a moral response. Alternatively, the moral relationship demands that we treat others with some degree of kindness. If I tell this same friend that she is stupid for cutting her hair – perhaps because I foolishly wanted to be the only one of our friends with short hair – I am being unkind. If I feel guilty in response to my being unkind to her, my guilt is a moral response; to treat anyone unkindly in this way fails to meet the moral demand for goodwill.

Strawson's discussion highlights several key aspects of our interpersonal practices: our expectation that we be treated with goodwill in our interactions with others; the importance we attach to quality of will in our interpersonal relationships; in a general sense, the sorts of reactions we tend to have to others' treatment of us (and, of others); to whom we tend to have these reactions; and some sense in which we can judge whether a certain response constitutes an appropriate response. So within his description of the reactive attitudes, Strawson's view provides some of the necessary framework for a comprehensive, normative account of blame.

Strawson's discussion of the reactive attitudes also provides insights regarding moral responsibility. The entire project is intended to be a compatibilist argument for responsibility: even if determinism is true, our understanding of moral responsibility need not change. The reactive attitudes are natural, essential constituents of our interpersonal relations. We understand how excuses function and do not think that the truth of determinism provides an excuse; nor would we think that the truth of determinism renders everyone exempt from participating in our ordinary moral practices. The reactive attitudes are simply a part of being a human in the moral

community, and whether or not determinism is true has no bearing on our interpersonal practices. So, Strawson argues, we can continue to understand one another as moral agents in the ways we generally do.

Strawson's discussion of how excuses and exemptions trigger the objective attitude further helps us understand what it is to be a responsible moral agent. [7] Excuses function to inhibit your resentment because, despite the harmfulness of another's action, you believe that the action does not express the agent's ill will or indifference toward you: excuses "invite us to view the *injury* as one in respect of which a particular one of these attitudes is inappropriate. They do not invite us to see the *agent* as other than a fully responsible agent…The agent was just ignorant of the injury he was causing…" (1962/2003, 77). The idea in these sorts of cases is that there is some (good) reason for us to think that the agent is not responsible for her action, that she did not intend her action to be harmful; but while she is excused from this particular action, the reason for the excuse is insufficient to think that she cannot intend actions more generally, such that we might doubt her capacity for agency altogether. Thus while she is excused from responsibility for *this action*, we continue to view *her* as a responsible moral agent. Exemptions inhibit your resentment because, despite what you take to be another's disrespectful attitudes, you take there to be reasons precluding understanding yourself as engaged in an ordinary participatory relationship with her; whether temporarily, or more permanently, you take her to be *incapable* of engaging in the ordinary participatory moral practices. As a result, you are not susceptible to the participant reactive attitudes in your interactions with her; instead of reacting to her in the ordinary way, you view her instead as an appropriate target for "treatment or training"

[7] Here I follow Gary Watson (1987) in calling these sorts of cases "excuses" and "exemptions"; these labels each nicely capture in a single word the two kinds of cases that Strawson has in mind.

(1962/2003, 79).[8] In contrast to excusing conditions, Strawson tells us exemptions "invite us to see the agent himself in a different light"; or, perhaps "[t]he agent was himself; but he is warped or deranged, neurotic or just a child…or compulsive in behavior or peculiarly unfortunate in his formative circumstances…" (1962/2003, 79). Given exempting condition(s) – whatever they are in a given case – an agent is not regarded as responsible for *any* of his or her actions.

[8] Laurence Stern (1974) reads Strawson's account of the objective attitudes as one that indicates that the objective attitude and the attitudes I have described as including ill will can sometimes overlap. Stern argues that while Strawson represents lack of a certain kind of feeling as the mark of the objective attitude, in at least some cases it is the focus on trying to get specific results from a target – "treating" or "handling" her in order to get her to behave as we want her to behave – that makes the objective attitude essentially non-participatory. Stern says that reactive attitudes are a form of dialogue: our interactions with another rely on her rational and moral capacities, taking her to be one with whom we share principles – or, one with whom we can come to share principles, reaching shared understanding through reasoning with one another; the reactive attitudes also involve affect, so there is a certain kind of feeling that is also involved in dialoguing. In engaging in this sort of moral dialogue, Stern says, we thus take one another to be fellow members of the moral community. The objective attitude, on the other hand, involves manipulation rather than dialogue, "subverting or by-passing another person's rational or moral capacities for the sake of some result" (1974, 74). Stern argues that manipulation is the antithesis of moral dialogue; in manipulating another, we foreclose the possibility of dialogue. Unlike in participatory interactions, when we regard another with the objective attitude, we do not invite her to engage in moral argument with us. Stern argues that, from our objective perspective, we are not "genuinely open to the other's influence" (75).

Stern's reading of Strawson seems mistaken to me. First, Stern regards our lack of participatory affective attitudes, and our "treating" or "handling" another like an object, as two distinct features of the objective attitude. But on Strawson's view, they stem from the same feature of our relationship with another – we are not susceptible to reactive attitudes *because* we do not share the usual moral relationship with her. Our "handling" her is due to the fact that, absent the moral relationship, the norms of participatory interactions do not apply; we are not susceptible to reactive attitude because we understand that she is not likely to be affected (at least, not in the normal participatory way) by our reactivity. So while lack of reactivity and our "handling" another can be seen as two separate features of the objective attitude, they come as a pair and do not come apart.

Second, manipulation in the sense Stern describes seems more properly a part of Strawson's participatory relations, rather than of the objective attitude (as Stern argues it is on Strawson's account). Stern notes that manipulation aims to circumvent another's rational or moral capacities – usually to avoid dialoguing with her – in order to get a particular result; this is a good description of manipulation as a sort of *bad behavior*, but does not seem non-participatory (in the Strawsonian sense). To aim at circumventing another's rational or moral capacities – the capacities that Stern says we rely on for dialogue – presupposes that she *has* the requisite capacities for dialogue. But Strawson argues that taking the objective attitude toward another is to view her as incapable of normal interpersonal interactions. If one treats another as incapable of engaging in normal interpersonal relations in order to get her to behave a certain way – and, in fact, she *is* capable of such relations – it looks like manipulation. But in such a case, manipulation appears to be a case of regarding another with inadequate goodwill (or, worse, with ill will); it is a part of normal interpersonal interactions, albeit an unhappy part. On the other hand, if one truly regards another as incapable of normal interpersonal interactions – and, to simplify the example, she actually is incapable of such relations – this does not qualify as the sort of manipulation Stern describes. In such a case, one is not circumventing another's capacities for dialogue in order to achieve a particular result; one is merely not interacting with her in the normal way because normal interactions simply are not possible (or, at least, are not perceived to be possible). So, contrary to Stern's claims, Strawson's account of the objective attitude is *not* marked by manipulation as Stern claims – instead, the basis for the objective attitude seems to preclude even the *possibility* of this kind of manipulation.

Strawson's account of the reactive attitudes also provides a good explanation for how blame has the force it does – that is, why we care about others' assessments of our quality of will, and why we might prefer to avoid being blamed. Relationships are central to Strawson's account; the importance we attach to our relationships with others motivates the reactive attitudes and also helps to provide the blaming reactive attitudes with a certain kind of force. Generally speaking, we are moved to blame those whose attitudes toward us and others we take to be lacking, and we wish to be regarded by others as having the "right sort" of attitudes in our interactions with others. It is because we care so much about our relationships with others, and about how we are regarded, that we evaluate others' quality of will and react accordingly. We attach "very great importance…to the attitudes and intentions of other human beings, and [to a] great extent, our personal feelings and reactions depend upon, or involve, our beliefs about these attitudes and intentions" (Strawson 1962/2003, 75). Strawson reminds us "…how much we actually mind, how much it matters to us, whether the actions of other people – and particularly of some other people – reflect attitudes toward us of goodwill, affection, or esteem on the one hand or contempt, indifference, or malevolence on the other" (Strawson 1962/2003, 76).

Reactive attitudes are evaluative, affective attitudes. This partially describes what they are, but also partially explains the source of their normativity, and that we care about what others think of us. We react positively to others' adequate goodwill toward us and negatively when others regard us with less than adequate goodwill. Our reactive attitudes, so understood, reflect our evaluative judgments of others' (or, in the case of self-reactive attitudes, our own) quality of will.[9] Our evaluative judgments involve our fundamental values and commitments: "[t]hese judgments, taken together, make up the basic framework through which we view the world"

[9] Here I follow Smith (2005), although she may not agree that this is a correct interpretation of Strawson (1962/2003).

(Smith 2005, 251). Thus reactive attitudes bear a rational relation to our evaluative judgments regarding others' attitudes; it is this rational connection that can make it reasonable to ask an agent to justify her attitude. In the case of those attitudes that are rationally related to one's evaluative judgments, the relevant evaluative judgment itself is partially constitutive of the attitude. So the reactive attitudes are the sorts of attitudes that are partially constituted by evaluative judgments.

Reactive attitudes can also be judged to be appropriate (or not). Strawson explicitly assumes throughout "Freedom and Resentment" that we can judge whether reactive attitudes are "fitting" to their objects (1962/2003, 77-8, 83 & 90). Whether a given reactive attitude is a fitting response depends in part upon the sort of reactive attitude it is: personal reactive attitudes respond to the expectations of particular personal relationships, self-reactive attitudes respond to our assessments of whether we have met our own expectations, and moral (or, vicarious) reactive attitudes respond to the expectations all members of the moral community have of one another. Each kind of relationship both forms the basis for the expectation of goodwill and determines who is the object of the reactive attitude. Thus appropriateness depends upon both the attitude(s) to which it is reacting, and the nature of the relationship that sets the expectation of goodwill. In other words, there is some fact of the matter about whether at least some attitudes are appropriate in a given situation, and whether at least some attitudes are inappropriate in that situation. For instance, reacting to another's kindness by being angry with her would be inappropriate, but feeling gratitude in response to kindness would be appropriate.[10] Similarly, resenting another for

[10] In conversation, Sara Goering raised a case of an unwelcome "kindness" from a religious zealot, praying for my soul because she sees me holding hands with my girlfriend – she suggested that this is a counterexample, or at least an exception, to the generalization I make that being angry in response to another's kindness would be inappropriate. But I contend that the zealot is mistaken to think that she is being kind, since in fact she is judging me unfairly – and, unkindly.

mistreating you would be appropriate. Reactive attitudes may be unjustifiable if our evaluative judgments are questionable, since those judgments are open to moral criticism as well.

Thinking about excuses and exemptions provides further support for my reading that there are appropriateness conditions for particular reactive attitudes. Strawson indicates that he thinks that there is a fact of the matter about whether a reactive attitude is appropriate and that we can be mistaken about another's quality of will and thus react in a way that isn't fitting (77-8). Resentment is only an appropriate response in a case in which another's quality of will toward me is indeed lacking. Perhaps you don't show up at the movie theatre to meet me for a date we've made. I may think that you're not taking our relationship seriously enough, and think that you don't mind blowing me off if something better comes along (and, I imagine as I'm waiting outside the theatre twenty minutes after the movie has begun, that's likely what has happened). I resent you for not caring enough about me to keep our date. But suppose that I soon get a call from you – you were in a car accident on the way to the theatre, and, although you are (thank goodness) all right, your cell phone was thrown from the car and destroyed, and you waited until you'd given your statement to the police to ask one of the officers if you could borrow his phone to make this call. All of this seems pretty reasonable as an excuse for not making it to the movie theatre to meet me, without revealing a lack of goodwill or indifference toward me on your part. If I continue to resent you in light of this information, I resent you without warrant – in other words, my resentment would be inappropriate – and it might even be appropriate for you to resent me for continuing to resent you.

Strawson's is not an account of *blame*, and which attitudes might constitute blaming attitudes is an open question. But presumably, one or more of the negative reactive attitudes can fit the

bill. Strawson's negative reactive attitudes involve a partial withdrawal of goodwill and presumably are only appropriate if a relational demand for goodwill has not been met:

> [t]he partial withdrawal of goodwill which *these* attitudes entail, the modification *they* entail of the general demand that another should, if possible, be spared suffering, is, rather, the consequence of *continuing* to view him as a member of the moral community; only as one who has offended against its demands (1962/2003, 90).

Here Strawson acknowledges that partial withdrawals of goodwill involve some form of suffering on the part of a wrongdoer, and he claims that the justification for this suffering is tied inextricably to one's membership in the moral community. If this much is right, and it is accurate that blaming responses will be negative reactive attitudes of some kind, then blame appears to involve some sort of justified suffering as well. On this point, I will depart from Strawson's view somewhat. But even in granting this much to a Strawsonian account of blame, the content of each of these attitudes, and the failures of goodwill to which they appropriately respond, still needs to be made clear.

Strawson explicitly claims that there is a range of morally disapproving attitudes, with moral disapprobation constituting a weak sort of disapproval, and indignation a stronger disapproving attitude. However, Strawson does not give us a clear picture of which of the negative attitudes might constitute the blaming attitudes (let alone their content) [11], nor when particular blaming attitudes are appropriate responses given the failures to which they respond, nor whether appropriate blaming responses can ever include attitudes of ill will. That negative attitudes involve a "partial withdrawal of goodwill" would seem to imply that there is no ill will involved in blaming – after all, a *partial* withdrawal of goodwill seems to preclude a *full* withdrawal of

[11] Many have taken the Strawsonian attitude most relevant to blame to be indignation, but whether this is the paradigmatic blaming attitude on Strawson's account – and, indeed, what is the exact content of this attitude with respect to good- and ill will – remains unclear.

goodwill; and so presumably, attitudes of ill will would entail a *full* withdrawal of goodwill.[12] But this is not made explicitly clear in Strawson's discussion, nor does he argue for it. [13] Indeed, while we might generally understand what it means to regard others with goodwill, it is not entirely clear on Strawson's account exactly what goodwill is demanded by the moral relationship in the default case, although his account makes clear that our moral practices are normative, social practices.

Strawsonian reactive attitudes are normative, evaluative, and affective responses to others' quality of will in relation to our expectations regarding quality of will. The importance of human relationships is highlighted on Strawson's account, and his account provides some necessary tools to understand the normative framework within which reactive attitudes can be assessed for appropriateness, and explains as well why we care about others' attitudes toward us. But which attitudes constitute the morally blaming attitudes still needs clarification, both in terms of the content of those attitudes, and in terms of the relational context of blaming attitudes. And since quality of will is central to Strawson's account, more details about good- and ill will are also needed to develop a plausible account of blame as a reactive attitude, especially since I will

[12] I recognize that this may be too controversial to simply assume, and I will discuss the possible combinations of good- and ill will that might be involved in putative blaming attitudes in more detail in the next chapter.

[13] Stern assumes (I think, wrongly) that blame for Strawson *requires* attitudes of ill will. Although Stern does not acknowledge it in his discussion, Strawson explicitly differentiates between indignation and the (weaker) moral disapprobation in "Freedom and Resentment", labeling both as participatory reactive attitudes (1962/2003, 83). So even if Stern's interpretation of indignation as constitutively involving a desire that the wrongdoer be harmed is correct, Strawson's view has available at least one milder reactive attitude – moral disapprobation – as a participatory response to wrongdoing. It is certainly clear on Strawson's account that he takes moral disapprobation to be a moral reactive attitude; thus, moral disapprobation is a blaming attitude on Strawson's account, and not a version of the objective attitude. So if Strawson were to agree that figures like Gandhi and King morally disapprove of wrongdoers – without indignation – then they are participating in normal interpersonal relationships as described by Strawson's account. But given that Stern does not acknowledge Strawson's discussion of moral disapprobation, and given that we only know that what Stern calls "moral disapprobation" does not include as constitutive a desire that the wrongdoer suffer, it is unclear whether moral disapprobation as Stern envisions it is the same as what Strawson calls the reactive attitude of moral disapprobation. But even if the two of them are using "moral disapprobation" to pick out different attitudes, Stern's worry appears to be that blaming without retributive desires is unavailable on Strawson's account. If that is the correct way to understand Stern's concern, then his particular worry is misplaced.

suggest that blame cannot be properly understood simply as an attitude that involves a partial withdrawal of goodwill. Next I turn to filling in the necessary details regarding the content of blame and its relational context for a Strawsonian account of blame.

§ 2: Reactive Attitudes and the Moral Competence of Agents

Indignation and some of the other negative, third-person correlates that partially withdraw goodwill seem the best candidates for the blaming attitudes, on Strawson's account; but some of the negative personal and self-reactive attitudes can also be blaming attitudes. The third-person, negative attitudes are responses to failures of goodwill as measured against the expectations we have of others as moral agents – that is, failures of goodwill when measured against the expectations that we have of *all* others as moral agents. These attitudes are impersonal, in the sense that any of us – victim or otherwise – can assess and react to others' failures of goodwill as demanded from the moral relationship; we all have standing to hold others to account when they fail by withdrawing some goodwill in our attitudes toward them. And the idea that there is a range of blaming attitudes – from moral disapprobation to indignation, and perhaps to even stronger negative attitudes – allows that we may respond (presumably) with different sorts of blaming attitudes, perhaps the differences being appropriate as proportional to the severity of the moral wrong to which the attitude responds. Some of the personal and self-reactive negative attitudes may constitute blaming attitudes as well, although those attitudes respond to failures to meet expectations we have of particular others within our particular relationships with them, or to failures to meet expectations we have of ourselves. The particular content of *any* of these attitudes is far from clear on Strawson's account, and it is the content that is crucial to understanding what blame *is*. So a more careful description of what blaming attitudes are – and

an articulation of the reasons why these attitudes are best understood as described – will be useful in thinking more carefully about blame.

Moral agency is central to understanding blaming reactive attitudes. What reactive attitudes are, what normative function they serve within relationships, why they have the normative force that they do, why we react to some people and not to others, why we react to others' qualities of will in the ways that we do, and how we assess the appropriateness of particular reactive attitudes in relation to whatever they are responding to, all depend upon having a particular understanding of moral agency. On Strawson's description of the reactive attitudes, moral agency is attributed to those to whom we react, while agency (at least, in a given instance) is not attributed to those to whom we *do not* react. In other words, agents are those to whom we react as persons, and non-agents are those whom we view as non-persons – or, in Strawson's term, as *objects*.[14] But much more needs to be said about agency to flesh out a proper account of blame. Agency determines the standard demands for goodwill demanded by the moral relationship, since these standards are revealed by agents' shared practices, norms, and mutual understandings regarding respect for others' moral agency. In order to show how agency functions to establish each of these, I seek to provide a more detailed account of what agency entails, as this will enable me to argue for normative understanding of how to assess the appropriateness of blaming reactive attitudes in particular cases.

In his rich account of blame as a reactive attitude, R. Jay Wallace (1994) follows Strawson in tying reactivity to moral agency, but moves away from Strawson's account in significant ways as well. Wallace wants to distinguish reactive attitudes – which he limits to the blaming attitudes –

[14] I think that it is important to recognize that we react *because* we are agents, and *because* we take those to whom we react to be agents as well. This may be consistent with what Strawson says, but it is not clear that he thinks it necessary to understand reactivity in terms of agency (as he describes agency in terms of reactivity). I will explain this aspect of agency in more detail below.

from the other participatory attitudes (which are all considered reactive attitudes, on Strawson's account). He also distinguishes moral and non-moral reactive attitudes: moral reactive attitudes are blaming attitudes that hold wrongdoers responsible for moral failures, but Wallace allows that it is possible to have similar attitudes that respond to failures to keep to non-moral obligations.

Wallace holds that to be morally responsible is to be open to a kind of deep appraisal, one which assesses the quality of an action as an expression of one's choices; when we hold others (or ourselves) morally responsible *via* this quasi-evaluative stance, it is indicative of their (or our) openness to this deep appraisal. Responses of blame and sanction are the "hallmarks" of the practice of deep assessment; wrongdoers can be made to answer for their actions, and blame has the special moral force that lets wrongdoers know that they need to answer for their actions (1994, 53 & 61). Blaming others shows that we hold those others responsible, as we hold them to the same moral obligations to which we ourselves are committed, and also shows that we are susceptible to the reactive emotions in the sort of way required for normative competence. Blame can also serve to express our commitment to moral obligations and to let others know that we hold them to those same moral commitments. We are responsible for all of our autonomous actions, as they display our values and commitments, but we are only held to *moral* account – and thus are open to moral blame – for those autonomous actions that display *moral* values and commitments. Members of a moral community expect each other to keep to their shared obligations, and hold one another morally responsible – *via* reactive attitudes – for failing to do so. [15]

[15] On Wallace's account, the nature of the expectation at issue explains whether reactive attitudes are moral or non-moral. Reactive attitudes get their propositional content from particular beliefs: a reactive attitude contains the evaluative belief that a demand has not been met. If the demand itself is a *moral* demand – that is, it is justifiable *via* explicitly *moral* reasons – then reactive attitudes concerning the failure to meet that demand will be *moral* reactive

Wallace's description of the normative competence involved in blaming – "the ability to grasp and apply moral reasons, and to govern one's behavior by the light of such reasons" (1994, 1) – develops and supports Strawson's claims that we care deeply about the ways others treat us, and provides a detailed account of the nature of moral agency. Having "the ability to grasp and apply moral reasons" requires that an agent understand all of the moral concepts relevant to a given situation, that she knows in which situations those moral concepts are relevant, that she understands what is demanded of her in those situations where those moral concepts are in play, and that she also understands in which situations certain moral concepts may need to be revised in light of other (also relevant) moral considerations (1994, 157). Being able "to govern one's behavior in light of reasons" requires that the agent have what Wallace calls "a capacity for critical reflection: the ability to step back from one's immediate desires and assess the actions they incline one to perform, in light of the moral reasons one has grasped and accepted" (1994, 158).

Wallace claims that these two abilities depend upon one another: one cannot have either capacity without having both capacities (1994, 25). Not only will an agent need to be able to step back from her desires in order to be able to reflect upon them, but to reflect upon the relation of her desires to reasons she has grasped and accepted she must have already grasped and accepted these reasons. But the capacity for critical reflection is not sufficient for governing one's behavior – an agent must also be able make choices about her actions based on her deliberations

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attitudes (1994, 36). Only *moral* demands constitute *obligations*, Wallace says: the moral reactive attitudes are connected to "moral *obligations*, [which] are supported by principled *justifications* and are focused on the *choices* expressed in what people do" (1994, 14-5). Responses to failures to meet non-moral demands, on the other hand (assuming such breaches do not *also* involve a breach of moral obligation), are nevertheless failures to meet a demand; so in some cases it may be reasonable (although not *via* moral reasons) to resent another, for example, for a violation of a norm of etiquette (36-7). Additionally, Wallace's account allows that sentiments like gratitude are moral, in that they respond to the moral worthiness of an action, but they are not *reactive attitudes* because they are not a response to a *failure* of moral obligation 1994, 37).

that accord with the reasons she grasps and accepts, and, further, she must be able to "translate those choices into behavior. Reasons for action, after all, regulate qualities of choice, as expressed in behavior; but someone without this last capacity will hardly have the power to act in ways that express her choices at all" (1994, 158-9). Thus it is fair to hold those with both capacities morally responsible, which "is essentially to be subject to a distinctive range of moral sentiments in one's interactions with the person" (1994, 8) when she fails to act as she is morally obligated. These moral sentiments are the reactive attitudes, and all constitute a form of blame: guilt, resentment and indignation are the paradigm examples of Wallace's reactive attitudes.

When compared with Strawson's original framework, Wallace's description of the failure to which reactive attitudes are reactions drastically alters the landscape of moral interactions. At first glance, the expectations associated with Wallace's reactive attitudes – that moral agents keep to their moral obligations – seem to resemble the expectations of the moral relationship on Strawson's account. They are universal expectations we have of all others in our moral community, and our reactivity and understanding of one another as moral agents are both intrinsically related to these expectations. But the expectations that ground reactive attitudes on Wallace's account differ from those on Strawson's account: the expectations that Wallace says ground reactive attitudes are in terms of *moral obligations* rather than of goodwill; further, on Wallace's account it is only *failures* to meet moral expectations that result in reactive attitudes.[16] Thus Wallace limits the reactive attitudes to blaming attitudes – those that respond to failures of moral obligations – so, only those attitudes that respond to bad behavior count as reactive.

Although they are objective, in the sense that the standards by which we can measure appropriateness do not vary from person to person, or from relationship to relationship, the

[16] This difference will be discussed in more detail below.

attitudes that constitute moral blame on Wallace's account are not limited to the attitudes that we can have vicariously, although they are limited to *blaming* attitudes. Wallace's reactive attitudes include first, second and third person blaming attitudes – such as guilt, resentment, and indignation – all of which are negative, and which differ from one another with respect to one's standing in relation to the target of the attitude. So despite the fact that both Wallace and Strawson talk about guilt, resentment and indignation as examples of reactive attitudes, the content of these three reactive attitudes must be quite different on each account.

On Strawson's account, there are three types of interpersonal, participatory relationships – personal, vicarious (moral), and the relationship with the self – and each type of relationship generates different expectations; guilt, resentment and indignation are responses to failures to meet different expectations. Strawson's personal reactive attitudes – such as resentment – are tied to expectations we have of others based on our particular relationships with each of them. We resent one who fails to regard us with the goodwill that we expect of her, *given the nature of our relationship with her*. Strawson's vicarious (or, moral) reactive attitudes – like indignation – are tied to expectations based on the moral relationship that all members of the moral community have with one another, in virtue of said membership; any of us can feel indignant toward another who fails to regard a fellow member of the moral community (or, us) with the goodwill we all are owed *in virtue of the moral relationship*. Strawson's self-reactive attitudes – like guilt – are based on our expectations of ourselves, that we expect ourselves to treat others with appropriate goodwill; we feel guilty in response to our regarding another with less goodwill than we demand of ourselves. So on Strawson's view, we may have different expectations with respect to goodwill, depending upon the nature of the relationship that grounds the response, and our reactions constitute our assessment of others' quality of will – whether our assessment is positive

or negative. So Strawson's reactive attitudes include a much broader range of both approving and disapproving responses, whereas on Wallace's account, reactive attitudes are always responses to *failures* to meet moral obligations that are the same for us all; even though the attitudes that constitute moral blame on Wallace's account are not limited to the attitudes that we can have vicariously, they are limited to attitudes of disapproval.

By limiting his definition of reactive attitudes to the negative, blaming reactive attitudes, Wallace's account obscures the importance of interpersonal relationships in normal human interactions, although viewed in a certain light I understand why some might find it plausible. He claims that blame holds others to account in a way that is asymmetrical with cases in which others live up to their expectations, and this asymmetry is not properly explained by Strawson's understanding of reactive attitudes as responses to others' quality of will. We do not 'hold others to account', Wallace says, when they do things that we expect of them, nor when they exceed our expectations, but only when they fail to meet obligations. Further, Wallace claims that we *ought* to hold others to account for their failures *via* reactive attitudes, although no particular sentiment is *required* in response to morally appropriate behavior – for example, we might feel gratitude toward one who shows us particular kindness, but it is no failing if we do not (1994, 71). That his account displays this asymmetry, Wallace says, accounts for the specialness of blaming attitudes among moral responses, having "isolated moral blame and moral sanction as the kinds of responses distinctive of holding people responsible" (1994, 55); on Wallace's account, only blaming attitudes can constitute reactive attitudes, so that *all* reactive attitudes hold others to account in this special way.[17]

[17] Strawson's reactive attitudes are always responses to others' quality of will, and he argues that we have normative expectations – based on the nature of our relationships – regarding what others' attitudes toward us ought to be. If I resent someone for her lack of goodwill toward me, my resentment is tied to my belief that she lacks appropriate goodwill toward me; if I am mistaken in my belief about her lack of goodwill – or, if I am mistaken about the

This all might seem plausible, given that Wallace's focus is to give an account of blame; but the result paints a picture of human interactions that stresses our recognition of others' agency in cases in which they *misbehave*; to recognize others *via* reactive attitudes thus requires an unwanted intrusion from another, and leaving others alone – either by not intruding, or by not blaming intruders – would not entail such a recognition. Wallace's account is thus more focused on holding others responsible for *behavior* than is Strawson's: we react to others' bad *behavior* when we blame, on Wallace's account, rather than to their (morally deficient) *attitudes*. As such, Wallace's reactive attitudes need not be embedded within settled engagements with others in the way most of our blaming reactive attitudes in fact are.

Further, in narrowing the class of reactive attitudes to specific kinds of blaming responses, Wallace's view cannot account for many cases of blaming within particular relationships. On some level, I am unconcerned what labels we give to the blaming attitudes, but Strawson's description of the negative attitudes – both moral and non-moral – resembles blaming attitudes more closely than does Wallace's description of the reactive attitudes. I think that we do react to others' attitudes toward us when we blame, taking their actions to reflect their lack of proper regard for us. In some sense, we take others to be obliged to regard us with certain goodwill, but thinking in terms of *obligations* is generally limited to the moral relationship. Wallace wants to

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goodwill our relationship entitles me to expect – my resentment toward her is unjustified. So on Strawson's account, the expectations in question are also normative. But these are not the sort of expectations that Wallace has in mind when he talks about reactive attitudes, nor is this the sort of normativity Wallace is seeking: Wallace seeks to show that a *particular* reactive attitude is the justified response in a particular situation; Strawson's account can at best allow that a range of responses may be appropriate responses in a particular situation. To that end, Wallace's account can better justify a blaming response as *the* appropriate response in a given situation. But I do not see this as particularly problematic for the Strawsonian account of blame I am defending. If one blames, on my account, we can assess its appropriateness in the ways I will explain below. And if one reacts with a non-blaming reactive attitude where blame would also be appropriate, we can still assess the attitude one actually has with respect to appropriateness standards. The fact that I may respond to your failure of goodwill with sadness rather than indignation, say, does not make my sadness inappropriate for being a non-blaming response; an account that would do so would minimize the importance of relationships between persons to our lives (moral or otherwise), and thus would be an impoverished account of our interpersonal interactions.

limit blame – for the most part – to failures of moral relations, but this seems to leave out many of the everyday cases of blame.

Consider the following case of blame for which Wallace cannot account. If I blame my friend for forgetting to invite me when she organizes a group outing to the movies, I judge that she has disregarded my value in some sense that matters to me, and feel upset with her; my blaming her will affect how I think of her and thus it will affect our friendship. It is true that we may be able to move past this disruption: perhaps I tell her that she has hurt my feelings and that I feel mad at her for not including me, she apologizes and tells me that she feels bad for leaving me out, and I forgive her and we go eat some ice cream. We can talk about my attitudes that respond to her forgetting about me as blame on my account, but such attitudes do not count as blame on Wallace's view. My friend is not *obligated* (in a moral sense) to include me in her plans. But I *expect* her to do so, given the nature of our particular friendship. On my view, I blame her – since blame responds to failures to meet expectations for goodwill – but Wallace cannot call this blame on his view. The expectations that matter in this kind of case are expectations within a particular relationship. But Wallace is adamant that relationships cannot provide the requisite normative grounds for reactive attitudes without an independent account of interpersonal relationships (1994, 29); it is for this reason that Wallace purposefully moves away from Strawson's account by changing the nature of the expectations that ground moral blame, but it seems that something important about personal relationships and their particular expectations is lost on Wallace's account.

Wallace argues that Strawson's account is overly inclusive because it captures as reactive attitudes emotions that do not involve any special connection with expectations: all of Strawson's participatory attitudes – that is, any attitudes we have toward other *persons* in

response to their qualities of will – are reactive attitudes, and the objective attitude is described as the stance from which we have no participatory relations with another. So on Strawson's account our interactions can only be either reactive or objective – that is, participatory or not. Wallace worries that this lumps reactive and participatory attitudes together into one category as the nonobjective attitudes, conflating two separate distinctions: the distinction between participant attitudes (some of which are reactive) and the objective attitude, and the distinction between reactive attitudes and nonreactive (but still participatory) attitudes. Wallace argues that Strawson's naturalistic claim that the reactive attitudes are practically inevitable for us *relies* on this elision, since Strawson describes interpersonal relationships as "precisely…being exposed to the range of reactive attitude and feelings that is in question" (1962/2003, 81). By separating out reactive attitudes – that is, blaming responses to failures to meet moral expectations – from other sorts of participatory attitudes, Wallace argues that his account avoids this conflation.

Wallace's objection regarding the putative conflation of the reactive attitudes with participatory attitudes seems question-begging. Strawson's account is not meant to be limited to only those reactive attitudes that hold others' to account for their failings. Strawson describes the reactive attitudes as constitutive of our interpersonal relationships and practices, without aiming to give an account of *blame*. But reactive attitudes, on Wallace's account, are restricted to *only* blaming attitudes, given his definition of the sort of expectations to which they are responses. So in claiming that Strawson conflates the reactive attitudes with other sorts of (non-reactive) participatory attitudes, Wallace appears to in fact be claiming that Strawson conflates *Wallace's class of reactive attitudes* with *Strawson's class of reactive attitudes.* If this is right, it is not clear why this is a problem for an account of reactive attitudes, unless one already accepts that reactive attitudes can only be responses to others' moral failings. But understood as reactions to another's

quality of will, reactive attitudes can plausibly include *any* responses to how we perceive others' quality of will to stack up against the expectations we have for them with respect to their quality of will toward us. So not all reactive attitudes are the sort of attitudes "to hold others to account" in the sense that they *blame* others, since they can include all participatory responses to others' qualities of will; but all such attitudes regard their objects as responsible agents. So one can develop an account of blame as a reactive attitude without limiting the class of reactive attitudes as Wallace does – on such an account, blame would be a *kind* of reactive attitude, but not exhaustive of the *class* of reactive attitudes.

Wallace's claim that blame is special for its ability to "hold to account" seems wrong. In his explanation of blaming attitudes, it seems plausible to talk about "holding to account" as mainly covering cases of wrongdoing and blame. But limiting "holding to account" to only negative cases does not properly capture what it is about responsibility that matters to blaming appropriately. All participatory reactive attitudes – negative and positive alike – are responses to agents and their actions *qua* agents. Participatory attitudes recognize their objects as responsible moral agents. So holding others responsible – whatever their quality of will – can be sensibly understood within my scheme of reactive attitudes as participatory attitudes that involve different kinds of relations with others within human community.

Additionally, Wallace argues that his account better captures the distinction between the reactive attitudes and the objective attitude; to explain, Wallace considers the patient-therapist relationship, one that is not "interpersonal" (or, at least, it is not interpersonal in the right sort of way). If the objective attitude and participant reactive attitudes are opposed to one another, as they are on Strawson's account, the therapist can never appropriately have participant reactive attitudes toward her patient. Removing love, sympathy, and hurt feelings from the class of

reactive attitudes – but allowing that they are yet participatory attitudes – solves the apparent problem of the therapist having reactive attitudes toward her patient. So on Wallace's view, the therapist can react to her patients with love, sympathy, or hurt feelings – all of which might be mistakenly construed as reactive attitudes on Strawson's account – without ever viewing her patients other than objectively (1994, 30).

But the case of a therapist is not as problematic for distinguishing reactivity from objectivity as Wallace thinks it is. When a therapist is interacting with a patient *qua* therapist, she may take up the objective attitude in her interactions with her patient; after all, *qua* therapist, she is *treating* her patient. But she might also only take up the objective stance with respect to some aspects of her interactions with her patient – say, suspending her susceptibility to moral reactive attitudes, while still feeling sympathetic. In such a case, the objective attitude is available to the therapist as a tool, to be used in the service of the ends of therapy; the therapist does not thereby regard her patient as a non-agent, incapable of normal interpersonal relationships. The suspending of certain reactive attitudes in cases like this one is a part of the particular relationship.

If at some point in her interactions with her patient a therapist comes to resent her patient – despite her avowal to suspend judgment of her patient within the context of therapy – she either is now in a participant role with her patient, or she is mistaken about their relationship, or her reactive attitude is inappropriate to their relationship; which of these is true will depend upon the facts of the situation. Strawson acknowledges that we have trouble sustaining the objective attitude for very long – it's just not natural for us to view others in this way, particularly when we take them to be members of the moral community. So while the therapist might view her patient *qua* patient with the objective attitude, she might also see her patient as a member of the

moral community and have perfectly legitimate participant reactive attitudes toward her when she's having interactions with her of the ordinary sort when they engage in the normal interpersonal interactions (that is, *qua* co-members of the moral community). And while she is treating her patient, she may go back and forth between the attitudes that she has toward her patient. So an account of reactive attitudes that respond to others' good- or ill will can account for the case of therapists and their patients, albeit in a different way than does Wallace's account.[18]

Some modifications to Wallace's careful description of the moral competence required for agency may yet prove helpful in understanding many of the normative implications of blame as a reactive attitude, as a response to others' failures to accord us adequate goodwill. Wallace's normative competence entails both "the ability to grasp and apply moral reasons, and to govern one's behavior by the light of such reasons" (1994, 1). On my view, reactive attitudes themselves *constitute* moral reasons, and moral agents can *understand* them as moral reasons. Reactive attitudes thus give one moral reason not only to *behave* in certain ways, but, more importantly, reactive attitudes *provide reasons to examine one's moral attitudes toward others* – that is, how one regards others; blaming attitudes also *provide moral reasons to adjust one's moral attitudes* in cases in which it is appropriate to do so.

Quality of will plays a central role in moral and non-moral participatory relations, and must be central to moral blame in ways that Wallace's account fails to recognize. When we blame a wrongdoer, more than just her behavior is at issue – we blame her for her *quality of will.* We care more about others' quality of will toward us, in general, than about whether they are keeping to

[18] Given the way Wallace construes reactivity on his account, one will never partially occupy the objective stance; so the opposition between reactivity and objectivity is always starker on Wallace's account than it could be on an account like the one I defend. I am not concerned about this, as I think that there are relational contexts in which we can take the objective attitude toward those whom we simultaneously regard as responsible moral agents; these contexts are discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

moral obligations – unless, of course, moral obligations are understood in terms of respecting others, which is in turn understood as regarding others with goodwill. But we also care about quality of will in our personal relationships, and Wallace's account fails to recognize this fact. In understanding reactive attitudes as responsive to others' qualities of will, we can recognize the importance of relationships, including the moral relationship. We need not think in terms of meeting (or, of failing to meet) particular moral obligations, as demands for adequate goodwill provide all that we need.[19]

Further, an account of blame must keep relationships central, making blame relative to expectations within a particular relationship – moral or otherwise. This is a particular strength on Strawson's account. Keeping reactive attitudes within a relational context helps to understand why we care so much when we are blamed, and what motivates us to avoid being blamed, and how others' partial withdrawals of goodwill serve to recognize us as responsible for wrongdoing. Additionally, we can assess the fairness and appropriateness of particular responses by measuring them against the norms of the relationship within which they occur. By redefining what constitutes a reactive attitude – that is, making them relative to moral obligations rather them expectations regarding goodwill – Wallace makes reactive attitudes much less personal than they are on Strawson's account and ultimately obscures the importance of relationships in human communities. So Strawson's way of defining reactive attitudes remains attractive, and I continue to build my view of blame upon his relational account.

[19] What constitutes goodwill is discussed in more detail below.

§ 3: REACTIVE ATTITUDES AND RELATIONSHIPS

T.M. Scanlon's account of blame as a reactive attitude (2008, 2013a & 2013b) explains how it is that relationships themselves can be constituted by our attitudes toward others. Like Strawson's account of reactive attitudes (and, unlike Wallace's account) *all* kinds of relationships are central to Scanlon's account of blame, and our expectations of others' attitudes toward us within particular relationships provide the requisite normativity from which we may judge blame as appropriate or not.[20] To have a particular relationship with another person is to have the sort of attitudes toward her that are appropriate to that particular sort of relationship; the parties to a relationship thus each expect the other to regard her with attitudes that are appropriate to their relationship. Those with whom we have the closest relationships are those to whom we owe the most favorable attitudes, given the expectations of close relationships, and they will expect our actions towards them to express the positive attitudes toward them that they expect of us; those with whom we have less close relationships will still expect us to regard them positively, only less so. In this way, our attitudes toward others are intimately linked to our relationships with those others: in the most common cases, our relationships are (at least, partially) *constituted* by our attitudes toward them.

On Scanlon's account, blaming involves an alteration in one's attitudes toward another, in response to the perception that one's relationship has been impaired; this alteration in attitudes may be either temporary or more permanent, depending upon the nature of the impairment.[21] Scanlon says that blame expresses a judgment of moral deficiency: that another is deficient in her attitudes, relative to the standards set by her relationship(s) with others. It is this moral

[20] Scanlon takes his account to be similar to Strawson's as "seeing human relationships as the foundations of blame" (2008, 128).

[21] Unlike Strawson's reactive attitudes, blaming responses need not be affective attitudes for Scanlon; this difference will be discussed in more detail below.

deficiency – which is something about the agent herself – that makes blame appropriate. "If [wrongdoers] are prepared to manipulate and mistreat others whenever this is to their advantage, this fact alone about what they are like makes it appropriate for us to suspend or modify our normal attitudes toward them" (2013a, 108).[22] So if I surmise from the nature of your action(s) that you do not regard me with the kind of respect I had expected you would (or, at least, you are failing to do so in this instance) – or perhaps even more generally you simply do not think as highly of me as I expected you to – I may (properly) judge you to be blameworthy. I may infer from your actions that (it turns out) we do not have the relationship I had believed that we did – or, perhaps, we no longer have the relationship that we once did – as you value me less than I had thought (or, you now value me less than you had in the past); "the [wrong] action shows something about the agent's attitudes toward others that impairs the relations that others can have with him or her" (2008, 128). If, as a result, my expectations of your attitudes toward me are now less than they were before, our relationship has been modified – thus I have blamed you, on Scanlon's account.[23]

Scanlon also provides a helpful description of the moral relationship. Just as on Strawson's view, Scanlon says that we also have standing expectations of *all* others in virtue of the moral relationship we all have with each other as fellow members of the moral community. Scanlon's

[22] But desert can only justify *certain kinds* of suffering, on Scanlon's account. I will consider what he says about the limitations of suffering in the next chapter.

[23] On Wallace's account, judgments of blame are expressive of the reactive emotions. This sounds like a complete reversal of Scanlon's order of things – which would be that blame is a response to a judgment of blameworthiness. But this is probably only at most a partial directional change, since Wallace thinks that the reactive attitudes and judgments of blame are dependent upon each other (where for Scanlon the judgment of blameworthiness comes first).

I favor Scanlon's way of thinking about things. Although the Strawsonian notion that reactivity signifies recognition of a moral agent might sound as though things work in a different way than Scanlon describes, one's reactivity – emotional or otherwise – can only be explained on a fairly cognitive view of the emotions: if I am angry at you for neglecting my feelings, this anger can only be justifiable if I am angry because I believe your attitudes toward me to be somehow lacking, whether I realize it in the moment or not. If I find myself angry with you and do not know why I am angry, some reflection is likely to reveal a belief I have that can support the reasonableness of my emotions; if no such belief can be discovered, then my anger may indeed be irrational (and merely unjustified).

moral relationship places demands on all of us as moral agents that we owe others, by default, "mutual regard and forbearance"; this relationship "holds between us and the strangers we pass on the road or interact with in the market" (Scanlon 2008, 141). While we do not have personal relationships with many people in the world, we stand in *at least* this minimal moral relationship with others simply as fellow members of the moral community. This is the relationship-based demand that we make of all others, and each of us has standing to blame anyone who violates it.[24] Scanlon says that even this minimal relationship has room for modification in cases in which we blame strangers, but notes that some "duties to aid are unconditional. Even murderers and rapists have a claim on us to be rescued when they are drowning or are in danger of bleeding to death after an accident" (2008, 144).

Given that Scanlon's account requires that we *always* owe to each other – by virtue of the moral relationship – some minimal positive attitudes, his view appears open to an objection on the grounds that it cannot account for blaming strangers. The worry runs like this: since we can only have minimal attitudes towards strangers before any wrongdoing occurs – presumably, our attitude toward strangers is just the default moral attitude we owe all moral agents in virtue of their moral agency, since we do not have any other relationship with strangers that can provide the basis for our expectations of their attitudes – and we still owe others the default moral attitude even in cases of grievous wrongdoing, then there is no way for us to adjust our attitudes

[24] Sher (2013) questions the notion that the moral relationship is the ground of blame, especially in the case of strangers, since "any adequate account of our backward-looking responses to violations of moral norms may have to make essential reference to the violated norms themselves" (65). But I think that Scanlon's point is that the moral relationship and moral norms are interdependent; the moral relationship is constituted by those norms (2013b, 88), and these norms are determined and defended by the moral relationship: "an action is impermissible if any principle that permitted it would be one that someone would reasonably reject" (2008, 99), and

> …thinking about right and wrong is, at the most basic level, thinking about what could be justified to others on grounds that they, if appropriately motivated, could not reasonably reject…it is by thinking about what could be justified to others on grounds that they could not reasonably reject that we determine the shape of more specific moral notions…[and] the idea that we have reason to avoid actions that could not be justified in this way accounts for the distinctive normative force of moral wrongness. (1998, 5)

toward strangers to constitute Scanlonian blame. Such an understanding is problematic for an account of blame, as strangers can wrong us, and we sometimes *do* blame strangers.

Anticipating this sort of objection to his view, Scanlon argues that such a worry is misplaced. In the case of violence perpetrated by a stranger, Scanlon says that "[b]eing the victim of an action by some stranger makes it that case that that perpetrator has a distinctive role in our life, as the author of an event that we have to come to terms with. It thus gives our attitude toward that person a distinctive significance" (2008, 147). However, the relationship with that person is merely the default moral relationship; there is no more robust relationship upon which to base blame, so no more robust positive attitudes to modify. But Scanlon claims that even within a minimal relationship, there *is* room to modify our attitudes towards those who wrong us without entering the territory of moral deficiency.

Scanlon thus appears to take there to be a difference between regarding strangers with attitudes of mutual regard and forbearance – those attitudes owed to others in virtue of the (minimal) moral relationship that we have with one another simply because we are fellow members of the moral community – and the attitudes we have towards those with whom we share only the moral relationship, but we also blame for their failures to meet our expectations of them within the moral relationship, since he argues that there is a way of blaming by modifying our attitudes toward a wrongdoer even when the person being blamed is a stranger. That Scanlon understands that modifying our attitudes too much in response to wrongdoing as a moral deficiency – that is, that modifying our attitudes so that they are too negative can be blameworthy – appears to indicate that he thinks there is a limit to how negative appropriate blaming attitudes can be. I think that there is something to this, although Scanlon does not argue

for this position; I will explore this point more fully in the next chapter, where I will show where I think that this limit is and why it is where it is.

In general (but with some important limitations), Scanlon says that when another wrongs us we may judge our relationship with her to be impaired; in blaming her we revise our attitudes towards her accordingly (Scanlon 2008, 128-31). Blame thus can take a number of forms, such as: a withdrawal of trust; decreased readiness to enter into special relations such as friendship with the person; decreased willingness to help the person with his projects; or decreased tendency to take pleasure in things going well for the person and to feel sad or regretful when they do not (2013a, 105-6). Exactly how our attitudes will be modified when we blame others will vary: the appropriate modification is dependent upon both the nature of the wrong and the nature of our relationship with the wrongdoer; but it is in this modification of attitudes toward a wrongdoer that she is blamed.

Much on Scanlon's account of blame is explained by the central role he gives to relationships. We can understand the normative standards of blame, as well as why we care so much to avoid being blamed. Blaming can be assessed as appropriate (or not) relative to the expectations of a given relationship. When blamed, wrongdoers suffer losses, since "all [blaming responses] involve withholding things that person has reason to want" (2013a, 208). Given that there are costs associated with blame, those costs must be justified; to this end, Scanlon acknowledges that an argument is required for both "why the person toward whom [blaming attitudes] are directed cannot object to this modification or withdrawal of normal attitudes, and what positive reason others have for modifying or withdrawing their attitudes in these ways" (2013a, 106). So for blame to be fair, Scanlon claims that it must be deserved, in the sense that it must be for

something the person being blamed has done,[25] but Scanlon argues that only certain kinds of suffering can be deserved regardless of the wrong done.[26] Scanlon's notion of desert makes clear how to attribute attitudes to others as appropriately "theirs", and the role of expectations within a relationship make clear why we blame others for failing in their responsibilities to us; Scanlon's discussion of desert also makes clear how he thinks it is fair to blame wrongdoers. The normativity of blame is also addressed by our understanding of the various relationships that ground blame: our interpersonal relationships are partially constituted by our expectations, such that when they are not met, we may appropriately adjust our expectations accordingly (and, thus, we blame); the expectations that partially constitute the moral relationship also provide the standards by which to judge the appropriateness of moral blame.

But despite the helpful contributions Scanlon's view makes toward developing a Strawsonian account of blame, his account also loses some of what is most attractive about Strawson's account – namely, reactivity. Scanlon claims that all forms of blaming responses, on his account,

> are "reactive attitudes" in Strawson's sense: attitudes toward a person that are reactions to that person's attitudes toward others, including the modification or withdrawal of attitudes toward the person that one would normally have held (2013a, 106).

Scanlon claims that blame is a reaction to the meaning of another's actions or attitudes.[27] But what Scanlon describes here lacks reactivity, in the Strawsonian sense – arguably the central

[25] This is a significant – and explicit – shift in Scanlon's view. In *What We Owe to Each Other*, Scanlon writes that the Desert Thesis, "the idea that when a person has done something that is morally wrong it is morally better that he or she suffer some loss in consequence", is indefensible (1998, 274). However, in "Giving Desert its Due" he sets out the position described above, acknowledging that he has moved away from his earlier "skepticism about justifications of this kind" (2013a, 102).

[26] That there are limits to blaming appropriately, on Scanlon's account, will be considered more carefully in the next chapter.

[27] Strawson's claim that reactive attitudes are responses to others' quality of will is not obviously equivalent to Scanlon's claim that blaming reactive attitudes are responses to meaning, but perhaps the two can be translated into similar terms. Certainly in places the two sound very similar; for instance, Scanlon likens the modification of attitudes involved in blaming to Strawson's description of a disapprobative reactive attitude as a "withdrawal of goodwill" (2013a, 109). But if Scanlonian relationships are understood as partially constituted by wishing well for

feature of Strawson's account of reactive attitudes. Scanlon's most significant move away from standard interpretations of Strawson's account is to understand blame as a judgment *without* any affective response.[28] Scanlon sees the sort of attitudes that matter on an account of blame to be different from those on Strawson's account, placing an "emphasis on the expectations, intentions, and other attitudes that constitute these relationships rather than on moral emotions such as resentment and indignation" (2008, 128).[29] So blame, for Scanlon, need not involve any Strawsonian susceptibility to certain emotional responses. Instead, Scanlonian blame involves changing my attitudes in response to the *meaning* of others' actions – that is, for "the significance of this action for the agent and others" (2008, 52). More explicitly stated, the meaning of the action "indicates something significant about [an agent's] attitude toward [the one(s) affected] and about their relationship with each other – whether or not it was his intention to convey this" (2008, 53). Given the role relationships play in Scanlon's account, an action's meaning will depend upon the relationship for its significance.[30] But blaming an agent for the

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others (or, as not wishing well for others) then the "meaning" of an action may indeed just be whether that action expresses the goodwill one expects in virtue of the relationship.

[28] Wallace has complained that Scanlon "takes the blame out of blame" (2011, 349) by relegating "the reactive sentiments to a peripheral role" (353), since it is possible to adjust one's attitudes in a way that constitutes Scanlonian blame without "the emotional tone that seems essential to blame" (353). Wallace argues that it is at least partially constitutive of blame that one "is exercised" (358) – the affective component is not optional. He worries that Scanlon's account does not require the affective component in all cases of blame – and, worse yet, the affective component is in fact precluded in many ordinary cases of Scanlonian blame. Wolf (2011) has also raised concerns that Scanlonian blame lacks the necessary affective component.

I think that Wallace and Wolf are right about this, to a certain extent. Scanlon's blame does appear to be affectless in most cases, in which case perhaps it loses some of its force as an attitude about which wrongdoers have reason to care; but wrongdoers still have some reason to care about being blamed without affect, since they understand the disapproprobative judgment it entails, and that their relations with others are affected for the worse.

[29] In addition to providing a novel understanding of blame as a reactive attitude, Scanlon explicitly claims that appropriate blame ought never to be retributive; I discuss this part of Scanlon's account in more detail in the next chapter.

[30] Scanlon explicitly states that he does not want to imply that the significance of an action varies because persons may subjectively take actions to have whatever significance they so choose. Rather, the significance of the action may be assessed from an objective standpoint, provided the perspective of the agent is taken into account: the significance a given action has for an agent is "the significance that person has reason to assign to it, given the reasons for which it was performed and the person's relation to the action" (2008, 54). Effectively, this allows third parties to assess significance (although we may be mistaken), it allows that an agent may be mistaken about the significance she takes an action to have for her, and it even allows that an agent may be open to criticism regarding

meaning of her action need not amount to much more than the mere judgment that she has done wrong, accompanied by the corresponding change in attitudes that make up the relationship. But these attitudes need not involve any *registering* of the judgment by a more heated reaction to the wrongdoer, nor need they necessarily entail withdrawals of goodwill. As a result, some cases of Scanlonian blame may be difficult to distinguish from the sorts of judgments we make about those whom we regard with the objective attitude.[31]

So while Scanlon's explanations of the role of relationships in blame adds much to the Strawsonian picture, his account does not yet capture all I think that is needed to understand blame. Blame *is* heated – at least, in the usual case – and is itself an *attitude* that is *felt* rather than a description of a kind of change in one's attitudes. The importance of relationships – moral and otherwise – contributes to the intensity with which we feel blame, both as blamers and as targets of blame. Quality of will is an important part of relationships as well, so to properly understand blame as a reactive attitude, more needs to be said about the role of quality of will.

§ 4: Reactive Attitudes and Quality of Will

Quality of will plays an important role at all levels of Strawson's account. The reactive attitudes are our reactions to others' perceived quality of will, and the reactive attitudes themselves are

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the significance she takes an action to have for her. Permissibility and meaning are thus interrelated, on Scanlon's account: acting impermissibly toward another (negatively) affects the meaning of that action for her. But, Scanlon notes, the meaning of an action can vary independently of its impermissibility: given the same set of agents in each case, an impermissible action performed deliberately, and the same impermissible action performed negligently, are likely to have different meanings; similarly, given the same agents and same action, different reasons for action may change its meaning (2008, 55). Usually, the standards and expectations that are constitutive of the particular interpersonal relationship between the parties that will be the relevant standards for determining meaning.

[31] Smith (2013, 38) notes that some of the modifications to relationships Scanlon describes as instances of blame do not, actually, seem like instances of blame, since they are missing the element of moral protest that is essential to what blame *is*. Bennett (2013) has a similar criticism of Scanlon's view, claiming that since Scanlon's blame "is simply a reorientation of a relationship so that is better matches the level of commitment the person brings to that relationship" (75), it is hard to see how Scanlon's blame can be an expression of disapproval.

described in quality of will terms. Throughout "Freedom and Resentment", Strawson talks about good- and ill will, both as that to which we react and as coloring the reactive attitudes themselves:

> …the actions of other people… reflect attitudes toward us of goodwill, affection, or esteem on the one hand or contempt, indifference, or malevolence on the other (1962/2003, 76).
>
> In general, we demand some degree of goodwill or regard on the part of those who stand in these relationships to us, though the forms we require it to take vary widely in different connections. The range and intensity of our reactive attitudes towards goodwill, its absence or its opposite vary no less widely. I have mentioned, specifically, resentment and gratitude and they are a usefully opposed pair. But, of course, there is a whole continuum of reactive attitude and feelings stretching on both sides of these and – the most comfortable area – in between them. (1962/2003, 76-7)

In some sense, it is reasonable to describe such attitudes in terms of good- and ill will, and many have followed Strawson in describing quality of will as an essential component of both blameworthy attitudes and blaming attitudes. So what good- and ill will are is crucial, as is their role in an account of reactive attitudes. But it would be a mistake to think that the quality of will appropriate to blaming attitudes is that which simply mirrors the blameworthy quality of will of the wrongdoer. In what follows, I explain that to make sense on an account of blame, the distinct sorts of attitudes represented by the phrase "quality of will" are more nuanced than one might initially think from reading Strawson's account.

Although Strawson talks often of good- and ill will in "Freedom and Resentment", what these come to on his account is not altogether clear. Strawson describes the reactive attitudes as reacting "to the quality of others' wills towards us, as manifested in their behavior: to their good or ill will or indifference or lack of concern" (1962/2003, 83); he also talks of feeling gratitude toward those who, through their goodwill, confer benefits upon us (1962/2003, 76). Strawson also describes at least some of the negative reactive attitudes as involving partial withdrawals of

goodwill, and the willingness to inflict punishment as being "all of a piece with this whole range of reactive attitudes" (1962/2003, 90).

Given these brief descriptions, one might think that goodwill involves wishing good things for another, and that ill will involves wishing bad things for another. In an intuitive sense, we might understand goodwill to be a generally positive attitude directed toward another and her projects, and its opposite – ill will, presumably – may be generally understood as wishing that things go badly for another. So if blaming involves a partial withdrawal of goodwill, then blaming attitudes require the blamer to wish less well – or, to wish for bad things – for the wrongdoer. This may be Strawson's view. But this does not properly describe blame. It is not the case that, in blaming, we withdraw goodwill such that we simply wish that things go less well (or, that they go badly) for others, although that may be a reasonable response to blaming those with whom we had been particularly close.[32] Understanding quality of will in such a binary way – that good things should happen to the good people, and that evil things should happen to the evil people – is an oversimplified conception of the role of quality of will in reactive attitudes, and cannot properly capture most cases of blaming in any event. So to take seriously the role of quality of will in an account of blame, the quality of will involved in reactive attitudes must not be so simple.

Blame is, in the main, a form of *moral appraisal*. As such, it attributes to a wrongdoer responsibility for the wrong, and may include the hope that she accept responsibility for her wrongdoing and that she acknowledge the moral values that her wrongdoing failed to respect; appropriate blame does not simply contemplate the wrongdoer's feeling bad *per se.* In most cases, we can understand resentment and indignation as negative attitudes that express moral

[32] A version of this response to blaming seems to be a part of Scanlon's account of blame: when those we love regard us with disrespectful attitudes, we may come to see our relationship as altered for the worse, and so are less enthusiastic about promoting and supporting their projects. I will discuss this aspect of Scanlon's account more fully in chapter two.

disapproval without those attitudes involving a desire that the wrongdoer suffer ill fortune. For example, I may resent my student when he attempts to cheat on his final exam. When I catch him looking at the page of tiny font he has snuck in to the exam, I react to his failure to respect me and my efforts to provide a meaningful and educational experience for him, and as well I react to his failure to respect his classmates and their efforts to collaboratively engage with the course and its ideas. My reaction is a negative attitude, and it is directed at him, and it involves my judgment that he has done something that he should not. But I do not wish that things go badly for him; indeed, I am pleased when I am informed that he made a full apology before the Board tasked with dealing with academic misconduct, and that the Board has allowed him to remain in school and continue with his studies as a result of his taking responsibility and his efforts to make amends. In another example, I may feel indignant toward a politician whom I judge to bear ill will toward immigrants, without bearing him any ill will. I take his attitudes to be repugnant with respect to fair treatment of immigrants, and his rhetoric regarding immigration issues strikes me as inflammatory and lacking any factual basis. But in hoping that he loses the election, I am not hoping that anything *bad* happen to him; I am mainly hoping that a more morally good person than he will be tasked with representing us. Nor am I withdrawing any goodwill from my relationship with him, as I had not previously hoped that he would win; instead, my relationship with this person is – from its inception – based on my indignation toward his policies. So neither thinking of blame as bearing its target ill will, nor Strawson's description of negative reactive attitudes as involving "partial withdrawals" of goodwill, seem the best way to understand blaming attitudes.

It may yet be unclear what I mean in saying that attitudes of ill will entail wanting bad things to happen to another. At the extreme, we can imagine wanting the worst possible things to

happen to someone – for instance, wanting them to be slowly tortured. Ill will certainly includes such attitudes, and while some may defend the having of such attitudes in certain carefully defined instances of blaming, most reject the moral permissibility of *actually* torturing others. But I argue that other negative attitudes – such as those I defend as appropriate blaming attitudes involving a negative assessment of the wrongdoer – do not bear their targets ill will, as I will explain more fully in chapter two. For now, it will suffice to recognize that while there are a variety of negative attitudes that might be understood to include ill will – such as some varieties of hate, desires for vengeance, and vindictive attitudes. These are the sort of attitudes I have in mind when I talk of attitudes that wish that bad things happen to another.

Blameworthy attitudes – those that are deficient in some way with respect to quality of will – may be morally deficient in a variety of ways. Attitudes of ill will – those that wish for bad things to befall another – are certainly morally deficient. For instance, if a wrongdoer tries to hurt another person, we take such an attempt to express her ill will toward her putative victim. Such ill will clearly violates the general demand that we all have of one another, described by Strawson as a demand for goodwill. But it does not necessarily follow from this brief description that the demand for goodwill essentially involves wanting *good* things for all others (although general well-wishing may well be a part of attitudes of general goodwill).

What members of the moral community demand of one another – our standard "demands for goodwill" – is that our attitudes toward one another be appropriate relative to the relational context in which they are situated. This is broader than simply ruling out attitudes that wish ill for another, although those attitudes of genuine ill will are ruled out as well. Further, the relational context is important when sorting out the requisite quality of will. For instance, in close relationships, appropriate goodwill might well entail wishing well for another. This might

be explained by understanding that what it is to be in intimate relationships with another is that we share one another's projects as though they are our own, actively supporting those projects. But this is not required in our relations with *all* members of the moral community. However, we do demand goodwill of all others, and may be warranted in blaming in those cases in which that demand is not met; so this sense of goodwill must be different from either the sense involved in general well-wishing, or in sharing in others' projects.

In the context of participatory interactions, to have the appropriate quality of will – in all cases – is to regard others *respectfully*. The moral relationship – the minimal relationship that we share with all fellow members of the moral community – always requires a kind of minimal threshold of expected goodwill. We always expect others to *at least* regard us with a quality of will that respects our personhood; the moral relationship provides this ground level demand for goodwill, even in cases of justified blame. So the general demand for goodwill entails a demand to be recognized with respectful attitudes.

The notion of respect for persons I am invoking within interpersonal participatory relations is based on Kant's conception of the person. Kant describes us as autonomous, rational creatures. We possess rational capacities that enable us to discover the moral law and to govern ourselves, according to reasons and out of respect for the moral law; when we do this properly, our actions have moral worth. In addition to our capacity to determine the moral law for ourselves, each of us is able to assess what it is that we value. That we have these moral and legal capacities, Kant says, gives persons dignity; it is our dignity that is worthy of respect. Each of us is an autonomous, rational creature: we recognize our own rational and moral capacities, and that we have these capacities as persons; through this recognition about ourselves, we can also recognize

that all other persons have these abilities and are fellow moral agents in the moral community (1785/1993).

Given our rational capacities – our autonomous nature – we can *will* our actions; this is the relevant aspect of quality of will in assessing others' attitudes. Because our rational capacities enable us to recognize the moral law, we have the capacity to will morally good actions. But having the capacity to will morally good actions is no guarantee that we will indeed will morally good actions; our autonomous nature entails that it is *up to us* whether we will morally good actions – or not. When we will morally worthy actions, it is to our credit that our will is good – and it is fitting for others to react positively to our quality of will. But we are also responsible for our bad acts, when we will them, as they indicate that our will is lacking; in such cases, it is fitting that others react negatively to our quality of will (including with blaming attitudes). *Blameworthy* attitudes are those that are responses to a (perceived) *morally deficient will*.

Having a will is unique to human agents; to worry about the quality of others' wills is necessarily to worry about them as human agents. The distinction between reactive attitudes and the objective attitude highlights this point: to be reactive to another's quality of will – to have reactive attitudes – is to recognize her as having a will; the objective attitude is the stance we take towards those we do not take to be responsible for their actions (either temporarily, or more globally) *because* we do not regard them as acting according to their wills.

To properly respect persons requires that we not interfere with their rational, moral capacities, and that we not prevent their use of those capacities for their own purposes. So to respect human dignity, we must never use others as mere means for our own purposes but always treat others as ends in themselves, recognizing and respecting their capacities to make autonomous choices: "Act in such a way that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of

another, always at the same time as an end and never simply as a means" (Kant 1785/1993, 36). Respect thus also entails recognizing another as a person with same moral worth as all others in moral community. In this way, respect is an integral part of the framework within which we understand ourselves as moral deliberators – and, all others as well.[33]

Blame responds to those attitudes we perceive as failing to properly respect us (or, others). Attitudes of ill will, those that include desires that bad things happen to another, fail to properly respect persons' moral agency; I will explain this position more fully in chapter two. But other kinds of attitudes may also fail to respect persons' moral agency, and thus may be blameworthy as well. For instance, I may be blameworthy for lying to my partner about where I have been, even if I have do not wish that bad things happen to him. Perhaps I wanted to go meet some friends for a drink after work but was supposed to take our child to his piano lesson. In this example, I do not want anything bad to happen to my partner, but I decide that I could avoid a potentially uncomfortable discussion by telling my partner that I have to stay to work late (I do not) and then meeting my friends without his knowledge. In service of my own selfish ends, I fail to properly respect his autonomy. My lie makes it difficult (if not impossible) for my partner to decide for himself how he wants to proceed in the particular circumstances. If I had told him that I wanted to meet my friends – that is, if I had just been honest with him – then he would have the relevant information to assess what he thinks of the situation. He might offer to take our son to piano so I could meet my friends, or he might tell me that he has other plans and that I

[33] Thomas E. Hill, Jr. (2000a) explains this point as follows:

> The idea of all human beings as potential co-legislators is admittedly a metaphor that abstracts in many ways from the imperfect conditions of real moral deliberation and discussion. Nevertheless, it is an idea that makes vivid and brings together important aspects of what moral deliberation may be thought, at its best, to be. If we take the ideal seriously, we can see that it implicitly presupposes certain standards of respect that are, comparatively speaking, formal or procedural…to accept the Kantian framework itself is already to acknowledge at least a presumption that all human beings should be accorded these forms of respect in moral discussion and education… (103-4)

need to skip drinks and keep to our planned schedule. Or, he might tell me that he is upset with me, or disappointed in me. He may even blame me for my blasé attitude toward my family responsibilities. But instead, I lied. He would be warranted in blaming me for my attempt to circumvent his processing of the situation. In the service of my selfish goals, I withheld information from him, thus failing to properly respect his personhood. But while this scenario need not involve me wishing that bad things happen to him – that is, that I do not bear my partner ill will – I nonetheless have failed to meet the moral demand for goodwill.

The relevant aspect of quality of will involved in blaming wrongdoers is tied to recognizing others as competent moral agents, and caring when they do a poor job of respecting other agents. Our blaming attitudes involve an assessment of a wrongdoer as having had deficient attitudes toward us, or as being morally deficient in a more global sense. Our attitudes toward those we blame thus include a judgment that they are morally inferior, in some sense. But, as I will explain in chapter two, this judgment of inferiority is distinct from viewing them as other than persons, since appropriate reactive attitudes must always properly respect persons – even the blaming attitudes.

I worry that, in thinking about blame as a "partial withdrawal of goodwill", many conflate the notion of wishing less good for another – which, in the extreme, may involve regarding another with attitudes of genuine ill will – with *blame*. As I have begun to explain already, I think that wishing ill for another is distinct from appropriate blaming attitudes. Given the role of reactive attitudes in our participatory relations, we *can* blame others *via* attitudes of ill will. But ill will is always blameworthy, even as a response to wrongdoing. Appropriate blaming attitudes are negative, affective, judgmental attitudes that regard another as responsible for her bad attitudes, but *without* wishing her ill or withdrawing goodwill. So we can distinguish between respectful

blaming attitudes – those that are appropriate, and express some goodwill toward the wrongdoer as a moral being – and those that are disrespectful. In the next chapter, I explain my reasons for thinking why this is the case.

§ 5: CONCLUSION

So far I can construct a rough Strawsonian account of blame as a reactive attitude that responds to inadequate goodwill relative to the expectations of a given relationship – including the moral relationship – such that blame is a disapproving, affective attitude that involves a judgment of moral responsibility. Blaming attitudes fit within the Strawsonian participatory framework as some of the negative reactive attitudes, attitudes that regard a wrongdoer as morally deficient, in some sense, and thereby constitute the judgment "That's wrong." We react – whether we blame, praise, thank, or otherwise judge and react to another's quality of will – toward those we take to be like us, morally speaking. We react toward agents we recognize *as persons,* whom we also take to be similarly reactive toward other fellow agents. To blame another is to regard her as responsible for her quality of will, in a deep sense; it is more than the mere judgment that she has done something that we regard as wrong, that she is not functioning properly as a member of the moral community. Our blame registers as an affective attitude, and can be expressed as such. Our attitudes toward her – now recognizing her responsibility for her bad actions and attitudes – can give her moral reason to change her attitudes toward us; that is, because she is a moral agent, she can understand that we blame her and so recognize the need for her to change the ways that she regards and interacts with us.

This notion of blame can be distinguished from other reactive attitudes that are not blaming attitudes, such as attitudes that respond to failures of goodwill within relationships but are not

disapproving (such as disappointment), and many other sorts of reactive attitudes besides (such as any of the positive affective attitudes). So reactive attitudes are the broader category within which the moral blaming attitudes fall. Given their place within the normative framework of participatory attitudes, we can assess the appropriateness of reactive attitudes. Blame is a participatory reactive attitude, as opposed to the objective attitude, and thus is the sort of attitude that is capable of engagement with others' moral sensibilities. Blame is a kind of negative response to action – as opposed to mere behavior – that is only directed to action of another moral agent.

Quality of will is *central* to reactive attitudes, as it both invites and constitutes our affective, evaluative responses to others' goodwill – or, their lack of goodwill – toward us. Reactive attitudes may differ with respect to the goodwill that partially constitutes them, as it is *via* quality of will that the reactive attitudes constitute our assessments of others' attitudes toward us, as well as our demands that others regard us with goodwill. Others can understand from our attitudes toward them what assessment we make of their attitudes toward us. As such, reactive attitudes are a constitutive part of interpersonal relations within the moral community, marking relations between moral equals.[34] But more still needs to be said about quality of will and respect to properly assess whether an agent is blaming appropriately.

As I will show in the next chapter, to withdraw all goodwill from our interactions with others – not to mention replacing our goodwill toward others with ill will – is disrespectful, and violates the requirements of the moral relationship with those others. This is because respecting others as moral agents requires not just *recognizing them as* moral agents by reacting to their quality of

[34] Recent defenses of contempt by Michelle Mason (2003) and Macalester Bell (2005 & 2013) describe contempt as an attitude that regards another as morally inferior; given this description, it may sound here that I am ruling out attitudes of contempt as reactive attitudes. As I will show in Chapter 3, in certain, limited cases, contempt can be a respectful blaming attitude; the judgment of another's moral inferiority in such cases is that another is a particularly bad moral agent, not that she is not less capable of properly exercising her agency.

will, but also requires that the quality of *our reaction itself* recognizes moral agents as those who stand in the moral relationship with all other moral agents. As I will argue, blaming with ill will cannot meet this requirement.[35]

In chapter two, I provide a careful analysis of goodwill and respect for persons to show why appropriate blaming responses ought never to include attitudes of ill will, and how it is that we still hold wrongdoers responsible when we blame with the sort of goodwill I claim is required to blame respectfully. Reactive accounts of blame are predicated on a particular understanding of moral agency: that our reacting to others' qualities of will constitutes recognition of their moral agency, of their responsibility for their actions and attitudes, of their standing moral relations with us. But a reactive account must also take account of the fact that the moral relationship requires this same regard for others' agency when reacting, since this recognition of agency is a necessary constitutive element of the moral relationship itself; while attitudes of ill will can still recognize their targets as moral agents who authored the wrong at issue, such attitudes violate the demands of the moral relationship by failing to address the agent *as an agent*, and thus will always be disrespectful. In the next chapter I will explain my reasoning for this position more carefully. In particular, I will discuss the different kinds of suffering entailed in blaming

[35] Angela Smith (2011) also explicitly ties respect for fellow members of the moral community to attitudes of goodwill. Smith's understanding of goodwill aligns closely with many intuitive understandings of goodwill, connecting goodwill to caring about how things go for others. She states that the basic moral regard we ought to have toward all others – the moral relationship – requires us to have at least a minimal feeling of goodwill toward others: hoping that things go well for them, and being disposed to feel compassion toward them and to feel indignation on their behalf. We all understand that certain attitudes – such as trust and care – are demanded of friends; indeed, such attitudes are constitutive of friendship. So, too, should we understand that certain attitudes – like goodwill – are demanded of all with whom we have a moral relationship (2011, 252-3). However, she indicates that these are attitudes we expect in the usual situation; negative attitudes, she says, are sometimes warranted in place of these general attitudes of goodwill. For instance, contempt is only ruled out if it is based on morally irrelevant features; this suggests that contempt can be morally warranted in some cases. Although it appears that the minimal attitudes of goodwill are always required – which would seem to indicate that contempt is not an attitude of ill will, and that blaming with ill will is similarly ruled impermissible – this may be a stronger claim than Smith intends to make.

respectfully as opposed to the suffering contemplated by blaming attitudes that include ill will, I will show why blaming with ill will can never properly count as appropriate blame, and why my view of blaming respectfully still constitutes a proper account of *blame* by holding a wrongdoer responsible in a way that is more than a mere judgment of wrongdoing.

CHAPTER TWO:

THE LIMITS OF APPROPRIATE BLAMING ATTITUDES

That blaming with ill will is sometimes permissible has some intuitive power – particularly since, if ever ill will could be justified, it would be so as a part of justified blame. The intuition seems to run like this. While our default attitudes toward others ought to include goodwill, if another behaves in morally bad ways, she does not deserve to be treated like everyone else – and in some cases, maybe she deserves something bad. Blaming involves attitudes that withdraw goodwill toward a wrongdoer, and the more blameworthy a person is – that is, the worse her behavior and attitudes for which we blame her – the less goodwill we need have toward her; in the worst sorts of cases, our blaming attitudes may include ill will.[36] For instance, if someone I love is murdered, perhaps it is appropriate for me to wish that the murderer should endure a similarly horrible fate. Or perhaps it is reasonable for a woman whose racist relative refers to her biracial children as "mutts" to regard him as disgusting and less than human. Perhaps it is fair for a person to tell a few harmful lies about a past employer who provided a scathing (but false) reference to her prospective employer. And maybe it is even okay to be secretly joyful when my neighbor's treasured car is stolen, given that he regularly has loud parties and thinks it is funny that my children have trouble sleeping on the nights of his parties. In such cases, the intuition seems to be that we can justifiably feel ill will towards others when we justifiably blame them strongly.

[36] Of course, everyone is likely to agree that the harshness of an appropriate blaming attitude ought to be proportional to the wrong – in other words, we can go overboard and blame someone *too much* given what she has done. I may be justifiably annoyed at my colleague for consistently interrupting me during meetings, but it would be excessive of me to think her such an awful person that I cannot possibly tolerate working with her; while her interruptions are disrespectful towards me, they are certainly not among the worst sort of wrongs, in the grand scheme of things.

Some hints of these ideas can be found in Strawson (1962/2003). When a relational demand for goodwill is not met – that is, when others' attitudes toward us make it appropriate to blame them – Strawson says that the general demands on us are modified, allowing us to withdraw our goodwill accordingly:

> [t]he partial withdrawal of goodwill which *these* attitudes entail, the modification *they* entail of the general demand that another should, if possible, be spared suffering, is, rather, the consequence of *continuing* to view him as a member of the moral community; only as one who has offended against its demands (1962/2003, 90).

Here Strawson appears to claim that, although we are in general not permitted to cause suffering to others, we are permitted to cause (at least some) suffering to those agents whose lack of goodwill renders them blameworthy. Since the negative reactive attitudes modify the general demand that another should be spared suffering (if possible), we might draw the conclusion that, concurrent with the withdrawing of goodwill that is constitutive of negative reactive attitudes, there is a modification of the general demand that another be spared suffering. In other words, blaming attitudes are not constrained by the general demand that others be spared suffering but are instead partially constituted by an allowance that at least some suffering be inflicted on the wrongdoer. In cases of mild wrongdoing, what is permissible might be only minor kinds of suffering – such as the hope that the wrongdoer feels guilty, or the withdrawal of kindnesses and special considerations that had previously been extended to the wrongdoer. So in cases of more serious wrongdoing, the friend of ill will argues that blaming with ill will is appropriate.[37]

[37] Quality of will is also somehow related to justified punishment on Strawson's view, since he goes on to say that inflicting suffering is "all of a piece" with the range of negative reactive attitudes: "So the preparedness to acquiesce in that infliction of suffering on the offender which is an essential part of punishment is all of a piece with this whole range of attitudes of which I have been speaking" (1962/2003, 90). So perhaps in cases of serious wrongdoing, the reactive attitudes of the blamer may motivate her to inflict more serious suffering on the wrongdoer. Punishment is that more serious form of suffering, and Strawson indicates that being willing to inflict suffering is included in the range of reactive attitudes. Thus goodwill in non-blaming cases involves the demand that others be spared suffering, but withdrawing some goodwill modifies this demand; in cases where the blamer is prepared to inflict significant suffering, perhaps all goodwill toward the offender has been replaced with ill will. But none of this is entirely clear on Strawson's account.

In this chapter, I argue for an account of blaming respectfully, and argue that blaming attitudes that include ill will are disrespectful of wrongdoers' moral agency. While my view is built upon Strawson's basic description of our practices involving reactive attitudes, I may be moving away from Strawson's description of negative attitudes – which include, on my view, blaming attitudes – as those that partially withdraw goodwill; I am certainly moving away from Strawson's view if it entails that even some of the blaming attitudes should include ill will. In § 1, I show how our practices of reactive attitudes can manifest respect for persons in a number of ways. In § 2, I describe the difference between respectful attitudes and blaming attitudes that include ill will. I also discuss the limitations on blaming attitudes included in each of Margaret Holmgren's view, R. Jay Wallace's view, and T.M. Scanlon's view. In § 3, I offer my account of blame that meets the general moral demand for goodwill. In § 4, I consider and respond to two arguments from the friend of ill will: that blaming with ill will can respect the wrongdoer's agency; and that blaming with ill will must be an appropriate blaming response in cases of the most egregious, horrible wrongs.

§ 1: The Reactive Attitudes and Respect for Persons

Blaming attitudes are responses to others' failures of goodwill, measured against the appropriate goodwill demanded by the relationship that is at issue. In chapter one, I argued that the demands for goodwill we make in blaming are, primarily, that we be *respected* in the manner fitting to the particular relationship; at the very least, such demands always include the demand to be properly recognized as a *person*. In what follows, I argue that such demands for respect must also be made respectfully, which places limits on the sort of attitudes that blame respectfully. Persons cannot forfeit the respect that they deserve as persons, since no matter what the circumstances we

still have the moral capacities that give us dignity and warrant respect; even when blameworthy, persons are worthy of this kind of respect.[38] Although many will concur with this claim, how it is to be interpreted as applied to particular cases is where the difficulties begin.[39] In what follows, I suggest that respect for persons places limits on what are appropriate reactive attitudes, even those putatively aiming to hold wrongdoers responsible, and outline what those limits are.

Respect for persons is salient to blaming, as is demonstrated by a number of particular aspects of our practices of reactive attitudes. First, the reactivity aspect itself can be understood as a form of respect. Although it may not be universally the case, in our culture (and, indeed, in most cultures through history), it is a fact that humans regard one another in a certain way that constitutes our recognition of one another as persons, and reactive attitudes constitute our judgments regarding whether others have regarded us in the way that we expect fellow humans

[38] For a careful argument against the possibility of forfeiting respect for persons, see Hill (2000b).

[39] I include here a sampling of the wide variety of interpretations of the implications of respect for persons:

Darwall (1977 & 2006) offers an account of respect that calls respect for persons *recognition respect*; while the other kind of respect can be forfeited through wrongdoing - that is, *appraisal respect* – Darwall argues that recognition respect cannot.

Bennett Helm (2011) argues that personhood and its normative implications – that we respect one another's dignity – can only be understood if we understand ourselves as members of a community with normative expectations that inform the reactive attitudes. Given that reactive attitudes are assessable as appropriate based on normative expectations that are understood as such by all members of a community, Helm claims that reactive attitudes can form a rational pattern at the community level. It is this rational pattern from which he says that the importance of dignity emerges: "the pattern is that of the whole community, constituting the shared import persons have to that community; such import is therefor the interpersonally valid import of fellow persons as such. Such import is…dignity" (2011, 232). Individual reactive attitudes thus assess others in relation to normative expectations shared among community members, signaling our appraisal of others' attitudes toward us, and our reactive attitudes are also subject to the appraisal of others. But reactive attitudes can only constitute respectful responses to others' dignity because the normative standards of appraisal are available to us as members of a community.

Morris (1968) argues that respect for persons entails that wrongdoers have a right to be punished. His argument is based on the claim that to respect agency, we must respect the autonomous nature of wrongdoers – we recognize their agency in wrongdoing through punishment. Wrongdoers choose to do wrong, and we have all agreed to be bound by the social contract that says we will be punished if we violate it; so wrongdoers *choose* to be punished. Morris argues that to deny criminals their right to be punished would be to deny *all* rights and duties.

Falls (1987) argues that respect for persons requires that we punish criminals proportionally to the wrong that they have committed, but that respect also places an upper limit on the proportionality – we cannot inflict on criminals any punishment which destroys their capacities for moral reflection (so, for instance, we cannot justifiably punish murderers by killing them). I discuss Falls' view in more detail below.

Hampton (1984) claims that punishments are also limited to those that allow the offender to retain his capacity to reflect and learn; but, by the same token, we cannot be paternalistic in punishing, as to aim mainly to teach criminals a lesson would violate their autonomy.

to be regarded. As such, our reactive interactions are an essential part of our normal interpersonal practices, so ingrained in how we live and interact with one another that we cannot and would not give them up. Reactive attitudes are thus partially constitutive of how we understand and relate to one another. Reactive attitudes are affectively charged judgments regarding others' quality of will, directed toward that other. As such, reactive attitudes can themselves have the potential to provide reasons others can understand, and thus they can respond accordingly. So reactivity itself manifests a form of respect, constituting recognition of another as responsible for her quality of will, and that she is recognized as responsible for her quality of will accordingly. However, reactive attitudes can only be respectful if they are fitting responses to that to which they respond, and if they can potentially provide *moral* reasons with which a wrongdoer can potentially engage. I will explain why more fully below, but I am claiming that while reactivity demonstrates an element of why respect for persons is important to blaming appropriately, not all reactive attitudes are respectful.

Second, the reciprocity aspect of reactive attitudes can be understood as a form of respect. Reactive attitudes are an integral part of normal interpersonal relations and practices, a crucial part of our back-and-forth participation with others; reactive attitudes are, by nature, reciprocal. Reactive attitudes respond to, and constitute demands for, goodwill – that is, demands to be regarded and treated as a person, as a morally capable agent with a will. We also recognize others' reactive attitudes as being like ours – that they recognize responsibility, and include judgments about which we all have reason to care. In reciprocating demands for goodwill among members of the moral community, we recognize others' reactive attitudes as rational (just as our own reactive attitudes can be rational), and we respond to others' quality of will towards us with our own attitudes (which themselves are partially constituted by our quality of will toward them).

Not to reciprocate in these ways may mean either disrespecting another or taking the objective attitude toward her; while the objective stance can be appropriate in certain instances, in some cases it may be disrespectful to take the objective attitude toward typically functioning moral agents within the context of normal interpersonal relations.[40]

Third, the moral address aspect of reactive attitudes embodies a form of respect. Since reactive attitudes issue (or, reiterate) demands for goodwill, they can give agents reasons we can understand and have reason to care about; as such, reactive attitudes can play a significant role in our morally addressing one another.[41] Our reactive attitudes can *mean* something to us, whether we are the targets of the attitudes or are having the reactions ourselves. Since moral agents are those with the requisite capacities to understand reactive attitudes as moral reasons, we can recognize the meaning of particular attitudes within interpersonal relations. When functioning as forms of moral address, reactive attitudes are capable of being understood as moral reasons by agents – although, of course, even when they are expressed there is no guarantee that such attitudes *will* be so understood. Thus respectful reactive attitudes are those that are capable of engaging with others' moral capacities, and of constituting the sort of moral reasons that only moral agents are capable of understanding as such; conversely, reactive attitudes that seek to manipulate another's sentiments, or to entice her to take a particular course of action, may be disrespectful.

[40] Again, exactly what I mean here will be explained more fully below. But by "reciprocity" I do not mean to indicate that appropriate reactive attitudes are ever responses in kind, such as "You hate me, so it is right for me to hate you back." As I will argue below, I actually mean to rule out understanding such "eye for an eye" responses as morally appropriate blaming responses.

[41] Many would agree that reactive attitudes constitute some form of moral address that at least has the potential to implicitly seek a response; see, for example, Pettit and Smith (1996/2003), Watson (1987), Darwall (2006), Shoemaker (2007 & 2009), McKenna (1998, 2012 & 2013), Smith (2013), Bennett (2008 & 2013), McGeer (2010), and Fricker (2014). How I think that blaming reactive attitudes can function as forms of moral address will be discussed more fully below.

§ 2: The Limits of Respectful Blaming Attitudes

In "Responsibility and the Limits of Evil: Variations on a Strawsonian Theme" (1987), Gary Watson seeks to fill in some gaps in Strawson's account of reactive attitudes: specifically, he explains how the conditions of membership in the moral community can be understood in terms of capacity to understand reactive attitudes as forms of moral address. He shows how this understanding provides an explanation for Strawson's claims that certain conditions – such as being a child, or being insane, or being under great strain – can provide one with either an exemption or an excuse from being the target of reactive attitudes.

At the very end of his paper, Watson raises a question related to the propriety of retributive attitudes – the term many use to refer to negative attitudes that include either desires that wrongdoers suffer to pay for their wrongs, or that include the notion that it would be *good* for a wrongdoer to suffer, or that she *deserves* to suffer. Watson reads Strawson as claiming that retributive attitudes are the *required* responses to wrongdoers, if we are to hold wrongdoers responsible at all. Thus in the face of wrongdoing the only two options for us, on a Strawsonian picture, appear to be to *fail* to react – which *isolates* us from human community by not participating in its practices – or to respond to wrongdoing with retributive attitudes. But, Watson reminds the reader of Laurence Stern's suggestion that some – like Gandhi and King –

> *stand* up for themselves and others against their oppressors; they *confront* their oppressors with the facts of their misconduct, urging and even *demanding* consideration for themselves and others; but they manage, or come much closer to managing, to do such things without vindictiveness and malice. (286)

So, Watson says, it looks like the retributive sentiments are at least in principle separable from holding responsible. But I think that such examples show that, ideally, we *ought* to blame others without regarding them with retributive sentiments. I will show that retributive sentiments – that is, attitudes that include ill will toward a wrongdoer – are not merely separable from holding

responsible but, on a Strawsonian account of blame as a reactive attitude, such attitudes have no appropriate place.

Respectful blaming attitudes are affective, evaluative attitudes of disapproval directed toward a wrongdoer that nonetheless maintain a certain kind of goodwill toward her: namely, the attitudes themselves recognize the wrongdoer as a moral agent, and make moral demands for respect. Such attitudes are necessarily negative evaluations, as they are attitudes of disapproval, and include some negative affective component as well. Resentment and indignation are most often cited as paradigmatic examples of blaming attitudes, although the content of these attitudes may vary between accounts of blame. While I will remain largely neutral with respect to the labels that ought to be applied to particular blaming attitudes, I do intend to make clear the *content* of attitudes that constitute appropriate blaming attitudes.[42] Such attitudes ought to attribute to a wrongdoer responsibility for the wrong, and may also hope for her acknowledgment that she is responsible for the wrongdoing for which she is blamed. Given our moral capacities, respectful attitudes are those capable of engaging with a wrongdoer's sensibilities; respectful reactive attitudes are those that moral agents can potentially regard as providing relevant reasons to reflect upon her wrongdoing. I will argue that this notion of respect is a kind of goodwill, and so respectful blaming attitudes are those that regard the wrongdoer with this sort of goodwill.

To understand the distinction between what I suggest are respectful and disrespectful blaming attitudes, compare the sort of suffering that might be contemplated by an attitude of genuine ill will with the suffering of one who feels moral guilt. Imagine that, following your discovery that your co-worker made you the subject of embarrassing (but false) rumors, you feel negatively

[42] I move away somewhat from this claim of neutrality with respect to a more careful consideration of whether contemptuous attitudes can constitute respectful blaming attitudes; I will define and discuss contempt in more detail in chapter three below.

toward her and hope that she will be the subject of vicious gossip. This attitude of mild ill will desires a kind of suffering for another: you may feel happy at the prospect that your co-worker will be made miserable; her suffering satisfies your desires that she be brought lower and made to feel less important than you. At the very least, you hope that your co-worker will worry that others will think less of her and be less friendly with her; her concern, in such an instance, is mainly self-interested – she is not concerned for your hurt feelings, nor for her disregard of appropriate regard for you in whatever enjoyment she got from gossiping about you. If your blaming her consists of desires for any of these kinds of suffering, your blame cannot engage with the wrongdoer's moral capacities. Your response in this scenario does not consider your coworker's capacity to understand that she has hurt you or the possibility that she may realize that she owed you better attitudes; instead, your attitude mainly involves thinking she should suffer in the way that you have.

Now imagine feeling upset with your co-worker over her treatment of you, and thinking that she ought to apologize to you (and maybe even to do something particularly nice for you to make up for her poor treatment of you). Perhaps you even consider confronting her, hoping that you might prompt her to feel guilty: her guilt would indicate her acceptance of responsibility for wrongdoing and her acknowledgment of the moral values her wrongdoing failed to respect. In this second scenario, your attitudes are respectful of the wrongdoer's moral capacity to understand why you blame her and that she is capable of making things right again; That wrongdoers take responsibility for their actions is the important part of what the blaming aims at – rather than at making the wrongdoer feel bad *per se*. The desire that she feel guilty about her bad attitudes and behavior seems an important part of blaming, even though it is a form of

suffering.[43] The wrongdoer feels *bad* when she feels guilty, and so suffers; but unlike the suffering ill will intends, guilt is a kind of suffering that shows engagement with the person she has wronged, and shows that she takes responsibility for her moral failings. Appropriate blame should aim to engage a wrongdoer's moral sensibilities in precisely the way that guilt does, and any discomfort blaming causes should be as a result of the wrongdoer feeling guilty for her treatment of a fellow member of the moral community. So the suffering involved in blaming appropriately is limited to a distinctively *moral* kind of suffering, one that may be prompted by the blamer, but is primarily generated by the wrongdoer's own moral sensibilities, upon reflection. Of course, there is no guarantee that the wrongdoer will, indeed, feel guilty, but if she does not, then you would likely be warranted in blaming her for that, too.

Margaret Holmgren (1994) provides another contrast to the sort of view I argue for; she argues that respecting the moral capacities of agents requires forgiving wrongdoers *unconditionally*. Goodwill plays a central role in Holmgren's account: she equates our moral capacities with our capacities for goodwill, and on her view forgiveness is an attitude of real goodwill. Holmgren relies on the claim that our capacity for goodwill gives us intrinsic value, regardless of our individual "moral track record[s]" (1994, 349). Such forgiveness is compatible with self-respect, respect for morality, and respect for the wrongdoer, since Holmgren's account of forgiveness is focused on the victim and her judgment: in forgiving, the victim of wrongdoing does not deny her own value, or stop respecting moral standards; she merely recognizes that all persons – including wrongdoers – are

[43] Miranda Fricker (2014) discusses blame as having a similar aim. In arguing for an account of blame that explains the various forms of blame as derivatives of what she calls Communicative Blame, she describes the point of Communicative Blame as "inspiring remorse in the wrongdoer", where remorse is the "pained moral perception of the wrong one has done" (3). However, unlike the sort of blame I am considering, blame that inspires remorse as described by Fricker aims at *changing* an agent, since Fricker claims that Communicative Blame "can actually cause others to come to have certain features by treating them as if they have those features" (12).

> capable of assessing our actions and attitudes from a moral point of view. We are capable of adopting new attitudes and behaviors that are more in accord with our moral ideals, And whether or not we have achieved it yet, we are capable of genuine remorse for our own past misdeeds. This capacity for moral growth and awareness warrants a great deal of respect. (1994, 349)

To recognize this intrinsic value that we all have, Holmgren claims, we ought to treat everyone (even wrongdoers) with compassion and so to forgive in all cases. Forgiveness thus recognizes wrongdoers as moral agents, and recognizes the victim's self-respect (as a non-vindictive, virtuous moral agent) as well as the importance of moral obligations (since the forgiving victim ultimately recognizes the action as other than a wrong action).[44] So to be virtuous, we must not stay mad with wrongdoers but instead always be compassionate, even in the face of the worst sorts of wrongs.

Forgiveness, on Holmgren's view, "depends on the internal preparedness of the person who forgives" (1994, 342). To support this claim, Holmgren concedes that victims tend to resent wrongdoers initially, but this is owing to their psychological need to protect themselves. On her view, holding wrongdoers responsible is not central to what is best for those who have been wronged. Instead, she argues that it is best for victims to sort through their situations so that they can forgive wrongdoers unconditionally.[45] Once victims go through the processes required for psychological healing, they can compassionately consider the wrongdoer and his circumstances – such compassion constitutes the "moral grounds" required for forgiveness – and thus "overcome her negative feelings towards the offender and extend toward him an attitude of real goodwill"

[44] Holmgren (2012) makes a similar argument, although she there frames her argument for unconditional forgiveness in terms of virtue ethics rather than in terms of respecting humanity.

[45] Holmgren does not claim that it is *wrong* to resent wrongdoers – only that to be virtuous, one must *forgive* wrongdoers. Holmgren treats forgiveness as a virtue because she thinks that it is extremely difficult for a victim to overcome her situation and forgive a wrongdoer, regardless of the fact that forgiving might in fact be what is best for her.

(1994, 345). Resentment is thus not a *deserved* moral response to wrongdoing on her view but is instead simply a stage of the healing process of victims.[46]

While I agree that respecting our own and others' moral capacities brings with it strong moral obligations, it does not require unconditional forgiveness of wrongdoers. Respecting others' moral agency requires understanding them as persons capable of understanding moral reason, as persons capable of caring about others' moral worth; on this much, Holmgren would agree. But I have argued that to properly respect moral agents, we ought not to *ignore* those capacities when we blame them, but rather appropriate blame should have the *capacity* to engage a wrongdoer's capacity for moral understanding, to express that her attitudes were lacking in appropriate goodwill. Holmgren's view cannot accomplish this, either through resentment as she conceives of it – as an attitude that helps the victim process her trauma, rather than as an attitude that seeks to engage the wrongdoer's moral sensibilities – nor through the unconditional forgiveness she claims respect for persons demands.

First, Holmgren's view of resentment does not look like an appropriate moral blaming attitude: while it is a negative attitude that is *about* a wrongdoer, it is not thereby engaged with the wrongdoer *as a moral agent*. Granted, Holmgren is concerned to give an account of forgiveness that favors the victim and her situation, so is focused on the victim's perspective. But from this perspective we see that her account of resentment is too disengaged to constitute a reactive attitude. She describes the process of forgiving as one of reaccepting the wrongdoer *as a person*; such a description of forgiveness entails that, while we are still resenting a wrongdoer, we do *not* accept her as a person. On Holmgren's view, then, we must regard a wrongdoer as

[46] Resentment is not a motivating factor on Holmgren's view of punishment as restitution (1983 & 2012). She argues that legal punishment is justified as a way of making restitution to members of a community. Criminals inflict harm on those whose rights they directly violate, but they also inflict secondary harm on members of the community by increasing their need to protect themselves from future similar crimes. Punishment restores security to the community as it deters others from committing similar acts in the future against community members.

other than a person when we resent her; such resentment thus is not a part of normal interpersonal relations, of reacting to one another *as persons*. Holmgren's resentment is justified (when it is justified) in virtue of its role in a victim's healing process. But such an attitude cannot thereby seek to engage with the wrongdoer's moral capacities, so it cannot give the wrongdoer moral reasons, as it is solely focused on the victim and what she is going through. So Holmgren's resentment cannot hold a wrongdoer responsible in the way that an appropriate blaming attitude does.

Holmgren's understanding of forgiveness, on the other hand, does recognize wrongdoers as moral agents, but does not hold wrongdoers responsible for their wrongdoing. We hold others responsible by blaming them – for instance, by resenting them – and to forgive is to forgo justified resentment.[47] But when we forgive, we give up our otherwise justified claims to hold wrongdoers responsible; by definition, we do not blame those whom we forgive. Thus on Holmgren's account, properly respecting others' humanity entails that we cannot hold wrongdoers responsible; indeed, such a position cannot adequately account for wrongdoers as autonomous agents, since resenting the wrongdoer does not recognize her as a person, while forgiving her does recognize the wrongdoer as a person but precludes ever holding her responsible for her wrongs.

R. Jay Wallace (1994) imposes limits on the suffering at which morally appropriate blame should aim that are more in line with the limits I am arguing for. But exactly what those limits are, and what justifies them, turns out to be somewhat unclear, in part because the content of particular blaming attitudes on his account remains unclear. At times Wallace calls the reactive attitudes – the "distinctive range of moral sentiments" (1994, 8) to which we are susceptible

[47] Here I follow Bishop Butler (1827/1970) in understanding forgiveness as forgoing justified resentment; Holmgren also follows Butler on this point.

when another fails to act as she is morally obligated – "simple blame". Usually, he says, blaming responses "extend beyond simple blame to include a range of sanctioning responses as well, such as avoidance, reproach, scolding, denunciation, remonstration, and (at the limit) punishment" (1994, 54). In other words, the range of moral responses to wrongdoing begins with reactive attitudes, but stronger responses can include sanctioning behaviors "that serve to express the reactive emotions to which we are subject when we blame people for their moral failings" (1994, 67). When responding to wrongdoing, Wallace says we usually pair a reactive attitude and some form of sanctioning behavior together: our attitudes dispose us to *express* our blame through sanctioning behavior; we understand these behaviors as sanctioning *precisely because* they are expressive of the reactive attitudes. Blame and certain forms of punishment are thus linked together, on Wallace's account: justified reactive attitudes provide the ground for justified sanctioning behavior.[48]

Wallace stipulates that there is a limit to the harshness of appropriate blaming responses: what sets reactive attitudes and moral sanctions apart from cruel or vengeful attitudes is the nature of the sentiments that constitute the blaming attitude (expressed or not). Wallace says that if punitive behavior is cruel or vengeful, it is unjustifiable, regardless of any putative wrongdoing that may have "motivated" it. He further stipulates that vengeance is inherently cruel, involving "behavior that aims to inflict suffering (physical or psychic) as a way of subordinating the sufferer to one's will" (1994, 67-8). Presumably vengeance involves "paying back" a wrongdoer in kind – making her suffer in the way that she had made her victim suffer, and thinking that she *deserves* to be made to suffer in precisely this way. Wallace argues that blaming and sanctioning

[48] Sanctioning behavior also plays an important role in our moral education, on Wallace's view: we first come to notice sanctioning behavior, and subsequently we learn to recognize it as indicating others' disapproval. Understanding that others have reactive attitudes leads to our becoming susceptible to reactive attitudes: we come to "learn the concepts of indignation, resentment, and guilt in part by learning to see their connection to sanctioning behavior, and the adequate expression of those emotions often requires such behavior" (1994, 68).

responses must be other than mere vengeance or cruelty to show that such responses are not *inherently* cruel.[49]

In a basic sense, claiming that cruel behavior is unjustifiable does not get us any closer to understanding what kinds of blaming behavior Wallace is ruling out on the basis of the kind of suffering involved. "Cruel" is a thick ethical term, in the truest sense – simply by calling something cruel, we have defined it as morally bad.[50] It seems uncontroversial to claim that cruel behavior is unjustifiable, but it may yet be quite controversial to claim that *particular sorts of behavior* are cruel and, thus, unjustifiable. Further, Wallace claims that what defines the class of moral sanctions is that they are expressive of attitudes of blame; but given this definition, cruel and vengeful actions cannot constitute moral sanctions, since such actions are not expressive of reactive attitudes. So while the notion that aiming to inflict suffering as a way of subordinating another to one's will is inherently cruel might make it sound like inflicting suffering out of ill will is inherently cruel, neither *thinking it good that a wrongdoer suffer* nor *enjoying a wrongdoer's misfortunes* is the same as *aiming to inflict suffering as a way of subordinating another to one's will.* Crucially, sanctioning behavior that inflicts suffering while aiming at certain other purposes – namely, to express reactive attitudes – *is* permitted, on Wallace's view. So *some* attitudes of ill will may still be permissible as a constitutive part of Wallace's reactive attitudes.

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[49] Certain consequentialist accounts of blame – those Wallace calls "economy of threats" views – do meet this constraint, but Wallace worries that they fail in other important respects. Specifically, Wallace claims that such views treat blame too behavioristically, do not properly recognize the inherently backward-lookingness of blame, cannot account for unexpressed blame, and cannot take incompatibilist worries seriously enough. Wallace denies that reactive attitudes aim at forward-looking benefits, explaining that on his account sanctioning behaviors serve to express reactive attitudes, so are (only) expressions of backward-looking disapproval.

Wallace argues that blame is backward-looking and consists in the having of reactive attitudes; sanctioning behaviors are ways of expressing the reactive attitudes and as such are also (backward-looking) blaming responses. So Wallace must defend his reactive attitudes against the charge of cruelty without relying on forward-looking benefits.

[50] Here I follow Williams (1985) in using the term "thick" in this sense.

Wallace also contrasts reactive attitudes with anger and hatred, but here it is not clear from what he has to say whether anger and hatred are *inherently* cruel. Reactive attitudes, Wallace says, are "focused emotional responses to the violation of moral obligations that we accept"; expressing reactive attitudes is thus unlike "venting feelings of anger and hatred, in the service of an antecedent desire to inflict harm for its own sake" (1994, 69). As described here, it certainly sounds like anger and hatred are not appropriate reactive (blaming) attitudes; if anger and hatred are *always* in service of desires to inflict harm then, by definition, these attitudes are inherently cruel and thus not reactive attitudes. But perhaps it is only cases of *venting* anger and hatred (in the service of expressing desires to inflict harm) that he means to indicate here as morally problematic, not *all* attitudes of anger and hatred. So perhaps Wallace's account leaves room for some kinds of anger and hatred that *do not* include desires to inflict harm. Further, sometimes Wallace talks about "blind" anger and hatred: perhaps the "blind" is intended to show that these particular attitudes (that is, blind anger and blind hatred) lack the propositional content required of reactive attitudes.

If I have properly understood Wallace's discussion of hatred and anger, his account may still permit us to respond to wrongdoing with *justified* hatred and anger; such justified attitudes plausibly might constitute appropriate reactive attitudes. If this is right, then what matters when making a determination of cruelty is whether there is either an "antecedent desire to inflict harm for its own sake" (69), or a lack of the propositional content required of reactive attitudes. For instance, I can be angry with a person for hurting my friend, and I can hate someone for the way she treats me. In both cases, my attitudes may be partially constituted by my belief that the target of my anger or hatred has failed to comply with moral obligations that I accept, and demonstrate my "commitment to certain moral standards, as regulative of social life" (69):

> blame and moral sanction can be seen to have a positive, perhaps irreplaceable contribution to make to the constitution and maintenance of moral communities: by giving voice to the reactive emotions, these responses help to articulate, and thereby to affirm and deepen, our commitment to a set of common moral obligations (1994, 69).

Although blaming responses *can* cause suffering, Wallace says that justified sanctioning behavior does not *aim* at inflicting suffering; rather, it is essentially just expressive of the reactive attitudes. Reactive attitudes thus avoid the pitfall of being *merely* cruel or vengeful by making this positive contribution to our moral communities and practices. Not *aiming* at suffering is what saves reactive attitudes and the behaviors that express them from being morally problematic; provided my anger or hatred functions as my backward-looking response to what my friend has done *wrong,* then it does not *aim* at inflicting harm on a wrongdoer, so it seems either might plausibly constitute a reactive attitude on Wallace's account.[51] However, even if this much is a correct interpretation of Wallace's account, the *content* of attitudes of anger and hatred remains unspecified; so it is still unclear what the limits of appropriate blaming are on Wallace's account (not to mention *why* he thinks that there ought to be such limits).

Wallace's account of the limits of appropriate blame does not acknowledge that appropriate blame often does aim, in fact, at a certain kind of suffering. Reactive attitudes are *engaged* attitudes, and are a constitutive part of our interpersonal interactions and relations with others (moral or otherwise). In blaming, we respond to the perception that another has failed to accord us the sorts of positive attitudes that we take to be constitutive of relations between moral equals. Our responding with negative attitudes *acknowledges* this failure, and also acknowledges that

[51] If Wallace's account can allow for anger and hatred to count as reactive attitudes, they will only do so in cases in which it is justified for *anyone* to hate or be angry with the wrongdoer. For instance, I might hate you for your indifference toward me in a particular situation, given that I expected you to care deeply for me as my friend and not because I take your attitude toward me *by itself* to be an objectionable attitude to take toward anyone; in this example, I blame you *via* my hate. Wallace's account cannot account for hateful attitudes like this one as justified blaming attitudes, not because the hatefulness is inherently cruel (although it might also be) but because attitudes that respond to failures of expectations within a personal relationship are not properly reactive attitudes.

this failure was the *wrongdoer's* failure. Appropriate blame, on a reactive account, is *engaged* with the wrongdoer as a moral agent, and as such it usually includes some expectation that the wrongdoer *reflect* on her wrongdoing, and perhaps also includes the hope that she will feel *bad* for what she has done. The suffering that comes from feeling bad for doing wrong (even if only upon reflection) is (even if only indirectly) part of the aim of blaming a fellow moral agent.

Considering cases of particular, intimate relationships may further illuminate the distinction between appropriate blaming attitudes – those that aim at a certain kind of morally acceptable suffering – and regarding another with morally unacceptable attitudes that include ill will. Such cases are often the easiest to imagine: we tend to have most of our reactive attitudes in the context of close relations, and the range of the sort of attitudes we can have in this context is likely to be wide. This makes sense, since most of our interactions are with those to whom we are closest, and those are the people about whom we care the most. We are more sensitive to the attitudes of those to whom we are closest – both in the sense that their attitudes will affect us the most, and in the sense that we will more easily detect what their attitudes are. As a result, their attitudes and actions affect us the most in terms of our own attitudes, and provoke most of our reactive attitudes. For instance, we are likely to be more pleased for our friends' good fortune than for the good fortune of mere acquaintances. Conversely, we tend to be more upset with our loved ones when they disappoint us than we would with a stranger who had done the same.

Imagine what it is like to get extremely angry with someone whom you love dearly. Even while angry, we ought to continue to regard our loved ones as persons capable of discovering and understanding moral reasons for themselves. In blaming them, our attitudes toward them are still *engaged* with them *qua* persons about whom we care deeply, and as persons we see as intrinsically valuable. We do not stop loving them, and our relationship with them need not be in

any jeopardy. It does seem right that we are less inclined to feel generous toward our friends while angry, but to wish them ill – even temporarily – is not a respectful moral response. If I consider, even fleetingly, kicking my friend in the shins after he inadvertently (but thoughtlessly) bumped into me and spilled my drink, I am motivated my own desire to "pay him back"; similarly, if when my friend shuts the door my finger is painfully crushed, my thought that he deserves to have his finger broken is not so much a blaming response as a desire that he "gets his". If I feel this way toward a loved one while angry, even secretly, I should – hopefully – later regret that I desired his suffering in this way, and recognize that it was not an appropriate reactive attitude: I was not merely assessing his quality of will as lacking but was myself "sinking to his level" (or, perhaps, even lower) and failed to recognize his capacity to understand that he had done something wrong. In these sorts of cases if we bear our loved ones ill will because we are particularly upset, our attitudes do not constitute morally appropriate *blaming* responses. Rather, they may be expressive of our hurt feelings, and their excessive nature may be owing to "the heat of the moment". Our feeling guilty later about such excessively negative attitudes indicates our understanding that we have been unreasonable – irrational – in thinking another's blameworthiness can justify such harsh attitudes.[52]

One might object that blaming strangers is importantly different from blaming intimates: since we have no existing relationship with them the only way to blame them is to bear them ill will, thus attitudes of ill will can be appropriate blaming responses – at least in cases of egregious wrongs – if we are to make sense of blaming strangers. But this seems suspicious. If I am right that we ought not blame with ill will in close relationships – signified by our feeling guilty about our secret desires that those who have wronged us should suffer some humiliation or

[52] For a good explanation of how guilt can indicate our assessment of our own attitude(s) as blameworthy, see Smith (2011).

pain – it seems odd to think that we can be justified in blaming with ill will those with whom we share only the moral relationship. After all, we also stand in moral relations with those to whom we are close, so it cannot be the case that the moral relationship demands we be able to blame with ill will if we think that we would not blame our friends with ill will.

T.M. Scanlon's account of blame (2008, 2013a & 2013b) explicitly limits the harshness of appropriate blame, even when we blame strangers with whom we have no personal relationship. When blamed, a wrongdoer indeed suffers losses, but the extent of the losses that may be *permissibly inflicted* by the blamer is limited. Scanlon claims that desert of blame – that is, blameworthiness – is what justifies the suffering associated with blame, but states that desert can only justify *certain kinds* of suffering. At least *some* positive attitudes are not conditional upon moral expectations being met: "ideally, we would like our moral relationship with others to be mutual…[but] the basic forms of moral concern are not conditional on this kind of reciprocation" (2008, 142). Proper moral consideration entails that certain moral claims remain intact for all persons – even wrongdoers – and that they so remain regardless of the nature of any wrong committed: "it is a moral deficiency to hope that things go badly for others, even strangers, or to be pleased when they do" (Scanlon 2008, 240); regardless of the gravity of the wrongs committed one must always respect others' "claims on us not to be hurt or killed, to be helped when they are in dire need, and to have us honor promises we have made to them" (2008, 142). Scanlon says that these minimal attitudes are owed to "fellow rational beings" in virtue of the moral relationship, a relationship that cannot be severed – even when justifiably blaming a wrongdoer (2008, 140).

What Scanlon terms "retributivist responses" – that is, thinking it a good if bad things befall wrongdoers – he says constitute inappropriate forms of blame, no matter the wrong to which they

purport to respond. Scanlon describes retributivism as the view that "even our intentions not to kill or harm others are appropriately suspended toward those who fail to manifest these intentions toward others (2008, 142)". In other words, if a wrongdoer deliberately inflicts serious harm upon another (thus revealing her bad attitudes toward that other), the retributivist claims that the wrongdoer's action makes it permissible to harm her in a similar way; in theory, there is no limit to the harm that a wrongdoer can retributively deserve if she has done something particularly egregious. Scanlon claims that retributivists are mistaken in assuming that the sort of desert that makes blame appropriate can also justify punishment. Although she is no longer owed all of the positive attitudes that she had been owed previously, to *punish* or *sanction* a wrongdoer requires an appeal to more than simply desert: beneficial consequences of the sanction – and perhaps also fair opportunity to avoid – are also required if sanctions are to be justified (2013, 108).

No longer wishing well for a wrongdoer just isn't the same as thinking it will be a good thing if things go badly for that wrongdoer: Scanlon makes clear that it is okay to cease to wish a wrongdoer well, but it is not okay to think it better if things go badly for her. Put another way,

> not being sad or regretful when something bad happens to a person is not the same thing as thinking it to be a good thing, or justified, that the person should suffer this fate, or even thinking that it is less bad that he should suffer in this way than that the same thing should happen to some innocent person. Attitudes such as hoping and being pleased, or regretting or being sad, need not involve or presuppose judgments about what is good or justified (2013a, 109).

So there is a difference between being pleased that a wrongdoer suffers some ill fate (or, at least, being indifferent to his suffering), and our thinking it is *justified* that a wrongdoer suffer some ill fate owing to what is bad about him; this is what distinguishes Scanlon's account of blame from that of the retributivist. Scanlon's account of blaming appropriately only precludes us from thinking that it is a *morally good thing* when a wrongdoer suffers an ill fate; in at least some

cases of serious wrongdoing it may still be permissible to *desire* that a wrongdoer suffer significantly (provided we do not think we are morally justified in causing her suffering), and in many cases it appears that we are permitted to regard a wrongdoer's suffering with mere indifference.

Scanlon offers another explanation of this distinction between claiming one is justified in *causing* a wrongdoer to suffer and simply being indifferent to her suffering in the form of this metaphor:

> It would be wrong of us to go out of our way to kick over their sandcastles, so to speak, but we need not offer them our shovels…The fact that a person has behaved very badly toward you or toward others can make it appropriate not to take pleasure in that person's successes, and not to hope that things go well for him. Not being disposed to such hopes and feelings in regard to a person is not, however, the same thing as judging it to be good that things go badly for him or her (or even judging it not to be good that they do well (2008, 144-5).

Apparently, the moral relationship, on Scanlon's view, precludes actively working against the (presumably permissible) interests of another – even when responding to wrongdoing. But if we are justified in blaming a wrongdoer, we need not actively *promote* her interests. Kicking over another's sandcastles, it would seem, is a direct attempt to work *against* another's interests; you aim to destroy the progress of another in kicking over her sandcastles. On the other hand, while not offering your shovel to a sandcastle-builder is not to *share* in her projects, your not sharing does not go so far as to *hinder* her individual progress toward achieving her goals: you do not aim to *thwart* her projects, you simply leave her to struggle to succeed on her own. Again we see Scanlon's description of the distinction between no longer hoping for good things for a wrongdoer – which can be appropriate in cases of blame – and wanting things to go *badly* for her. The first is consistent with withdrawing at least some of your previously afforded goodwill,

in the sense that you no longer share in the projects of the one you now blame, while the second is indicative of bearing her ill will.

Of course, the above interpretation requires charitably understanding Scanlon as intending "sandcastles" to include only morally permissible projects; if the sandcastle were to represent an *evil* project (such as killing people), presumably we cannot stand idly by and allow the "sandcastle" to be built. There is a difference between bearing some minimal goodwill toward another, in the sense that we do not interfere with the progress of her projects – or, to be indifferent to her – *despite* justifiably blaming her, and not opposing or preventing her further wrongdoing. I will discuss this distinction in more detail in the next section, but I do think that we can respond to one another and stand up to wrongdoing with attitudes that do not include ill will; however, I do not intend to claim that such attitudes entail allowing persons to commit egregious wrongs if we are in a position to prevent those wrongs. So if the "sandcastles" of Scanlon's metaphor represent evil projects, I do not endorse (nor, I think, does Scanlon) the idea that watching others work on their evil projects but refraining from intervening to *prevent* the evil is required if we are to blame appropriately (that is, with some goodwill toward the wrongdoer).[53]

Scanlon's view appears to include a limitation on blaming attitudes that looks like this: even when blaming wrongdoers, modifications of attitudes must not be made such that a blamer wishes ill for a wrongdoer. While Scanlon says that we owe minimal attitudes to all others, and in the usual case are morally precluded from hoping that things go wrong for others (2008, 240), he also allows that we need not be sad or regretful if things *do* go badly for a wrongdoer (2013a, 109). So in blaming in those cases where our default obligation requires only the minimal

[53] I am grateful to Bill Talbott for challenging my understanding of Scanlon's sandcastle metaphor by pointing out that we *ought* to kick over the evil sandcastles. However, as I read Scanlon, the "sandcastle" is meant to represent another's morally acceptable projects.

attitudes involves no longer caring if things go badly for the wrongdoer, we are not permitted to think it *better* if things go badly for her. When we blame, we may be permitted to be indifferent to the wrongdoer's projects (like building a sandcastle). Perhaps, then, if blaming him causes him some (justified) suffering, we can be indifferent to that suffering but may not think it a good thing that he so suffers. But if this is his account, it is still not clear how this amounts to *blame*, rather than a kind of emotional detachment.[54]

It may help to return to Scanlon's account of blaming strangers. Consider how Scanlon would describe blaming a stranger who has perpetrated some act of violence against you: because of what she has done, you need no longer regard her with mutual forbearance as is otherwise demanded by the moral relationship; however, you are precluded from blaming with the sort of responses a retributivist takes to be justified – that is, thinking it better if she be made to suffer. But this may seem unsatisfying as an explanation of blaming her. Prior to the attack, you might very well have – generally – wished well for all humans, in a general, nonspecific way that included (but certainly did not pick out) your attacker. This sounds like a good approximation of Scanlon's minimal relationship, which seems all we can possibly have with strangers. In blaming your attacker, Scanlon says you are permitted to refuse to make agreements or to enter into more specific relations (in short, you need not trust her), and you may permissibly suspend friendly attitudes toward her (2008, 143). But you were unlikely to have trusted her or have been contemplating making agreements with her before you were attacked except in the most abstract sense, so no longer being willing to do so does not seem like much of a modification of your attitudes.

[54] Bennett (2013) argues that Scanlon's description of the modification here does not look much like blame, since "all that can change is our morally good but not required willingness to go the extra mile for someone…[thus] treating people as if they are fit to participate in the default moral relationship even though they are not" (74). Bennett denies that wrongdoers are owed basic moral respect that Scanlon accords them.

Further, after being attacked, you have a much more specific relationship with your attacker *qua* your attacker; unlike the minimal moral relationship, this relationship is with a specific person with specific characteristics, including that she is the person who harmed you. In blaming her, you may have strong negative feelings toward your attacker, feelings that – even if they do not include ill will – certainly do not seem indifferent. Blame of this sort, it seems, cannot involve mere indifference. In blaming your attacker, you do not merely retract your general, non-specific well-wishing for this particular person, but you also have a stake in letting her know that you do not approve of her harming you, and may hope that she understands her actions as wrong (even if you do not hope that things go badly for her). If this is correct, then not offering your shovel to the castle-builder seems like it ought to involve attitudes other than mere indifference. But what these attitudes are – and, why they cannot be justified if they are constituted by the thought that it is a morally good thing that the wrongdoer be made to suffer – remains unclear.

To claim that these two kinds of attitudes – namely, that we are permitted to stop hoping that things go well for a wrongdoer, but ought not to hope that things go *badly* for her – are distinct seems plausible, as far as it goes, but the sandcastle example still does not make clear *why* one kind of attitude is permitted and the other is not. Indeed, Scanlon also says we are not obliged to aid others in their projects in any case – in other words, we need not loan our shovels to anyone, regardless of their attitudes toward us (2013, 108) – so keeping our shovels to ourselves need not be a blaming attitude in any case. Further, this distinction does not clearly rule out our *wanting* to have something *bad* happen to a wrongdoer, it only rules out the claim that it would be *right and good* for us to punish a wrongdoer – say, by destroying her sandcastles. So while we must recognize that it is not better if her sandcastles are destroyed, it may at least be permissible for us to be pleased if, say, a rogue wave comes along and smashes the wrongdoer's beautiful

sandcastle into a wet pile of sand. Additionally, no longer wishing well for another seems somewhat disconnected from blaming appropriately, although it is *consistent* with blaming appropriately.

Holding another responsible – respectfully – entails continuing to view her as a moral partner, one with whom we can engage in respectful dialogue. Harsh attitudes – such as strong forms of hatred – regard their objects as persons with moral capacities, but may include the judgment that despite her agency she is not worth the usual consideration we afford our moral equals. These sorts of attitudes are reactive, as they are reactions to another's quality of will, but they exceed the realm of rational, respectful responses. As such, they are distinct from the objective attitude, which is *not* reactive to another's perceived quality of will. Such attitudes, I claim, are blaming reactive attitudes, as they recognize the wrongdoer as a person who is responsible for her bad attitudes or actions, but that they nevertheless are *disrespectful* reactive attitudes since the attitudes themselves do not constitute respectful forms of moral address toward the wrongdoer. I next turn to a discussion of blaming with goodwill, to explain how I think that such blaming attitudes are capable of morally addressing a wrongdoer.

§ 3: Respectful Blaming Attitudes

I have described blame as a negative, affective, evaluative attitude directed at a wrongdoer, and respectful blame as an attitude that satisfies that description while maintaining goodwill toward wrongdoers, in the sense that the blaming attitudes are primarily about the wrong. Reactivity constitutes a form of respect for persons, since to react to another's quality of will is to recognize her attitudes and actions as *hers*. But, I claim, reactivity alone is not all there is to ensure that one is blaming appropriately. Given the requirements of respect for persons, ill will ought not to be

included in appropriate blaming attitudes. In this section, I explain why respectful blaming attitudes thus must maintain a certain kind of goodwill toward a wrongdoer – in the sense that respectful blaming attitudes must take a form that recognizes the wrongdoer as capable of engaging in moral conversation – while addressing the possible worry that, without ill will, such attitudes will miss the point of blame. I show how blaming attitudes that are capable of engaging with the wrongdoer's moral capacities, addressing her as a competent moral agent, meet the requirements of respect for persons better than can blaming attitudes that bear a wrongdoer ill will.

Blaming attitudes hold wrongdoers responsible. To assess another's action (or character) as *wrong* (or *bad*) is to attribute the action (or character) to *her*, in a deep sense: blaming includes an evaluative judgment that *recognizes* the wrongdoer as responsible for the wrongdoing, and not in a merely causal way. This judgment also entails the recognition that the wrongdoer is responsible *to* another person, since she is being judged to have failed to treat the person wronged in an appropriate manner. Blaming attitudes involving either good- or ill will do all of this, since they include the judgment that a particular failure of respect was *wrong*. So whether ill will is present or not, blaming attitudes *recognize* the wrongdoer as *responsible* for her disrespectful attitudes towards another who is owed goodwill.

Blame that takes the form I have suggested it should – that is mainly a form of moral address, protesting against the wrong on moral terms – can also be understood as fair. Blame is only fair if its target *deserves* the judgment that she is blameworthy – that is, that the judgment is justified, or warranted, or appropriate – and if the blaming attitude itself is both proportionate to the wrongdoing, and respectful. Assessing the appropriateness of the judgment of blameworthiness requires determining whether the wrongdoer has failed to meet the relevant demand for

goodwill; both blaming with and without ill will can meet this requirement. But things look slightly different when assessing whether the blame itself is proportionate to the wrong, and respectful. The friend of blaming with ill will may argue that the more serious the wrong, the harsher the blaming response that the wrongdoer deserves; as a result, those who commit the most serious wrongs deserve to blamed with ill will. But proportionality need not be understood this way. The wrongness of an attitude or action can be reflected in the blaming judgment itself, which is itself a part of the blaming attitude. But the harshness of the attitude – in the sense of withdrawing goodwill, or bearing a wrongdoer ill will – is limited by respect for persons. Attitudes of ill will are not the right kind of attitudes to engage with the wrongdoer's rational and moral capacities through respectful moral address, so they cannot constitute respectful blaming attitudes.[55] Thus respectful blaming attitudes can be fair, while blaming attitudes of ill will might not be fair.

Respectful blaming attitudes can also be understood as fitting within our normal moral practices. Blame is deserved for violations of shared norms – that is, for failures to meet the goodwill demanded by the relationship; those demands are normative and may be understood as such by moral agents. The demands of the moral relationship – including the demand for respect – apply in all cases; when these demands are not met, it can be appropriate to blame whoever failed to meet them. But blame can also be judged as appropriate based on shared norms. The requirement to regard others as persons is one such shared norm and cannot be forfeited, even

[55] The friend of ill will is sure to disagree with me about this. She will claim that harsh attitudes recognize the wrongdoer respectfully, since they are deserved in virtue of the fact that the wrong in question resulted from her autonomous, willed action (or attitude). I will discuss and respond to her objection in the next section of this chapter.

when one has failed to meet the relevant demands to regard others with goodwill. Thus blaming respectfully can consistently respect the normative demands of the moral relationship.[56]

Making a distinction between respectful and non-respectful blaming attitudes can also help explain why we *care* so much about blame. Relationships are central to understanding blame, both the moral relationship that we share with all others and our specific relationships with particular others; this is because of the central role of quality of will in our interpersonal relationships and practices. To regard others with the appropriate sort of goodwill includes *caring* what others think of us, morally speaking, especially if they think us blameworthy for our attitudes; given the social nature of our moral lives, a part of properly respecting others includes hoping that they *feel* properly respected. Others' assessments of our quality of will thus have the potential to affect us – in the case of blaming assessments, to motivate us to be better – since our moral capacities enable us to understand others' moral judgments and to consider them as reasons when reflecting on the quality of our own attitudes.

Attitudes of ill will, on the other hand, can work *against* our caring about being blamed. While agents may fail to care when they are blamed in any case, I suggest that attitudes of ill will are more likely to be (mis)understood by their target as *undeserved disrespect* – rather than *deserved blame* – than are blaming attitudes that include goodwill. The idea is that we are less likely to care about others' assessments if it feels like we can't talk to that person, or it feels like that person is simply dismissive of us, or it feels like she is not open to having or repairing her relations with us. I think that such responses to being blamed are more likely to happen when blame includes ill will. The sort of respectful blaming attitudes I have defended, on the other

[56] Again, the friend of ill will is likely to disagree with me about this, but I will address her concerns more fully below.

hand, stand a better chance of giving the wrongdoer hope that her apology and any possible amends she could offer might be welcomed.

We also care deeply about blame because of its role as a form of moral address; here is where goodwill is *crucial* to blaming respectfully. Blame holds wrongdoers responsible for their wrongdoing and assesses their quality of will as disrespectful in the relevant context. As such, blaming attitudes can be understood by others as explanations for why she is blameworthy, and may even provide reasons to motivate wrongdoers to change their attitudes for the better (although this is not the main aim of blaming attitudes); such attitudes are at least capable of being understood by the wrongdoer as demanding that she understand and accept her disrespectful attitudes as *wrong*. But ill will mainly aims at a wrongdoer being made to feel bad *per se* and, as such, can only provide non-moral reasons to a wrongdoer to change her attitudes; by this, I mean that such attitudes do not particularly address wrongdoers in moral terms that entail that they ought to care about being *blamed*, so much as such attitudes may make her wish to change her attitudes in order to avoid being made to feel bad. Such attitudes thus have as their moral aim – if they have any moral aim at all – *changing* the wrongdoer, rather than expressing moral disapproval that she can understand as such. Such an aim interferes with the wrongdoer's capacities to autonomously will her own attitudes and actions, and is more forward-looking than an account of blame ought to be.

Some defenders of ill will might respond with the following pitch. Since wrongdoers are members of the moral community, they have the capacity to understand the moral values accepted by the rest of the moral community. But those agents who do wrong *flout* those moral values, thereby showing that they are not properly connected to those values; in short, through their bad actions and attitudes, wrongdoers demonstrate either that they rely on uninformed or

mistaken beliefs about what they ought to do, that they are selfish or thoughtless, or perhaps even that they just do not care about moral values. In the cases in which wrongdoers are uninformed or mistaken in their beliefs, understanding their mistakes may be all it takes for them to reconnect to moral values; in such cases, attitudes of ill will may not be justifiable. But in the last sort of case – when wrongdoers understand that their actions are wrong, and they just do not care about moral values – we cannot expect the wrongdoer to care much about the fact that she has done wrong, and simply reasoning with her about her actions and attitudes is unlikely to have any effect on her bad attitudes; that is, moral values do not provide the same motivating force to wrongdoers that we expect them to provide to members of the moral community. Thus the most negative blaming attitudes are warranted: through her wrongdoing the wrongdoer has *earned* the ill will that others (justifiably) bear her. These harsh attitudes are *required*, so the argument might go, in order to give the wrongdoer reason to sit up and take notice and thus to hold her responsible for her wrongdoing.[57]

The problem with this sort of a defense is that such attitudes are not respectful blaming attitudes because they are not capable of making a *moral* argument to the wrongdoer. Harsh attitudes like these do not seek to engage the wrongdoer's capacity for moral understanding but instead mainly give her reason to change her behavior to preserve *her own* self-interests. These attitudes dismiss the possibility of the agent engaging with blaming attitudes as *moral* reasons and so do not offer any; thus, attitudes of ill will like these are disrespectful to the agent as a person.

Perhaps, says the friend of ill will, *desires for vengeance* can be justified as respectful blaming responses; after all, such desires are closely tied to the wrongs they seek to avenge,

[57] Although he argues for retributive punishment rather than blaming attitudes that include ill will, I have based this defense of blaming with ill will on Nozick's argument for non-teleological retributivism (1981).

providing a kind of mirror-image of the wrong for the wrongdoer to contemplate. On such a view, the having of these attitudes can be a morally good thing, since these emotions enable us to stand up to wrongdoers and thus to respect ourselves appropriately. Understood this way, attitudes of ill will are constitutive of an important form of self-respect. A victim's ill will toward a wrongdoer thus repudiates the message that she is somehow morally inferior. Such ill will might also be taken to show respect for morality more generally – when a person feels vengeful towards a wrongdoer, it is clear that she will not tolerate those wrongs that were done. Finally, some might claim that attitudes of ill will show respect for the wrongdoer herself – she is being held accountable for her objectionable attitudes, which are fully recognized as *hers*. Given these forms of respect that are defended, attitudes of ill will may also serve to communicate to a wrongdoer that her attitudes are not acceptable. [58]

All of this sounds plausible, and certainly much of what is being defended here seems to coincide with the aims of blame, but attitudes desiring vengeance are importantly different than appropriate blaming attitudes. Some of these attitudes purport to *threaten* harm, and so provide coercive motivation to a wrongdoer to improve her attitudes rather than issuing respectful demands for goodwill. But, more importantly, *wanting to hurt a wrongdoer* just is not – in the main – what is at issue in blaming. Blaming calls out a wrongdoer for her disrespectful attitudes and actions, issuing demands for goodwill that a wrongdoer has failed to meet. Respectful blaming attitudes are those that are capable of engaging with a wrongdoer in moral conversation, offering and asking for moral reasons. That another has done wrong does not sanction our abandoning the respectful stances we otherwise take toward another; in judging her to be morally lacking, we are not thereby granted leave to regard her as other than a person who is *one of us*.

[58] Murphy (2003) defends a view much like this one. French (2001) goes one (big) step further, defending not only desires for vengeance but also, in some extreme cases, vengeance itself.

We can hold her responsible for her actions, repudiate her wrongdoing, and recognize ourselves as worthy of respect – in short, we can *blame* her – without thereby desiring to *hurt* her.

Additionally, modeling appropriate moral attitudes is an important part of blaming within respectful interpersonal practices. We can be unhappy with those we blame, and they can care that we feel that way toward them, without our attitudes involving any desires that they suffer for their wrongdoing. Our blaming attitudes can give wrongdoers moral reasons to change their attitudes, and to prompt them to apologize and try to salvage their relations with those who blame them – all without directing any ill will toward them. But the message that blame can send is made even stronger if it does not itself manifest the ill will it deplores, nor lack the sort of respect being demanded. In blaming, we reiterate our demands for goodwill – and, if we blame respectfully in the way I am suggesting, our demands model that which they demand. Blame that offers moral reasons regarding a wrongdoer's problematic attitudes and actions respects the moral order in ways that desires to hurt wrongdoers simply cannot.

Further, it seems right that respect requires humility. None of us is perfect, and so we ought to exercise caution in our blame and sanction of others to avoid hypocrisy. In many cases those whom we blame may be in a disadvantaged position in some respect or other; we all ought to recognize that we are all capable of making moral mistakes, and remember the phrase "there but for the grace of God go I" before asserting our blame too strongly. Blaming with goodwill – rather than with ill will – better models this humility. So even when – or, perhaps, *especially* when – we blame those who have committed particularly terrible acts, we ought to model attitudes that seek to *engage* with others' moral and rational capacities, and regard wrongdoers in the best possible way while still holding them responsible and assessing them as having failed to regard others appropriately.

I have argued that blaming attitudes that include ill will still recognize their targets as moral agents, in some sense – since they recognize the wrongdoer as the one whose will is lacking – but that such attitudes violate the demands of the moral relationship to address an agent in a way that recognizes her personhood and thus will always be disrespectful. The defender of ill will may yet claim that such attitudes *are* respectful, as the attitudes themselves are capable of being understood as a form of respect; I turn now to a consideration of these objections in favor of ill will and my responses to each.

§ 4: More Against Blaming with Ill Will

Defenders of blaming with ill will might yet appeal to parts of Strawson's framework and to Stephen Darwall's distinction between recognition and appraisal respect to support their position that blaming with ill will can yet respect wrongdoers. As I have already shown, on the Strawsonian picture, to be susceptible to blaming attitudes in one's interactions with another *just is* to recognize her agency. On Strawson's description of negative reactive attitudes, blaming attitudes partially withdraw goodwill toward a wrongdoer (1962/2003, 90); although I have not followed this description of blame, those who defend blaming with ill will might well think it right. If they do, then wrongdoing may be understood to *modify* the general demand that another be spared suffering; so while we ought to wish others well in the usual case, in the case of wrongdoing we may be permitted to hope that they suffer. Extending this notion to defend blaming with ill will, the idea seems to be that the *worst* sort of wrongs can justify blaming attitudes that go beyond *partial* withdrawals of goodwill, replacing all goodwill with ill will toward the wrongdoer. Perhaps then, on such a view, the justified withdrawals of goodwill that constitute blaming a wrongdoer are justified as proportionate to the wrong: the worse the

wrongdoing, the more goodwill we are justified in withdrawing. So if her wrongs are serious enough to warrant punishment, the wrongdoer likely may not deserve any goodwill; at some point, it is plausible to assume that we could withdraw all of our goodwill toward a wrongdoer.[59]

But, the defender of ill will might continue, respect can be afforded on different levels, such that attitudes of ill will can constitute respectful blaming attitudes. Our reactive attitudes of ill will withdraw all of our *appraisal* respect toward a wrongdoer, since her blameworthy actions or attitudes do not warrant our esteem; but those same attitudes nonetheless also serve to afford her *recognition* respect, since (deserved) reactive attitudes of ill will recognize the wrongdoer as a capable moral agent who is responsible for the wrong (despite the fact that she does not warrant any of our esteem).[60] A wrongdoer thus earns others' ill will through her autonomous choices

[59] Margaret Falls (1987) defends a proportional retributivist view of punishment, but argues that a wrongdoer's moral capacities – that is, those capacities that give her intrinsic worth as a moral agent – restrict the harshness of justified punishments. Falls argues that persons as such deserve to be held accountable, and that holding persons accountable requires punishment, thus persons as persons deserve to be punished for their wrongdoing; so far, this is a standard enough retributivist argument for what punishment a wrongdoer deserves. However, Falls argues against reciprocity views of retributivist punishment – such as those defended by Morris (1968) and Murphy (1973) – that what punishments can be deserved is limited by the very capacities that entail desert of punishment: in holding a wrongdoer responsible, she argues that the wrongdoer must be able to reflect on her wrongdoing as she is punished, which entails that her moral capacities must remain intact through her punishment. As a result of the requirement that she be capable of reflection, certain harsh punishments – such as death – are ruled out by respect for a person as an agent with moral capacities, regardless of the wrong that she has perpetrated. So reciprocity holds – the harshness of the punishment is to match the harshness of the crime – only as long as the punishment allows the criminal to reflect on her wrongdoing; effectively, there is a cap on how harsh deserved punishment can be. The view remains a retributive one, only with an upper limit to the severity of allowable punishments.

While I agree with Falls that respect for persons precludes justifiably punishing wrongdoers with death, her view does not rule out ill will as a (possibly) justifiable response to wrongdoers. Indeed, her view is compatible with a retributivism that understands respect for persons as *requiring* ill will toward the worst wrongdoers, provided that said ill will does not include a desire or aim of *destroying* the wrongdoers moral capacities altogether; responses to wrongdoers that include attitudes of ill will can still aim to coerce or manipulate wrongdoers into behaving in a more acceptable manner may still be permitted. But respect precludes much more than simply those punishments that seek to obliterate wrongdoers' capacities of moral reflection; in limiting the constrains of respect to protecting moral capacities from obliteration, Falls' view provides only a partial understanding of the requirements of respect for persons, as her view cannot not address the objectification worry that I raise below.

[60] Here I follow Darwall (1977 & 2012) in distinguishing between recognition respect and appraisal respect, but in no way do I intend here to attribute this retributivist defense of blaming with ill will to Darwall.

and actions – she *deserves* attitudes of ill will because of what she has done – and her moral capacities are thereby simultaneously recognized.[61]

On this picture blaming with ill will affords a wrongdoer recognition respect, and the ill will involved in blaming the worst wrongdoers comes into the picture as appraisal respect – or, rather, as signifying a lack of appraisal respect. The idea is: I have a reactive attitude that involves ill will in response to another's wrongdoing, but I have that reaction because I respect the agent in the sense that she is my moral equal, a fellow member of the moral community who is capable of understanding my ill will as a reasonable response to her wrongdoing. So while I have an occurrent attitude of ill will toward a wrongdoer *qua* wrongdoer, I nonetheless respect her *qua* fellow member of the moral community, because I regard her as my moral equal; effectively, my ill will toward her constitutes a form of respect for her. So in blaming a wrongdoer with ill will, the friend of ill will explains her position as bearing ill will toward a wrongdoer *qua* her conduct, while still regarding her with respect *qua* her agency.[62]

While this is a plausible defense of how ill will can recognize a wrongdoer's agency with respect to the wrongdoing that is at issue, it falls short of explaining how to blame respectfully. I have argued that respect for persons requires more than mere recognition that another is responsible for the action for which she is blamed. Blaming reactive attitudes recognize a wrongdoer's responsibility for wrongdoing, whether they are attitudes of ill will or not, since

[61] Support for this description of recognition and appraisal respect featuring in our blaming practices in this way may be found in Helm (2001), although I do not mean to attribute to him a defense of blaming with ill will. Helm claims that recognition respect is constituted by what he calls rational patterns of reactive attitudes – that is, being reactive to others' normative successes and failures in ways that indicate appraisals of them; appraisal respect (or, what he terms appraisal *dis*respect, in those cases in which esteem is not warranted) is thus constituted by the various reactive attitudes themselves. The having of reactive attitudes toward another – whether those attitudes signal appraisal respect, or appraisal disrespect – constitutes recognition respect, and is thus a form of caring for persons as such (2011, 226-7). So even attitudes that indicate appraisal disrespect – assuming that they are warranted – can nevertheless also constitute attitudes of respect, in the sense of recognition respect.

[62] I am grateful to Jeramy Gee for challenging my argument by offering this subtler interpretation of a retributivist position.

they attribute responsibility for the wrongdoing *to her*; but reactivity alone is not all that is required to respect a wrongdoer's agency when blaming her. Respecting a wrongdoer's agency when blaming her also requires that the *form* of the blaming attitude recognize the wrongdoer as a moral agent, capable of understanding and reflecting upon moral reasons. Within the Strawsonian framework, blaming attitudes are part of normal interpersonal relations. Blame calls out wrongdoing and is deserved in virtue of the wrongdoer's disrespectful attitudes and actions; on this much the friend of ill will and I can agree. But such calling out must *also* be respectful of the wrongdoer's moral capacities, recognizing her as capable of understanding moral demands for goodwill. So respect not only calls for reactivity, it also places *constraints* on the nature of reactive attitudes that can constitute appropriate responses.[63]

As a part of our normal participatory interpersonal practices, blame is the means by which we hold wrongdoers responsible for their disrespectful attitudes, and involves the thought that we take them to have good reason to revise their disrespectful attitudes. Of course, blame need not always be expressed, but given its role in the Strawsonian framework I suggest that it often is, in some manner – indeed, it is our attitudes that are subject to assessment, so presumably most of them are discernible by others through some expression or other. But even in cases where blame is unexpressed, respectful forms of blaming attitudes could still be of a nature that, were they to be expressed, they could be an engaged part of moral conversations with the wrongdoer.

[63] Darwall might not disagree with me about this. In his original explanation of recognition respect, Darwall writes

> To have recognition respect for someone as a person is to give appropriate weight to the fact that he or she is a person by being willing to constrain one's behavior in ways constrained by that fact…Recognition respect for persons, then, is identical with recognition respect for the moral requirements that are placed on one by the existence of other persons (1977, 45).

According to Darwall (1977), recognition respect thus places moral limitations on our *behavior* in our interactions with other persons: given their moral capacities – their ability to deliberate about what is morally required of them – they warrant respect, and this constrains our permissible treatment of them. In Darwall (2006), Darwall extends the application of this distinction to conduct, character, beliefs, relations, and attitudes. While Darwall continues to employ the distinction between recognition respect and appraisal respect, he notes that in certain cases there may not be much daylight between the two kinds of respect (2006, 124, n. 9).

Blaming wrongdoers is a valuable part of our ongoing interpersonal relations with others and is constitutive of our recognizing others' responsibility for their morally inferior attitudes and actions; so not only ought we to recognize others' moral agency by blaming them, but we ought to blame them in a manner that similarly recognizes their moral responsibilities. Recognizing wrongdoers' moral capacities when blaming is *crucial* to our on-going interpersonal practices, and to the value of those practices in our lives.

In blaming, we ought to issue *respectful* demands for goodwill; I have suggested that this entails doing so in a way that is at least theoretically capable of engaging with a wrongdoer's moral understanding. Attitudes of ill will cannot do this. Respect precludes our using ill will as an instrument against wrongdoers given their import as moral agents capable of moral reasoning and understanding – even if the ill will purports to be a kind of assessment of her lack of moral esteem – because such attitudes do not primarily provide moral reasons against the wrongdoing and thus are not the sort of attitudes that aim at engaging wrongdoers in moral address. All moral agents have powers of rational deliberation, and if we are to respect them we cannot ignore or override those abilities in our interactions with them; insofar as blaming attitudes that include ill will hold wrongdoers responsible, they do so without properly recognizing wrongdoers' moral capacities. Respect thus entails that our blaming attitudes aim – at least, in theory – to engage with a wrongdoer's capacities to understand moral reasons.

Further, assessments of an agent's esteem seem importantly separate from simply wanting bad things to happen to another. While there is a negative, affective component to blaming attitudes, the evaluative judgment included is essentially that another has failed to regard others with properly respectful attitude. If this is correct, then attitudes that mainly desire another's suffering do not sound like they plausibly fit the description of the typical case of blaming. So the negative

appraisals signaled by blaming attitudes of ill will fail to afford their targets proper respect for persons.

Respectful blaming attitudes recognize a wrongdoer as one capable of understanding moral reasons and as one capable of seeing her wrongdoing and taking responsibility for it. Respectful blaming attitudes issue demands for goodwill, calling out an agent's wrongdoing, but do so in a manner that allows the agent to reflect and revise her attitudes of her own accord. Respectful blaming attitudes thus are those that are capable of engaging with a wrongdoer's *moral* sensibilities, understood as her ability to understand and care about moral reasons against her disrespectful attitudes and actions. Respectful blaming attitudes are those that can constitute moral address; attitudes of ill will cannot achieve this feat.

One might yet object that blaming with ill will seems appropriate in particularly serious cases of wrongdoing – for example, hating a person for murdering your child and wanting him to be tortured seems *exactly* the right response. I am sympathetic to the claim that it can be appropriate for a parent to desire bad things for his child's murderer; it seems hard to imagine that a parent would *not* have extremely negative sentiments toward anyone who deliberately harms her child. However, thinking that such a response is understandable in this kind of a context does not entail thinking that such a response is an appropriate *blaming* response; indeed, this kind of case is demonstrative of the distinction I mentioned above, that there can be a clear demarcation between assessments of another's blameworthiness, and the desires for another's suffering. Blame is, primarily, an attitude of assessment, one that holds another responsible for her wrongdoing, and constitutes one side of a moral conversation that the wrongdoer is capable of understanding and responding to. But hateful attitudes such as described here do not aim to engage in a moral conversation with the wrongdoer, and are not primarily assessments of esteem.

The parent in the example above does not regard the wrongdoer with respectful attitudes that expect the wrongdoer to respond to her moral complaints, nor is he open to listening to the wrongdoer. The reciprocity of reactive attitudes terminates.

While the hateful attitudes of bereaved parents are understandable, and are certainly related to justice in some sense, they are not properly *blaming* attitudes. Blaming attitudes are moral responses that anyone might have to failures of goodwill. While we all have reason to *blame* the murderer, we do not think it the case that we all have reason to hate the murderer and want him dead, or to want him tortured; such responses would not be appropriate for *all* of us to have. But it *is* appropriate for any of us to *blame* the murderer. The murderer is *not* more blameworthy when the parent blames him than when the rest of us blame him, so we cannot account for the difference in appropriate responses on the basis of how strong a blaming response is warranted. If I am right that a murdered child's parents have reason to wish these things and that the rest of us do not, this example demonstrates that what warranted the parents' responses are not primarily *moral* reasons, since they constitute another kind of response.[64]

§ 5: CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have shown why blaming appropriately entails continuing to regard fellow members of the moral community with a certain kind of goodwill – even though they have offended against the norms of the community. Appropriate blaming attitudes respect wrongdoers as persons, holding each wrongdoer responsible for her attitudes, and for recognizing her faults

[64] John Stuart Mill makes a similar observation in chapter 5 of *Utilitarianism*, distinguishing between moral and non-moral resentment: "It is common enough, certainly, though the reverse of commendable, to feel resentment merely because we have suffered pain; but a person whose resentment is really a moral feeling, that is, who considers whether an act is blamable before he allows himself to resent it – such a person, though he may not say expressly to himself that he is standing up for the interests of society, certainly does feel that he is asserting a rule which is for the benefit of others as well as for his own" (1864/2003. 136). Mill goes on to immediately quote Kant's first formulation of the categorical imperative – and, to claim that Kant here agrees with Mill's point.

and failures of goodwill toward others, and ultimately for revising her inappropriate attitudes (or not). Any incentive such blame gives to wrongdoers to change their attitudes is neither manipulative nor paternalistic but instead is always respectful. The engagement demanded by the moral relationship remains active, regardless of a wrongdoer's actions and attitudes. So respectful blaming attitudes hold wrongdoers responsible for their failures of goodwill while fully and properly recognizing their autonomy – not just their past autonomous choices to do wrong, but also their current capacity for moral understanding, and, potentially, for moral growth. Whether or not they *experience* any moral growth thus remains up to them, as they autonomously choose whether and how to reflect on the sorts of people they have been, and the sorts of people they aspire to be.

In the next chapter, I consider whether contempt can ever be a respectful blaming reactive attitude. Given the theoretical account I have proposed so far, it will be instructive to see whether the account can make sense of a particular attitude as a respectful blaming attitude, or not. Contempt seems a particularly useful example for consideration, given that it is an extremely harsh response to wrongdoing and wrongdoers and falls extremely close to the line I have drawn between respectful and disrespectful blaming attitudes. In chapter three, I will show how in certain, specific, limited conditions contempt *can* be a respectful blaming attitude; I hope that this demonstration will provide further understanding regarding the limits I claim respect places on appropriate blaming attitudes.

CHAPTER THREE:

CONTEMPT – A CASE STUDY

In the preceding two chapters, I laid out my view of blame as a reactive attitude, and argued that respect for persons limits the sort of blaming attitudes that can properly respect a wrongdoer's moral capacities. Blaming attitudes are responses that recognize an agent as having disrespectful attitudes and hold her responsible for wrongdoing. *Respectful* blaming attitudes are attitudes that seek to hold a wrongdoer responsible for wrongdoing by addressing the wrongdoer in *moral* terms; such attitudes at least implicitly seek a response from the wrongdoer regarding her wrongful conduct. Respectful blaming attitudes are explicitly about the wrong in question, and so recognize the wrongdoer not only as responsible for the wrong, but also as one who is capable of understanding and responding to being blamed, and these attitudes are at least theoretically able to be understood by the wrongdoer on these grounds. In arguing for this distinction, I have offered a sketch of the boundary between permissible and impermissible blaming reactive attitudes and argued that attitudes that purport to blame wrongdoers and also include ill will fall on the impermissible side of this boundary, since they are blaming attitudes but do not primarily aim to address the wrongdoer by engaging with her capacities for moral understanding.

So far, I have remained largely neutral on the question of which attitudes are blaming attitudes – in part because I think that there are a variety of attitudes that can constitute blaming attitudes, and in part because my primary goal has been to argue that respect constrains what sort of blaming reactive attitudes can be morally appropriate. But having the necessary criteria to be able to determine which attitudes can constitute respectful blame – at least, the description of

which attitudes – is at the heart of this project. So the next step is to test out these criteria in particular cases.

Most accounts of blame assume resentment and indignation to be the paradigmatic blaming attitudes, but some descriptions of these attitudes suggest that the terms are sometimes understood in different ways.[65] Contempt, on the other hand, is used less broadly, and its content may be easier to pinpoint. Contempt is certainly understood to be a more severe attitude to take toward another person than is resentment, and contempt has some peculiar features that are not generally understood to be included in resentment or indignation. But as contempt is a harsh attitude to take toward another person, it comes very close to the boundary between respectful and disrespectful blaming reactive attitudes; close examination of what contempt is and to what it responds should reveal whether it can ever be respectful to blame a wrongdoer by regarding her with contempt. So contempt provides a suitable test case to consider more carefully what it looks like to blame respectfully.

In what follows, I examine different varieties of contempt, further explaining what it means to blame appropriately. In § 1, I describe the attitude of contempt and point to the particular features of contempt that make it an attitude that some worry is incompatible with respect. In § 2, I consider some obviously inappropriate cases of attitudes of contempt to show that, at least in these cases, the inappropriateness of contempt is explained either by the fact that the object of contempt is not blameworthy, or that the attitudes of contempt result from an agent's disregard of the objects of her contempt as *persons*. Such cases thus are not demonstrative of contempt as a disrespectful blaming response, since in none of these cases is contempt a *blaming* response. In §

[65] Compare, for example, two very different understandings of the role of resentment in interpersonal relations: Murphy (2003) paints a picture of resentment as a "vindictive passion" directed at a wrongdoer that desires his suffering and so serves to repudiate the wrongdoing and respect the responsible wrongdoer; Holmgren (1994) describes resentment as a psychological crutch for victims, to help them cope with the trauma they have suffered until they are ready to respect and thereby forgive the wrongdoer.

3, I carefully consider the literature both for and against contempt as a respectful response to wrongdoers, and apply my analysis to particular cases to show under what conditions contempt is a respectful blaming attitude. In these kinds of cases, where an agent is properly judged to have a particularly bad character, I explain how the judgment that another is morally inferior can be respectful of her as a person, and how the withdrawal from her that is also characteristic of contempt can meet the requirements of respectful moral address.

§ 1: The Attitude of Contempt

Contempt is an attitude of distain. One looks down on the object of her contempt, seeing her as a morally bad person, and so not one with whom she deigns to carry on relations. If I regard you with contempt, I think you morally unworthy of my time and attention and so disengage from interactions with you. I may plausibly think that I have good reason for my contempt toward you; perhaps you have persistently behaved in morally awful ways, displaying what I take to be your utter disregard for my feelings and general well-being. But even if you are blameworthy, is my contempt a *blaming reactive attitude*? And, if so, can it ever be a *respectful* blaming attitude?

Answering these questions requires properly situating such attitudes within the framework I have set out in my account of blame as a reactive attitude; where contempt fits is not immediately obvious. On the one hand, if contempt entails that the contemnor views the object of her contempt as inferior in the sense that she is *less than a person*, it seems contempt must be a species of the objective attitude, like repulsion, fear, or pity (Strawson 1962/2003, 79). If this is right, then the attitude is one that does not recognize its object as a moral agent. Such a view might be especially tempting, given that contempt involves disengaging from at least some of the otherwise ordinary relations.

But thinking of contempt as a species of the objective attitude cannot be right (at least, not in the majority of cases of contempt), since contempt is generally understood to be a response to *moral inferiority*. Contempt is an attitude *felt* toward another for her failings, failings that are distinctively attributed to her *as a person*. Contempt is a negative, emotionally charged attitude, felt toward those judged to be *deserving* of contempt. Attitudinal responses to the quality of one's moral competencies – whether that quality is inferior, or otherwise – clearly recognize her as one with moral capacities. So contempt looks to be a reactive attitude, and the inferiority it entails is plausibly understood in this way: the object of contempt is viewed as inferior in the sense that she is a *morally bad agent*; it is this moral badness that prompts one to disengage from interactions with the one who is the object of contempt. Such an attitude regards its object as *lesser as a person* – a morally inferior person, but a person nonetheless. She is thus recognized as responsible for her bad attitudes and actions, and these may be taken as the warrant for regarding her with contempt. So while there may be a question in particular cases whether the object of contempt is blameworthy – and she must be for blame to be appropriate – contempt is at least capable of being a blaming reactive attitude.

But a further question regarding the appropriateness of contempt remains: can attitudes of contempt ever constitute *respectful* blaming attitudes? I have argued that the demands of moral relationship remain in place, even when blaming, such that wrongdoers are owed respect *qua* persons; respect due to persons cannot be forfeited.[66] Thus, blaming attitudes must respect a wrongdoer as a person not only by recognizing her responsibility for her attitudes and actions *via* reactivity, but also through the *form* particular blaming attitudes take; respectful blaming attitudes must be of a kind that can engage with a wrongdoer's moral capacities as a form of

[66] As noted in chapter 2, I do not think that I am making an original claim in stating that respect for persons cannot be forfeited; anyone who relies on respect for persons is likely to think that this is true.

moral address. I have claimed that respect for persons thus places limits on what kinds of blaming attitudes are appropriate responses to wrongdoing. If contempt is to be a respectful blaming response, it must be an attitude that can engage in moral address, providing moral reasons to the wrongdoer for why she is being held responsible for her bad attitudes and actions. One who blames via contempt regards the object of her contempt as so morally bad as to justify disengaging from interactions with her. So the key to determining whether contempt can ever be a respectful blaming attitude will be to sort out exactly what this disengagement comes to, and whether it removes the possibility of the blamer morally addressing the wrongdoer *via* her attitudes of contempt.

According to Thomas Hill (2000a & 2000b), contempt – by definition – appears to be an attitude that cannot be reconciled with respect for persons. As Hill describes contempt in "Basic Respect and Cultural Diversity" (2000a), it occupies a stance from which moral address toward the object of contempt is impossible:

> Contempt is a deep dismissal, a denial of the prospect of reconciliation, a signal that the conversation is over. Furious argument and accusation, and even sharp-tongued deflation of hypocrisy and self-deception, leave some space to resume communication; but cold, silent contempt does not. The one demands to be heard, while the other walks away in disgust. Moral argument, however impassioned, is addressed to a person, acknowledge as 'one of us': perhaps delinquent, misbehaving, outrageously deviant from our common standards, but still 'one who can be reached', or so we presume. Increasingly, and sadly, it seems to me, we are in a place and time when, having at least achieved some success in combating the most overt forms of bigotry, oppression, and imperialism, we are in danger of sliding into a stage of mutual contempt and dismissal, affecting all sides of racial, gender, and cultural divides. (2000a, 60-1)

Contempt thus apparently entails viewing another as outside of the moral community, according to Hill – or, at least, as treating her as though she is outside of the moral community and so not capable of engaging in normal interpersonal relations. If this is correct as a description of contempt, then the "dismissal" entailed in contempt appears disrespectful of its object's agency.

In "Must Respect be Earned?" (2000b), Hill describes contempt as an attitude that can only be deserved in the absence of respect:

> Even if we grant that everyone is initially owed some respect as a human being, is there any reason to deny that some extremely bad characters, by their immoral deeds, *forfeit* all respect, justifying our viewing them with utter contempt? (2000b, 88)

Piecing these descriptions together, Hill appears to consider contempt an unjustified taking of the objective attitude, in light of one's similarly unjustified view that the object of contempt is owed no respect – not even the respect ordinarily afforded each of us simply in virtue of being persons. Ultimately, Hill argues that respect for persons cannot be forfeited, under any circumstances; so contempt can never be a justified attitude to take toward another person. Respect thus requires "replacing contemptuous dismissal with firm but respectful confrontation". (2000b, 92)

Although Hill argues that contempt is incompatible with respect, in his discussion contempt is merely the foil against which he argues for respectful treatment of others; contempt is not squarely the focus of his discussion. Thus it is not clear that Hill's description of contempt need be the only description of contempt, nor whether the contexts within which he describes contempt as arising are the only contexts in which it may be counted as a blaming response. So perhaps there are still some attitudes of contempt that can constitute respectful blaming responses, even given the worries he raises about the incongruity of contempt and respect. Since others have defended contempt as a *respectful* response to wrongdoers, I turn now to consider those defenses.

Michelle Mason (2003) defends certain cases of contempt as respectful, appropriate responses, issuing "a general challenge to the view that an enlightened morality must be a gentle

morality" (2003, 236).[67] Mason's view specifically engages with Hill's concerns regarding respect. An attitude of contempt reflects the judgment that its object has failed miserably to meet what she calls the "standards of excellence" for persons. Contempt indicates that one views its object as a *lesser person*, who inhabits a lowered

> standing in the system of expectations, demands, and rights (merited and owed) that define normative relations with our fellows…we best understand contempt as presenting its object as low in the sense of ranking low in worth as a person in virtue of falling short of some legitimate interpersonal ideal of the person… (240-1)

Because we take the object of contempt to be especially poor at meeting the usual expectations we have of persons – around which our normal interpersonal practices revolve – we tend to avoid relations with one we regard with contempt, withdrawing from relations with her.

Mason takes herself to endorse Strawson's general framework, stating that, in general,

> …persons are beings entitled to certain rights and expectations concerning our behavior toward them, and who themselves are responsible for recognizing certain rights, demands, and expectations concerning their behavior toward others. (2003, 240)

But, she says, these expectations are altered in cases of wrongdoing; in other words, persons are entitled to these expectations only when they are themselves recognizing others' entitlements and regarding them accordingly. If agents behave badly, their bad actions and attitudes can lead others to regard them as not the sort of people who will meet these expectations. So simply being a person is not sufficient to deserve the general expectation in *every* case. When an agent has failed in ways that indicate she is morally inferior to the rest of the moral community, Mason argues, contempt may be the appropriate moral response.

[67] Mason claims that contempt has not received proper attention in the philosophical literature, and embraces what she calls its "nasty" reputation; thanks to Mason's work, others are following suit and examining contempt more carefully, particularly Macalester Bell (2005 & 2013). Bell's work will be considered in detail below.

Mason's detailed description of contempt is, I think, essentially correct.[68] On Mason's description, the disdain involved in contempt is understood to be a response to its object's perceived moral deficiencies; the contemnor also withdraws from relations with the object of her contempt – turning away from her, in some sense – given her judgment that this person is morally unworthy of her attention and engagement. "Properly focused contempt" – that is, contempt in those cases in which the contemnor is neither wrong about (nor being hypocritical in) judging the object of her contempt as failing to meet a given interpersonal ideal, and in which the contemnor remains open to having more favorable attitudes if new evidence warrants them – *is* a reactive attitude. Mason sees contempt as distinct from resentment – resentment is about *an action*, while contempt is about *the person*; for example, Mason says, we resent that a person has slighted us (for example), while we feel contempt for a particular person (246). The difference between resentment and contempt, then, Mason says, is that "whereas resentment reacts to what we ought not stoop to do, contempt reacts to what we ought not stoop to be" (251). Mason thinks that we hold others in contempt for their *character*, distinguishing contemptuous attitudes from blaming attitudes of resentment.

I think that Mason is mistaken in understanding that there is *always* a distinction between reactive attitude such as resentment as reacting to *actions*, and blaming attitudes of contempt as reacting to *persons*, although I think I understand why she makes this distinction. In blaming another with the usual negative reactive attitudes, our attitudes are less favorable toward an agent given what she has done. But we blame her for what she has done for the *further* reason that what she has done is a reflection of her failures of goodwill toward us – we blame her for her

[68] In defending contempt, Macalester Bell (2005 & 2013) also largely agrees with Mason's description of the attitude itself. Bell describes contempt as "negatively and comparatively regarding or attending to someone who is presented as falling below the contemnor's personal baseline. This form of regard constitutes a withdrawal from the target and may motivate further withdrawal." (2013, 44).

quality of will, not for her action. In other words, when I resent you for kicking me, I do so because I think that you have done so on purpose, and so your kicking me reveals a lack of proper concern for my well-being – in reacting, what I resent is *you*, not the action of you kicking me. I react to the actions of moral agents because I take their actions to flow from their agency. If, in blaming you, I regard you with contempt, I still blame you because I take your actions to flow from your agency. I may regard you with contempt, say, if I take your kicking me to be a pleasant activity for you, indicating that your regard for me is almost nonexistent. But my contempt is likely not solely responding to your kicking me; my response involves a broader negative assessment of your *character*. My contempt in such a case is still a reaction to my perception of your quality of will, to *something about you*. But in this case my reaction of contempt assesses your attitudes as more deeply objectionable than if I had merely resented you – likely because I am adding this instance to other instances of you showing disregard. My attitude of contempt includes the judgment that you're a really bad *person*, rather than a person whose has failed in this instance to afford me proper respect (but whom I do not necessarily regard as *horrible,* through and through). So both the usual blaming reactive attitudes, and attitudes of contempt, are capable of functioning as attitudes that blame an agent; the difference between the two appears to be *how strongly* the attitudes blame the agent, how *morally bad* the included assessment says the agent is.

What distinguishes blaming with contempt from other kinds of blaming attitudes – such as resentment – is its judgment that another's character is not just flawed, but particularly awful. Resentment responds to a particular instance (or, to particular instances) of a failure to accord proper respect: when we resent, we regard another as having attitudes that are lacking in proper respect for others. But despite our resentment, the moral relationship with the person resented

remains more or less unscathed. Contempt, on the other hand, responds to particular *kinds* of bad attitudes; such attitudes move beyond mere failures to respect others into the realm of whole-scale disregard for others (or, at least, for particular others). To judge another to have such attitudes requires taking stock of her character on a global level, assessing her bad tendencies and disrespectful attitudes in the aggregate. Often, these attitudes are not of a sort that lead to criminal behavior but, rather, involve condescending and despicable attitudes that we feel they ought not to be getting away with. We judge that the wrongdoer is so unlikely to respond respectfully – indeed, in our experience, she is more likely to respond disrespectfully – that we respond not only with a less engaged but also with a highly negative attitude. In regarding another with contempt, we think her attitudes so morally awful that we are warranted in withdrawing from relations with her; the moral relationship is still intact, but is severely damaged. It is this damage to our relations (especially the extent to which the object of our contempt is responsible for that damage) that warrants extending her less than the usual trust involved in normal participatory interactions, and warrants our withdrawal for reasons of (justified) self-protection.[69]

Understanding both what it means to say that contempt lowers its object's "standing in the system of expectations, demands, and rights (merited and owed)" and whether "turning away" from a wrongdoer can nevertheless still involve a form of moral address will be crucial to determining whether contempt can be a respectful blaming response. Also key to determining

[69] In critiquing Scanlon's account of blame, Bennett (2013) distinguishes blame from contempt, noting that

> For Scanlon, the person who blames does not assert the authority of the violated standards but rather downgrades the standards to which she thinks it appropriate for the person to be held. In some way this sounds more like a judgment of contempt rather than blame. Blame pays the offender the compliment of asserting that the more demanding standards of the higher form of cooperative relationship are still appropriate; an account of blame should explain the sense in which it is inclusive where contempt is exclusive.

I have a different view of the relationship between blame and contempt, as I understand contempt can (at least sometimes) constitute a kind of blaming attitude.

whether attitudes of contempt can constitute *respectful* blaming responses is to sort out whether contempt is an attitude that *always* violates the general prescription to respect persons, or whether there are at least some cases in which it is an attitude that *respectfully* regards an agent as a morally flawed *person* and so still allows that moral address is possible. In order to do this, we must determine answers to the following: How lowly is the object of contempt regarded? If the contempt clearly responds to a person, does it still allow for the possibility of respectful moral address – especially in light of the contemnor's "turning away" from the object of her contempt? In other words, is contempt a proper vehicle for moral address? In at least some cases, the answer is likely to show that contempt cannot constitute a respectful blaming response. Next, I examine some examples of obviously disrespectful contempt, to show how at least some attitudes of contempt are not properly blaming attitudes at all.

§ 2: *OBVIOUSLY* DISRESPECTFUL ATTITUDES OF CONTEMPT

Certain cases of contempt seem like *obviously* immoral attitudes to have toward persons, given their lack of respect for the individuals as persons. Consider the following cases:

1. Marnie was hired to be a lawyer's assistant 35 years ago and has worked hard for each of the lawyers to whom she has reported over the years. She is competent and has learned much about the kind of work that her law firm does. Her most recent boss – Philip, a senior partner at the firm – relies on her to know much about the documentation and procedural requirements involved in the complex litigation work he does, and expects her to keep on top of filing deadlines and other time-sensitive issues related to his clients' cases. Marnie has always liked her job, and has gotten along with all of the (male) lawyers for whom she has worked.

Now that Philip is retiring, Marnie has been reassigned to a new, young lawyer in the firm, Jill. Jill is in her late twenties, and most at the firm find her pleasant enough – but Marnie is not pleased with this new arrangement. She has heard about how demanding young female lawyers can be from some of her colleagues and does not relish the idea of working for a girl who is trying to prove herself in what really still is a man's world. Marnie thinks that a girl who wants to "prove" herself this way thinks too highly of herself, and is sure to be a horrible boss. None of this is helped by the knowledge that Jill will make significantly more money than she does, despite Marnie's many years of experience at the firm. Marnie regards Jill as her inferior, and Marnie interacts with her only when required to do so for professional purposes – even then, she makes her contempt for Jill clearly known. She refuses to engage with Jill's daily pleasantries and regularly ignores her instructions, telling herself that Jill does not know what she is doing in any event. Before long, Jill becomes very worried about how she can possibly work with Marnie and considers going to talk to the office manager about firing her.

2. Chuck and George move in to their new house. In the hope of making friends with a neighbor, they bake some muffins and bring them next door. A man opens the door when they knock, and Chuck and George tell him they've just moved in next door and have brought over muffins to introduce themselves. The man rudely says, "I don't want your muffins. And I don't want your kind living in my neighborhood, either."

In each of these cases, one of the characters – Marnie in the first case, the neighbor in the second case – regards the others in the case with contempt. Each regards the others as inferior and does not think of them as worthy of the same consideration they would ordinarily afford even the stranger they pass on the street. In each of the cases, the attitude of contempt seems clearly

disrespectful of its target. But I do not think that any of these cases rules out the possibility of contempt *ever* being an appropriate blaming response.

Blaming attitudes respond to a perceived lack in another's quality of will; but in neither of these cases is the contempt featured a response to its object's quality of will (at least, not properly). In the first case, Marnie regards Jill with contempt, but her attitude is not responsive to Jill's quality of will – or, alternatively, to her *actual* quality of will. Rather, Marnie's contempt for Jill appears to be motivated by her contempt for *all* young women lawyers, whom Marnie thinks are likely to be difficult to work for *because they are young women*. If this is right, Marnie's contempt relies on unfair stereotypes about young women lawyers, and she would thus likely regard *any* young woman lawyer to whom she was assigned with contempt. So Marnie's contempt, while directed at Jill, is not *about* Jill in any sense relevant to blame. Of course, it is also possible that Marnie's contempt is a response to what she perceives as a lack of goodwill on Jill's part; given Marnie's false beliefs about young women, she may (mistakenly) attribute to Jill poorer attitudes than Jill does in fact have. If this is the proper description of the case, then Marnie's contempt may purport to be a blaming reactive attitude,[70] but in this case the blame is unwarranted.

In the second case, the neighbor's contempt does not appear to be a response to Chuck's and George's *actual* quality of will. Chuck and George were trying to make friends with their neighbor – or, at the very least, become somewhat acquainted with him – and the muffins were meant as a friendly gesture toward him. While it is not clear what the neighbor means by "your kind", such utterances generally lump individuals into a particular group that is viewed as

[70] Mason similarly explains that contempt is not always a reactive attitude – since reactive attitudes are *always* reactions to another's quality of will, and contempt need not be – but she thinks that contempt is always nonetheless at least *related* to the reactive attitudes.

inferior. In most cases, judging individuals on the basis of particular (perceived) group membership tends to base judgments of inferiority on stereotypes that are themselves morally problematic. For instance, if Chuck and George are persons of color and the neighbor is a white racist, he might mean to indicate that Chuck and George are members of an inferior race when he says "your kind". But racist beliefs are unjust – by definition, since calling them racist indicates that they are based on unjustly stereotyping as inferior (in one sense or another) all those who ostensibly are members of a particular race. To consider another version of the case, perhaps the neighbor does not like gay people, and, because Chuck and George are both men, his "your kind" is meant to indicate that he does not want Chuck and George as neighbors because (he assumes that) they are gay. Again, the neighbor's dislike of gay people is not the sort of position that is morally justifiable, and certainly extending that dislike to Chuck and George – whom he does not even know – is offensive.

Neither of these cases of contempt, then, can constitute appropriate blaming attitudes, since neither is a case in which the object of contempt is properly blameworthy in the first case. In either case, the one who regards the others with contempt does not purport to hold them responsible for their *lack of goodwill* – unless, through their reliance on stereotypical beliefs about groups, Marnie and the neighbor unfairly misattribute bad attitudes to Jill, Chuck, and George. So these attitudes of contempt cannot be reactive attitudes – let alone blaming attitudes – as they are not reactions to another's quality of will. Rather, contempt in cases like these seems to be a sort of prejudicial, *unwarranted* judging that members of certain groups are lower in virtue of membership in that group. We cannot justify blaming in these kinds of cases – so it follows (perhaps, rather trivially) that we cannot justify contempt in cases like these as an appropriate blaming attitude.

However, not all cases of judging members of certain groups to be morally repugnant are necessarily unwarranted. Consider whether there is a basis to judge blameworthy members of groups where membership in the particular group itself is an indication of moral badness, and so, in turn, we might reasonably judge members of the group appropriately blameworthy. For example, imagine learning that your cousin was a member of one of the pro-Nazi groups who marched on Skokie, Illinois in the late '70s; he tells you that he didn't actually march that day, since he had the flu, and that he has always regretted that he did not support his group's event. If you blame him for being a member of the group, the blame is likely justifiable; you are blaming him for his racist attitudes. Now imagine finding out that your uncle belongs to an exclusive men's business club – a club that does not allow women to become members and apparently does not have many (if any) members of color. While your uncle may tell you that he has joined the club in order to make business connections, you may still be justified in blaming him for participating in an organization that perpetuates the privilege of white males in our society. In either of these cases, we might think that each of the main characters' contempt for others is based on those others' memberships in (non-offensive) groups. So in cases of obviously disrespectful contempt, we are likely justified in *blaming* the contemnor. But can we ever be justified in responding to their disrespectful contempt with contempt? In other words, can we ever respectfully blame a wrongdoer by regarding him with contempt?

§ 3: Can Attitudes of Contempt Ever Be Respectful Blaming Attitudes?

I have shown that the previous examples constitute disrespectful attitudes of contempt, but this does not rule out whether some attitudes of contempt might yet constitute respectful blaming attitudes. For attitudes of contempt to constitute appropriate blaming responses, they must *at*

least be reactive attitudes. Reactive attitudes are attitudinal responses to another's quality of will; such attitudes are affective responses, directed toward another, that include an assessment of the appropriateness of her quality of will. But for such reactive attitudes to also be *respectful*, they must be capable of morally addressing a wrongdoer and thereby communicating the blamer's assessment of her blameworthy attitudes. Respectful blaming attitudes aim at the wrongdoer's understanding and at her accepting her disrespectful attitudes as *wrong*. So for contempt to constitute a respectful blaming attitude in a given instance, it must do all of this. But it must do all of this while explaining how one can respectfully disengage from relations – that is, how such a "turning away" can nevertheless leave open the possibility of moral address – with another whom we regard as an inferior moral person.

In defending contempt as a sometimes appropriate blaming response, Mason considers what she calls "the Kantian objection": that contempt is morally objectionable because it regards another as a thing instead of as a person. In reply, she flips the objection, arguing that to *withhold* one's (justified) contemptuous reaction would constitute a form of Strawson's objective attitude: failing to be reactive is to view another as other than a person, so *not* responding with contempt where it would be appropriate to do so is inappropriate because it regards another as an object rather than as a person. But Mason claims that there is no need to deny that

> contempt involves a withdrawal of goodwill in order to deny that contempt thereby treats its objects as subjects of treatment…It is taking the objective attitude toward others that amounts to treating them in the Kantian sense as objects as opposed to aspiring members in moral community. Regarding another with contempt does not thereby objectify another person; rather, it is regarding him as beneath contempt that signals we have exiled him from moral community with us. (2003, 263)

If one is "beneath contempt", she is – presumably – regarded as not worth reacting to.[71] Reactivity indicates respect for a person, so withholding contempt – that is, being non-reactive – indicates not regarding another as a person. To defend her position, Mason employs Darwall's distinction between appraisal respect and recognition respect: contempt recognizes the person as responsible for her bad character, while simultaneously appraising her poorly. Thus justified contempt constitutes respect for persons, since it identifies the agent as the author of her actions, however rotten we take her to be in reaction. Mason also cites Jeffrie Murphy (1988) on self-respect to support her suggestion that contempt might even be required in those cases in which it is warranted: Murphy claims that to be too quick to forgive may be a vice, since it can indicate a lack of self-respect. Avoiding this vice, then, entails blaming wrongdoers to hold them accountable, to not let them off the hook, so to speak; in appropriate cases, contempt is how bad characters are held accountable.

Both of Mason's arguments that appeal to respect for persons fail, at least at first blush. First, Mason implies that if one opts not to blame others' bad character with attitudes of contempt, then one disrespects the wrongdoer by taking the objective attitude. But this is an oversimplification. If contempt is an extremely negative affective reaction, less negative – but, still negative – reactive attitudes remain available. One can blame without regarding a wrongdoer as rotten as a person – and without failing to be reactive to the wrongdoer at all. To attempt to respond on Mason's behalf, she might concede that responding with resentment is not a form of the objective attitude; but she would likely want to preserve the judgment that the contemptible wrongdoer is a rotten person and so might claim that resentment is insufficient to do so. To properly recognize an agent's bad character as *hers* might mean reacting to her in such a way

[71] This is, I take it, the sense in which Mason is using "beneath contempt". However, it also seems plausible that the phrase is sometimes used to indicate instead that one's badness evokes a *supremely* strong response, indicated by the explicit claim that she is *beneath* contempt.

that includes the judgment that her character is *rotten*. If resentment does not recognize the wrongdoer's rotten character, perhaps Mason might claim that it falls short of a proper recognition of the wrongdoer's character; contempt would be a more appropriate response.

This response becomes more promising when combined with the appeal to self-respect, although as originally offered Mason's argument from self-respect is too weak. Self-respect is understood as understanding one's own worth, but of course one can still do that by recognizing wrongdoers and blaming them with negative attitudes other than contempt. If the worry is that we not forgive too quickly – as Murphy stresses would be disrespectful to ourselves – then all that Mason claims contempt is necessary to defend can be defended by much "gentler" reactive attitudes.[72] But if the claim is that we regard with contempt those whose consistent and persistent bad attitudes and actions warrant our turning away from them and refusing to let ourselves be subject to more of the same bad treatment – out of self-respect as much as anything else – then contempt seems a more appropriate response than resentment when responding to horrible people.

Turning to particular cases of contempt in response to blameworthy attitudes will help to think more carefully about whether we can respond to particularly awful persons with attitudes of respectful contempt. Imagine the following:

1. You feel contempt for the pro-Nazi relative mentioned above, the one who was sad to have missed the Skokie march due to illness. Your contempt targets his racist attitudes revealed through his group membership (and, his talking about it with you). Given these attitudes, you regard him as morally inferior to you; he is a bad person, and you resolve to make no efforts to cultivate your relationship with him.

[72] Below, I will defend what Mason might think is a "gentler" turning away.

2. Your coworker, Paul, consistently fails to meet his deadlines on your projects. Given the way that your group shares responsibility for projects, when Paul is late with his work, you are often prevented from making progress on your parts of projects. As a result, you find yourself scrambling to finish projects in a fraction of the time you had originally set aside, and you and your entire group end up being held accountable for late projects on a regular basis.

   You've talked with Paul a few times in the past about the problems his lateness causes you and others in the group, and have even told him that you wish he could be more respectful of your time as well as your position in the group. In response, Paul has tended to shrug and to tell you to stop bugging him, sneering that he's working as hard as can be expected of a person being paid so little. He has never apologized, nor has he given any indication that he intends to change his work habits; indeed, he has continued to be thoroughly uncooperative with you and your other colleagues *despite* your attempts to reason with him. You realize that he is unlikely to change for the better, given what you take to be his terrible character, and regard him with contempt, viewing him as a poor excuse for a colleague. You blame him for his disrespectful attitudes toward you and your coworkers, and cease interacting with him except in the minimal ways that your work absolutely requires.

3. Brian, a white, male politician, is running for the US Congress. His campaign platform embodies a number of misogynist ideals, and he often makes negative public comments about his female opponent, linking her appearance and "hysterical emotional states" to unsuitability for office.

Trina, one of his constituents, regards Brian with contempt. She thinks he is a very bad man, and she is working very hard to help his opponent get elected – anything to keep him out. She worries that if he is elected, he will not represent the will of his constituents but will instead use his power to take away some of women's hard-earned rights. Given the way he has run his campaign, Trina may be right in thinking Brian aims to do just that.

In each of these cases, it looks as though blaming attitudes are warranted. So if blame is warranted, what more is needed for *contempt* be a respectful blaming response? First, the object of contempt must be a particularly horrible person, whose attitudes and action indicate that she is unlikely to change for the better anytime soon; it is this judgment that warrants the disengagement from relations with the one regarded with contempt. I think this case can be made. Regarding all those of a particular race as inferior – because of their race – reveals a bad character. Persistent rude and inconsiderate behavior toward one's coworkers, being thoroughly uncooperative with those your job requires you work with – and, in the face of those coworkers' attempts to patiently explain why such behaviors are so problematic for them – reveals a bad character, at least insofar as his work persona goes. Misogynists are disrespectful toward women – half of the world's population! – and aspiring to political power in part to institutionalize this disrespect (even further than it is already institutionalized) reveals a bad character. So in each of these cases, the bad characters seem to provide grounds to assess the agents as pretty horrible people.

Second, the "turning away" involved in contempt must nonetheless allow for the blame to be a communicative form. I have argued that respectful blaming attitudes are those that address the wrongdoer in moral terms that she can understand, and that explicitly recognize her moral agency; for contempt to be a respectful blaming attitude, it must meet this requirement. Before

determining if this can be accomplished in each of these cases, consideration of the literature – which is divided on this point – will be helpful.

Macalester Bell (2005, 2013) defends contempt as a justifiable moral response in cases like these, claiming it as a particularly important response to those who perpetuate oppressive sexist norms. Negative moral emotions play a special role for women, as they can serve as acts of insubordination: women are seen (by men) as subservient, as lesser; responding to such inequitable attitudes with negative reactive attitudes thereby constitutes a special form of protest, as such responses in themselves subvert the norm. Through contemptuous attitudes, which claim superiority over those who disregard them, women can assert themselves and their moral status over their oppressors; in this way, women can vehemently reject "patriarchal conceptions of what it is to be a woman" (2005, 88).

Bell argues that contempt contributes in a number of positive ways to women's struggles against sexist oppression. First, she claims that contempt is epistemically valuable to women. Reacting to sexism with contempt provides a form of knowledge of oppression to the woman who feels contempt (2013, 154-6). Further, its characteristic withdrawal from the oppressor distances a woman from the pain of the oppression, improving her ability to fight against the oppression (2005, 87-8). Second, Bell claims that contempt bears witness to injustice, since it is reaction to a failure to meet an important standard (2005, 88). Third, contempt motivates disengagement from the oppressors; this is an important first – and, necessary – step away from reinforcing an oppressive *status quo*. Once disengaged, those who share one another's contempt for the oppressors can come together and form their *own* communities to work together for change (2005, 88-9). Finally, Bell argues that contempt can motivate its *object* to work for social change. She claims that being the object of contempt can be "a deeply painful and disorienting

experience" (2005, 89 & 2013, 156-60). Such a terrible experience can help the oppressor come to realize just how grave his moral failings are, and inspire him to change his offensive values to ones that are better. At the very least, she claims, the object of contempt is more likely "to consider whether he endorses the standard that he has failed to meet" (2005, 90).

I do not think that contempt can be justified *via* instrumental values – such as that the wrongdoer will reform given how unpleasant being the object of contempt is – as may already be clear given what I have argued in Chapters 1 & 2. Bell's defense of contempt on the grounds that it can motivate its object to *change* his attitudes and behaviors strikes me as morally objectionable on the grounds that contempt is thus manipulative or coercive. To aim at "educating" another through harsh treatment fails to respect her autonomy. Such an attitude aims to give another a non-moral, somewhat manipulative reason to change his behavior. So such an attitude is ruled impermissible for engaging a wrongdoer's rational capacities without respectfully regarding him as a moral agent capable of understanding and responding to *moral* reasons. Bell acknowledges that "respecting a person's autonomy involves seeing and treating the person as capable of deliberation and responding to reasons and thus able to take responsibility for herself and her life" (2013, 187-8), so giving her pragmatic, self-preserving reasons to change cannot constitute the sort of *moral* reasons Bell considers here. I think that the instrumental reasons she considers as justificatory fall afoul of this rule.

But Bell also claims that there are non-instrumental reasons in favor of contempt; these are more promising. Bell claims that "responding with apt contempt *partially constitutes* integrity and relationships of mutual accountability" (2013, 163). Contempt provides a way for us to stand up against those with particularly bad characters – not unlike the defense of self-respect Mason defends. Responding to those with bad characters by withdrawing from them in contempt allows

us to morally protest those bad characters. But to be *respectful*, such attitudes must also be capable of morally addressing the wrongdoers regarding their bad attitudes.

If contempt is to be respectful, the withdrawal from relations it entails must still be capable of being an attitude that can *engage* with its object as a form of moral address, just as its assessment of its object as morally inferior must still be respectful of her personhood. Contempt regards another as unlikely to engage in respectful relations; given her *persistent* failures to meet the moral demand for goodwill, the contemnor views her as having a particularly bad character. It is this judgment that makes the withdrawing from relations reasonable. Contempt, in cases like these, is distinct from attitudes of ill will: the contemnor does not desire nor contemplate that it would be good for the wrongdoer to suffer. Instead, she withdraws from relations as a kind of giving up (at least for now) on the possibility of this person engaging in respectful moral relations. The contemnor thus disengages from relations with the wrongdoer. But what does it mean to disengage in this way? And how can such disengagement be respectful, since I have argued that blaming respectfully must be capable of engaging with the wrongdoer's moral capacities?

Respectful blaming attitudes are focused on the wrong in question and are the sort of attitudes that, if expressed, would communicate one's moral protest; thus respectful blaming attitudes must be capable of providing moral reasons regarding a wrongdoer's attitudes. Respectful blaming attitudes would, if expressed, be capable of engaging with the wrongdoer's moral capacities as a form of moral address, expressing that her attitudes are lacking and that she has reason to reflect upon them and to revise them for the better. So can contempt respectfully address a wrongdoer, disengaging from relations with her *and* calling her out for her bad character, all while continuing to recognize and engage her moral capacities?

Recall Thomas Hill's claim that contempt signals that the "conversation is over" (2000a, 60). Mason (2003) agrees with Hill on this point, claiming that those deserving of contempt have forfeited the right to be considered potential interlocutors by members of the moral community. However, Mason denies Hill's claim that cutting off the possibility of conversation *via* contempt also constitutes "the denial of the prospect of reconciliation" (Hill 2000a, 60). She claims that the one who regards another with contempt "can remain responsive to evidence that would favor forgiveness" (2003, 255), such as genuine apologies, the making of amends, or a change of character (for the better) on the part of the object of her contempt. Despite the seeming harshness of the withdrawing from relations, Mason argues that the option to *repair* relations remains open, making clear that the contemnor continues to recognize the wrongdoer's capacities of moral understanding – despite her persistent disuse of them. The contemnor does not view her target as outside the moral community but, rather, as a member who has nonetheless rendered himself unfit for moral relations. Mason claims that this stance leaves room to allow that the object of contempt can reform and be fit once again, rather than "writing her off" as a possible co-member of the moral community. That the disengagement entailed by contempt is not irreversible is important to its being respectful, but it is not enough to entail that contempt is a respectful blaming response.

To be respectful of their target's moral agency, blaming attitudes of contempt still must be capable of providing moral reasons to a wrongdoer regarding her bad character, and the severity with which she is being blamed for it *via* contempt. By Mason's own admission, on her view, contempt indicates that *the conversation is over*, which implies that contempt is not communicative – or, at least, not in the way I argue that it ought to be. The metaphor Mason persists in using to describe the one regarded with contempt is that she is "rotted" as a person.

"Rotted" implies that the object of deserved contempt is seen as *ruined* as a person – in some sense, beyond repair. It is this ruination that provides the justification for ending the conversation – that she is rotted implies that the object of contempt is *incapable* of engagement with others, on a moral level, rather than simply *unwilling* to engage with others. But this description makes it hard to see how the contemnor leaves open the possibility of reengaging with the wrongdoer. On some level Mason must be thinking that the object of contempt is not ever *really* ruined, since she allows that the wrongdoer can change his attitudes and can apologize and make amends, and the contemnor can then allow relations to resume. But despite the blamer being open to hearing new evidence, Mason's contempt does not appear to be capable of the sort of moral address that engages in conversation with the wrongdoer about the wrongness of her attitudes and actions, even if the wrongdoer is still understood to be capable of *understanding* such communication.

Bell talks about contempt as a form of address that "involves making a claim and this claim may be addressed to the target through contempt's characteristic withdrawal" (2013, 187). Contempt assumes that the object of contempt has basic moral capacities, so recognizes her moral agency in this respect. But, Bell says, contempt presents a difficult choice:

> reform or be seen as someone low and to be avoided. Given our fundamental desire for esteem and deference, the possibility of withdrawal may function like the threat of a gun to the head. But…one is not attempting to *use* the painfulness of the emotion as a mere tool to get the target to do what he wants…the contemned is presented with a tough choice, but when contempt is apt, he has brought this hard choice on himself and these is nothing manipulative or coercive about contempt's withdrawal. (2013, 188-9)

That this choice is not manipulative or coercive, however, is questionable. As described here, the choice is between something unpleasant and what the contemnor thinks best – how does this avoid the worry that the choice may involves manipulation or coercion? Respectful contempt ought to be capable of conveying the judgment that one's character is morally bad, without aiming to make her feel so uncomfortable that she is willing to change her behavior in order to

avoid future unpleasantness. As noted already, Bell's view appears at times to rely on the unpleasant condition of contempt to get agents to reform their bad characters; this instrumental value cannot justify contempt as a *respectful* blaming response. But here she points to the agent's ability to understand the moral message of contempt – that her contemnor has withdrawn from relations with her owing to her own bad attitudes and utter disrespect for others. However, the message of contempt, on Bell's view, appears to have the force that it does because of the contemnor's "fundamental desire for esteem and deference" – this understanding is problematic, given that those who are deserving of our contempt are so deserving precisely because they *do not* care about our esteem. So understanding contempt as a vehicle for moral address owing to the desires Bell describes seems an incomplete understanding.

I think that there is a way of reconciling contempt and respect that remains faithful to much of the spirit of Mason's defense of contempt as a moral attitude and agrees with Bell's claim that contempt can be a proper vehicle for moral address, yet takes seriously Hill's charge that respectful attitudes *must not* end the conversation. The very grounds for contempt make it unlikely that the object of contempt will pay attention to the fact that others' judge her contemptible such that she changes her attitudes for the better, providing further warrant for the blamer's disengaging from relations; the contemnor thinks the wrongdoer unlikely to respond in the way that she needs her to, so any attempts to actively aim to engage in ongoing relations with her would be fruitless, and potentially painful. In cases where blame is deserved – and, in which the wrongdoer is appropriately judged to have consistently and persistently maintained a horrible moral character – withdrawing *via* contempt can be understood as a form of continuing the moral conversation. The attitude of contempt is clearly *about the wrong* – in a way that attitudes of ill will are not – and purports to disengage from relations on the basis that the very grounds for the

contempt make relations untenable. While the attitude of contempt involves *disengaging* from relations with a wrongdoer, the attitude is nonetheless *morally engaged* with her wrongdoing – and, potentially, with her moral sensibilities.

So contempt can be communicative in the right kind of way. The wrongdoer – despite her badness – is still a person with moral capacities who has the capacity to understand moral norms and practices even if she does not show respect for them. In disengaging from relations with the wrongdoer, the contemnor's attitudes can themselves be understood by the wrongdoer as signifying that his attitudes are deeply objectionable, and thus the attitude of contempt is at least capable of engaging with the wrongdoer's sensibilities after all. This ability to engage with another's moral capacities is what respect requires, and contempt is at least capable of doing this. So disengaging from the relationship is not to be confused with the engaged nature of the attitude of contempt; contempt *can* be engaged, in the sense that the disengagement itself can be understood as expressive of the judgment that further communication is likely to be fruitless. So the attitude itself can be understood as capable of engaging with its object's moral capacities, despite the fact that the contemnor disengages from relations with the object of her contempt.

Respectful attitudes must recognize their targets as moral equals, in the sense that we are all members of the moral community, equally capable of understanding moral reasons and attitudes. Respectful contempt judges its target as morally inferior, but not in the sense that she does not have the same moral capacities as the rest of us. *All* blaming attitudes involve the judgment that their target is morally flawed; a judgment that another is morally inferior entails understanding that other as deeply (and, perhaps, stubbornly) lacking in moral goodness, but such a judgment need not *also* include thinking of the object of contempt as *incapable* of moral understanding and change. Attitudes of contempt have the potential to *address* the wrongdoer regarding her poor

character – albeit, through withdrawing from relations with her – so such attitudes *continue* to properly recognize her moral capacities by aiming to engage them in a moral conversation. If the wrongdoer does indeed seek to respectfully reengage with the one who holds her in contempt, respectful contempt entails that the contemnor remains open to reengaging in relations with the wrongdoer – although quite possibly much more tentatively than before.

With these details of respectful contempt in hand, we can return to the cases to see how we can understand each as a case of respectful blame. In the case of the pro-Nazi relative who missed the Skokie march: You do not see a reasonable possibility of his respectfully engaging in moral relations with you, given his seriously racist attitudes. You withdraw from relations with him, and he is capable of understanding this withdrawal as an attitude that holds him responsible for attitudes that make it impossible for you to engage in the usual sort of moral discourse with him (although it is unlikely that he will). In the case of your coworker, Paul: His disrespectful work habits, coupled with his rude dismissals of your attempts to engage with him, make clear to you that he is unlikely to change his attitudes, and so you are warranted in withdrawing from relations with him. He is capable of understanding why you have withdrawn and of responding to your contempt as an accusation of blame; but the fact that he is very unlikely to care is exactly what justified your contempt toward him. In the case of Brian, the politician: Trina judges Brian to be morally bad and turns away from him because it has become clear to her that he will not listen to moral reasons and will continue on in his misogynist ways. He's a public figure, and has been called out on his offensive views many times – in the press, in debates, in town hall meetings; each and every time, he has stuck to his guns. He is capable of understanding Trina's contempt as a blaming attitude, but, even if he met her, he is unlikely to be responsive to her protest – if she were to confront him, it is very likely he would dismiss her as a hysterical

woman. In each of these cases, the contempt is about the very attitudes for which the wrongdoers are blamed and can plausibly be understood as a form of moral address toward its objects: an unwillingness to engage with her signals that the contemner views her as very unlikely to engage respectfully. So contempt, in cases like these, can be a respectful blaming attitude.

§ 4: CONCLUSION

Using the criteria I set out in chapters one and two, I have shown how contempt – in certain cases – can constitute a respectful blaming attitude. I hope that considering this example in detail has also made clearer the distinction between respectful blaming attitudes and those that blame but are disrespectful of their target's moral capacities. I have argued that respect entails both recognition of the wrongdoer as responsible for her disrespectful attitudes and actions, and that the demands for respect issued in blaming recognize and respect the wrongdoer's moral agency. As a result, respectful blame ought to be primarily about the wrong in question, and be at least incipiently a form of moral address. But this raises a related question regarding punishment: if it is disrespectful to blame with attitudes of ill will – those that desire a wrongdoer's suffering – can it be respectful to punish wrongdoers, which involves the infliction of suffering? In the next chapter, I consider how criminal punishment relates to the account I have offered of blaming appropriately.

CHAPTER FOUR:

BLAME, CRIMINAL PUNISHMENT, AND NON-REACTIVE ATTITUDES

Strawson claims that being prepared to punish wrongdoers is "all of a piece" with the (presumably negative) attitudes he defines as involving partial withdrawals of goodwill (1962/2003, 90). I have already argued that blame ought not to be – at least, not in the main – understood as being comprised of reactive attitudes that withdraw goodwill, but rather blame is better understood as being comprised of reactive attitudes that seek to address the wrongdoer about the wrongdoing on moral terms. But justifying criminal punishment seems to raise another distinct worry regarding respect for persons: how is it that we can continue to respect the wrongdoer *qua* person despite our deliberately inflicting suffering upon her? Respecting persons – even when they have done wrong – requires regarding them as responsible moral agents who are capable of understanding and acting for moral reasons. Maltreatment of a moral agent, such as by the sort of acts that we tend to criminalize, is disrespectful to the moral agency of those affected by the maltreatment; that is *why* we criminalize such behavior, and this maltreatment (just as in cases of lesser wrongdoing) is what makes the responsible agent blameworthy. But punishment – by definition – is unpleasant, to say the least: it is a deliberate deprivation of one kind or another that is likely to cause suffering to a wrongdoer. So attempts to justify punishment must seek to resolve a tricky problem: the tension between what appears to be the deliberate infliction of suffering and the notion of respect for persons.

Traditional justifications of criminal punishment struggle to resolve this tension. Forward-looking justifications for punishment based on deterrence generally understand punishment as a necessary evil and so do not aim to reconcile punishment with respecting a wrongdoer's

capacities for moral understanding, except insofar as they claim that punishment can teach a lesson that the wrongdoer will not want to repeat. On the other hand, backward-looking, retributive justifications for punishment generally *rely* on the claim that recognizing criminals *qua* persons entails that they *deserve* to be punished. But even the most persuasive retributive arguments require that we understand respect as sometimes involving (or, even, as *requiring*) the deliberate infliction of suffering. So what is ordinarily understood to be an egregious wrong – the deliberate infliction of suffering – is instead understood to be a *good* thing when it is in response to an egregious wrong. But how is it that respect makes it possible to intentionally cause suffering to those who have intentionally caused suffering (which we think was disrespectful)?[73]

In what follows, I propose an alternative methodology for reconciling respect for persons and criminal punishment. Traditional views seem to assume a continuity of blame and punishment, which I think makes the reconciliation of punishment and respect particularly difficult; I propose instead that we understand blame and punishment as occurring in two different relational contexts. My view stresses the differences between the interpersonal context and the criminal justice context, and understands punishment itself as somewhat different from simply expressing moral blame within normal interpersonal relations. Blame is a part of normal interpersonal practices, so respecting a wrongdoer *requires* that we blame her; on this, the retributivist and I can agree. But accusing and punishing a criminal marks a kind of *stopping* of ordinary interpersonal interactions with her – not because we think that she is not a responsible agent and so incapable of engaging in ordinary moral relations with us, nor because we are disrespecting her, but because in punishing her the state and its actors stand in a relational context to the

[73] Additionally, maintaining this duality between disrespectful infliction of suffering and deserved, permissible behavior that takes the same form as the original action, makes it difficult to argue that there are particular constraints on deserved punishment to avoid maltreatment *via* "punishment"; this concern will be further considered below.

wrongdoer that is distinct from the normal interpersonal context. The "attitudes" of the state toward an offender – and, of those acting on its behalf to prosecute and punish criminals – are not *reactive* attitudes. That is, the state and its actors do not react to offenders with the sort of affectively charged, judgmental attitudes (such as blaming responses) that occur within ordinary interpersonal relations. Rather, the state's relationship to the accused in the criminal context calls for a non-reactive attitude – similar to the non-reactive stance we take toward those we view as outside ordinary moral relations, but not exactly the same. I will show that while being non-reactive within normal interpersonal interactions (what Strawson terms the "objective attitude") can be disrespectful to morally responsible agents, in other relational contexts – such as the criminal justice context – it can be perfectly appropriate to suspend normal reactive attitudes toward another while simultaneously regarding her as a responsible moral agent.

I begin with an overview of retributive justifications for punishment in order to outline the associated difficulties in reconciling punishment and respect, then move on to explain my alternative way of understanding criminal punishment to show how it can be justified without violating respect for persons. I explain how we can understand the criminal process, and the sentences imposed by the process, from the perspective of a kind of non-reactive stance rather than as a part of normal participatory interactions with others. Understanding the criminal process as assessing wrongdoers from a non-reactive stance makes sense of many of the processes we employ in the name of fairness, and explains why we think it appropriate for the state to punish those who have committed serious offenses. But even this non-reactive attitude within the criminal justice context continues to recognize the wrongdoer's agency, and so is respectful of his personhood.

§ 1: Retributivism and Respect for Persons

What wrongdoers deserve, according to retributivism, is to be punished in a manner that "fits" the crime. What justifies punishing wrongdoers, for the retributivist, is that they *deserve* it. Giving wrongdoers the punishment they deserve is usually defended either on the grounds that it expresses particularly moralized attitudes of disapproval, or because the punishment itself stands to somehow right the wrongs that offenders have committed. Although I have not the space here to properly set out the many sophisticated versions of retributivism – and there are many – I will give just a quick outline of such views to show why I seek an alternative way to reconcile punishment and respect.

In its crudest form, a fitting retributive punishment is understood to be "an eye for an eye": the wrongdoer should have done back to him whatever wrong he has perpetrated on his victim. There are obvious logistical problems with this version of retributivism; for instance, the person who has murdered three people cannot be killed three times, and a destitute person who steals another's property cannot be similarly deprived of his property. Additionally, most retributivists have moral worries about this simplest version of retributivism as well; for instance, retributivists generally do not endorse raping the rapist, nor subjecting the torturer to torture, since such punishments are widely considered too degrading even in response to serious wrongdoing. So most retributivists argue instead for the more reasonable stance that punishments ought to be somehow *proportionally* as harsh as the wrong committed. Such punishments should be (at least somewhat) humane, yet still commensurate to the wrong committed. However, restricting justified punishment to preclude certain forms of punishment as inhumane – in other words, as disrespectful, or violating the dignity of persons – is also difficult, as such restrictions require the retributivist to invoke respect for persons in support of what might appear to be opposing aims:

she has conceded that respect for persons demands infliction of suffering on a wrongdoer, yet she must invoke respect to argue that humanity restricts the harshness of punishments.[74] But it is hard to see how many such restrictions can be justified in this way. For example, since punishment is defined as justified infliction of suffering that shows the wrongdoer is respected as a person, it is not entirely clear how respect could preclude equating standardly accepted punishments with extremely intense forms of suffering for much shorter periods of time, even if the latter punishment seems intuitively inhumane.

One way of understanding retributive desert is to understand punishment as expressing moral blame for the most serious kinds of wrongdoing. Philosophers of both moral psychology and criminal punishment alike often take the interpersonal realm and the realm of the criminal law to employ the same notion of blame, as though the same theory must ground both interpersonal blame and criminal blame: what it is to be a responsible agent is to be one who is accountable for her wrong actions.[75] On many accounts, to blame is to have a kind of negative, disapproving attitude toward a wrongdoer; so retributivists may argue that the worst sorts of wrongdoing entail

[74] Falls (1987) explicitly argues that respect for persons both fuels *and* constrains retributive justifications of criminal punishment. Falls claims, much as other retributivists do, that respect for persons demands that deserved punishments be proportional to the wrong committed; however, she further claims that respect also limits our responses to wrongdoing such that we cannot damage or destroy an agent's rational capacities, even if we are otherwise justified in punishing him. So, Falls says, respect for persons both implies and limits the power of proportionality to justify punishments; she concludes that we likely cannot kill people as a justified punishment, but it is not clear how many other harsh punishments her view excludes. Falls' view illustrates the difficulties retributivists face when trying to justify constraints on punishment in retributive terms – namely, that respect for persons demands that we deliberately inflict significant suffering on wrongdoers in the name of justice. It is difficult to be a retributivist who takes moral personhood seriously.

[75] See, for example, Moore (1997), Murphy (2003), French (2001) and Nozick (1981), all of which offer retributive theories that take interpersonal moral blame and criminal punishment to be continuous with one another. Shoemaker (2009) and Fine and Kennett (2004) have explicitly assumed a continuity of moral and legal blame – and noted that this continuity creates difficulties – in providing arguments that account for particular discrepancies between moral and legal responsibility. More recently, Shoemaker (2013) has argued for moral blame and legal blame as different in kind, although he argues on different grounds than I will; I will discuss Shoemaker's more recent account in more detail below.

punishing wrongdoers to express that we blame them.[76] Negative, blaming attitudes withdraw goodwill in proportion to the wrong committed; we blame the worst sorts of wrongs by bearing ill will toward a wrongdoer – that is, we think it good that she be made to suffer for her wrongdoing.[77] The retributivist may point to this continuum as illustrating her claim that more serious wrongdoings warrant more negative responses – that is, in quality of will terms, that the less goodwill (or, more ill will) displayed by wrongdoers, the less goodwill (or, more ill will) they deserve in return. Retribution is a moralized notion that is generally taken to imply a particular sort of attitude – one of indignation or resentment. Without such attitudes, retributivists worry that policies are merely regulatory rather than punitive – that is, that such policies aim mainly to control behavior, rather than to punish wrongdoers by giving them the suffering that they deserve. In this way, some retributivists argue that justified punishment must be linked to extremely negative but justified attitudes towards the wrongdoer.[78]

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[76] Further support for thinking of punishment as an expression of extremely negative blaming attitudes might be garnered from a certain interpretation of punishment as functioning to express societal condemnation of those actions deemed criminal offenses. Joel Feinberg famously claimed "punishment is a conventional device for the expression of attitudes of resentment and indignation, and of judgments of disapproval and reprobation, on the part either of the punishing authority himself or of those 'in whose name' the punishment is inflicted" (1974, 98). Feinberg's explanation of the symbolic value of punishment as an expression of blaming attitudes such as resentment and indignation intrinsically links blaming attitudes and harsh treatment. While ill will is not explicitly taken to be a part of the justification of punishment on this view, understanding punishment as expressing the sentiments of blaming attitudes appears to entail that those sentiments include ill will. Blame and punishment are thus understood in the same terms, on Feinberg's view.

[77] Strawson makes clear that he does not mean that being ready to acquiesce in punishment requires "indignant boilings or remorseful pangs" (1962/2003, 91), just that all of these attitudes are on the same continuum of responses to wrongdoing.

[78] Jeffrie Murphy (2003) offers an account of retributive emotions that explicitly ties those emotions to punishment. He argues that retributive attitudes – examples of which, on his account, include resentment, anger, hatred and desires for vengeance – are justifiable blaming responses. He claims that such negative reactive attitudes can play a morally valuable role in human psychology and human relations" (2003, 16). They show our "emotional allegiance" to morals, motivating the moral person to do something about the wrong; that something can potentially be, in serious cases, a desire to seek vengeance for the wrong (2003, 19). These retributive responses thus demonstrate our commitments to self-respect, self-defense, and the moral order.

While Murphy does not explicitly defend *acting* on retributive feelings – that is, he stops short of advocating revenge – he endorses the retributivist position that "payback" is involved in justifying criminal punishment. Criminals (assuming they are not wrongly convicted) get the punishment they deserve. Murphy speculates that lesser punishments for attempts may be grounded in some notion of vengeance (2003, 30), and while he does not think that retributive emotions are irrelevant to criminal punishment, Murphy argues that victim impact statements

Other retributive theories of punishment – often termed reciprocity theories – offer an alternative explanation that does not invoke the notion that punishment is an expression of (deserved) ill will. Rather than being explicitly about moralized attitudes of disapproval, criminal punishment is instead justified as a way of righting moral wrongs in society.[79] The reciprocity theorist argues that the state – including the criminal justice system – looks to social contract theory for its authority to punish wrongdoers. We enter into civil society, according to these theorists, so that we can share in the benefits society provides, but we also thereby agree to share

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are problematic because irrelevant factors such as how attractive, articulate, and persuasive a victim is can creep into the process *via* victim impact statements and thus influence sentencing in ways that are not morally justified; Murphy also worries that some victims may not make statements at all, so not all cases will be able to account for victims' experiences in the relevant ways. Murphy's discussion of victim impact statements implies that if there were a way to accurately assess victims' retributive attitudes, then they should be included in the calculus that determines what sentences wrongdoers' deserve; it is only because intervening, irrelevant factors are likely to derail proper justice that Murphy thinks it important to keep victim impact statements out of the sentencing process.

Tamler Sommers (2013) offers an account of retributive punishment that ties retributive attitudes to desert of punishment even more explicitly than does Murphy. Sommers argues that a wrongdoer's morally *deserved* punishment is at least partially determined by a victim's (or, her family's) desire that he suffer. So, despite the acknowledged fact that different persons may have different emotional reactions to wrongdoing, Sommers claims that "…desert judgments should be properly sensitive to the feelings, desires, and behaviors of those most closely affected by the wrongdoing" (2013, 247). Victim impact statements thus are *essential* to making accurate judgments about desert of punishment on Sommers view. Further, he is not worried about issues of fairness due to the variability of victim impact statements; indeed, that one victim advocates more strongly for punishing a wrongdoer strongly than does another merely indicates that one wrongdoer deserves more punishment than the other.

Peter French (2001) offers an even more extreme account of the tight connection between blame and punishment. Ultimately, French argues that "[w]rongdoing requires a hostile response" (2001, 223), defending vengeance – his preferred term for justified revenge – on the basis of virtue ethics. On French's view, revenge itself (not the mere desire for revenge) is an important form of moral communication, one which not only serves as a venue for the avenger to express herself, but one which must also be understood by its target. The point of revenge, in other words, is to communicate that the avenger will not stand for being wronged. However, communication is understood, in this context, to involve understanding on both sides – if we consider as analogous oral communication, this requires both that the "speaker" (the avenger) and the "listener" (the wrongdoer/target of the revenge) be able to understand the message. While the wrongdoer need not *accept* that she has done wrong, she must be able to *understand* that the avenger has interpreted her act as such for the revenge to constitute communication.

[79] Even though justification of punishment on reciprocity theories ostensibly involves restoring the proper moral balance – without any consideration of quality of will – the notion that ill will toward wrongdoers can be justified may still be lurking in the background. On reciprocity views, it is always *better* that the wrongdoer suffers punishment – she *deserves* the harsh treatment, and to fail to give her the punishment she deserves leaves society morally unbalanced. Punishing a wrongdoer – provided that she deserves the punishment she gets – somehow rights the wrong and restores the moral balance. But how does harsh treatment restore the moral balance? And what does "desert" come to on retributive views of punishment, if not that desires for harsh treatment – when such treatment is *deserved* – are at least permissible? So even where it is not made explicit, some intuition in favor of blaming with ill will still seems to be doing some of the work in justifying criminal punishment on reciprocity views of retributive punishment. But for the sake of argument, I leave this allegation to one side and consider the problems reciprocity views face with respect to restoring the moral balance.

in the burdens of society. As a result of the social contract to which we all have (hypothetically) agreed, the criminal law provides protection for each of us to have a sphere of personal freedom unfettered by the state, but it also restricts our freedom to that sphere; if we infringe on the freedoms of others, the state is entitled to punish us, per the terms of the contract. Individuals who break the law seek to make exceptions of themselves, taking advantage of the benefits of society without upholding their share of the burdens. The harsh treatment of state punishment thus restores the balance of benefits and burdens in society by placing the criminal's burdens on him in the form of punishment, taking away his otherwise ill-gotten unfair advantage. Once the criminal has "paid back" his debt to society through punishment, he is once again fit to be a citizen with the other members of society.[80]

But either of these solutions, while logical, is still somewhat problematic when it comes to respect for persons. First, in each case we have to accept that deliberately inflicting suffering upon another is a good *when it is understood as punishment*, even though such attitudes and actions toward another would ordinarily be disrespectful to her moral agency; this is the main reason that motivates me to look for an alternative to retributive justifications of punishment. Second, we have to accept that the good is accomplished by "righting the wrong" through the infliction of suffering. But this is puzzling. Unless we already accept that inflicting suffering is a good that "rebalances" the moral order, it is hard to understand how the imposition of significant burdens on a wrongdoer removes the extra burdens his wrongdoing had placed on others.

Perhaps flipping the notion of benefits and burdens can help. Instead of thinking of punishment as imposing more burdens on a wrongdoer so that he shoulders his fair share of burdens after all, we might think of punishment as a benefit to the rest of society, to those who

[80] For examples of reciprocity views, see Murphy (1973) and Morris (1968).

did not shirk their burdens. The argument runs like this: In addition to those directly affected by the wrongdoing in question, the members of the community are also affected, in the form of a loss of a sense of security. In each instance of criminal wrongdoing, a small chip is made in the community's sense of security. Punishing wrongdoers thus increases the benefits to society: in punishing wrongdoers, restitution is made both to victims and to the members of the community, as punishing wrongdoers not only makes things up to the primary victim but also restores a sense of security to members of the community through deterring future wrongdoing and through a display of commitment to security.[81]

But this view, too, has difficulty explaining how punishment respects the wrongdoer. The justification for punishment is in terms of benefits for victims and the wider community; the focus is on protecting and compensating members of the community. But all of this is, for the most part, at the expense of the wrongdoer, who may even be made to suffer for the losses of security created by wrongdoers who were never caught. The wrongdoer's suffering is thus a tool for the benefit of others, and appealing to the benefits that society reaps cannot show how punishing him properly respects the wrongdoer. So it is hard to see this as a satisfactory resolution to the tension between punishment and respect for persons, either.

§ 2: PUNISHMENT AND NON-REACTIVE ATTITUDES

I have been discussing retributive justifications for punishment to get a sense of how retribution is meant to work, and to show how defending such views leads to an internal tension regarding

[81] This is a version of Margaret Holmgren's defense of punishment as restitution (1983 & 2013). Reactive attitudes are largely divorced from punishment on her account, serving psychological purposes for victims but being not at all indicative of desert of punishment. Holmgren addresses potential worries about respect for persons by claiming that respect requires compassion, which ought to lead to unconditional forgiveness (1994 & 2013). So criminal punishment does not involve blaming the wrongdoer with negative attitudes, but only involves what restitution is owed. Holmgren's view also diverges from retributivism in insisting that punishment must benefit others to be justified (rather than simply insisting on the suffering of the wrongdoer).

respect for persons. As a result, retributive explanations for how and why the state ought to punish criminals can seem strained. In view of these difficulties, I suggest an alternative approach: understanding blame and punishment as occurring in different relational contexts. Retributivists assume blame and punishment to be more or less continuous with one another; it is this putative continuity, I suggest, that makes it especially tricky for retributivists to reconcile respect and criminal punishment. This may seem intuitively puzzling, but hopefully it will seem much less puzzling once we examine more carefully the difference between interpersonal moral relationships and reactive attitudes, and the different kind of relationship that exists between the state and its citizens.

As is clear from the preceding chapters, I follow Strawson (and, many others) in understanding reactivity as the mark of interactions between fellow members of the moral community; to be susceptible to reactive attitudes in our interactions with others *just is* to recognize their moral agency in that the actions being reacted to are recognized as *theirs* (1962/2003, 90). I have made the further claim that this recognition is insufficient for respectful interactions: the demands of respect also require that the reactive attitudes themselves recognize the agent's moral capacities by addressing the agent on appropriate moral terms. In contrast, the objective attitude marks our interactions with those whom we do *not* – at least, not currently – regard as fellow members of the moral community. We simply fail to be reactive to those we do not think responsible for their attitudes.

The criminal process and punishment by the state involve regarding a wrongdoer with non-reactive attitudes, not because she is seen as incapable of engaging in normal, interpersonal, participatory relations, but because her relations with the state do not occur within the normal interpersonal context. In prosecuting and punishing offenders, the state and its agents stand in a

different sort of relation to wrongdoers, one in which it is appropriate for state actors to suspend normal reactive attitudes in the course of their work on behalf of the state; but such actors nonetheless simultaneously continue to recognize the agent as a fully responsible moral agent. Those prosecuting and punishing the wrongdoer within the criminal justice context take a sort of meta-attitude, stepping back from the interpersonal context in order to assess the actions of the wrongdoer on behalf of the state, and determining how best to deal with the wrongdoer as a result of those assessments. But the wrongdoer's attitudes and actions are understood throughout the process as *hers*: this understanding distinguishes the non-reactive stance involved in criminal punishment from Strawson's objective attitude, and ensures that the wrongdoer's personhood is thus respected throughout the criminal process. Punishment in the criminal context does not involve normal interpersonal blaming attitudes but, rather, regards holding offenders at arms length in interactions with them. The state and its actors, in trying and punishing criminals, are necessarily disengaged from the usual sort of interpersonal attitudes in this relational context, in order to carry out their duties.

Adopting the objective attitude in some of our interactions with others – but not in all – is not without precedent. We sometimes adopt such a non-reactive stance toward children of a certain age: those who are not yet grown but are nevertheless responsible in many respects that we generally recognize *via* our reactivity toward them. For instance, parents of teenagers will be reactive to their children in their usual, day-to-day interactions, since these parents take their children to be responsible moral agents in most contexts. But in those situations in which parents judge their kids are still learning about responsibility, they may treat their children *as though* they are holding them responsible and even *act* as though they blame them if they act "irresponsibly" – although the parents are not in fact reactive toward them in the normal

interpersonal sense in this context. Imagine parents catching their teenager sneaking out at night to drink with his friends. Although they think their teenager responsible in many respects, the parents might regard their teenager with the objective attitude in this instance; they may *act* as though they blame him for this choice in order to teach him how serious it is that he deceived him and was drinking underage, yet not *actually* blame him; they may instead think that their son is not entirely responsible when it comes to choices like drinking, given the combination of his youth and the way our society makes drinking seem exciting and taboo at the same time.

Perhaps parental punishment is, at times, more akin to "treating" children therapeutically than to punishing them – which some might view as unacceptable as a response to a moral agent's wrongdoing.[82] But the norms of the parent-child relationship are someone different from those in the normal interpersonal moral realm. The parent owes the child fiduciary duties of the highest level and must sometimes sanction the child in order to teach the importance of both behaving rightly and of cultivating the proper moral attitudes toward others.[83] Parents may attempt to

[82] For instance, Morris (1968) argues that if a criminal is a morally responsible agent, we are not morally permitted to treat him therapeutically, but we *must* punish him, since punishment is a wrongdoer's right as a person. To treat wrongdoers rather than to punish them, on Morris' view, is to fail to regard them as autonomous moral agents who chose to behave in ways that they ought to have known would result in their punishment.

[83] In arguing that criminal punishment is not continuous with interpersonal moral blame, Shoemaker (2012) also compares the criminal justice context to the relationship between parents and children, but describes the comparison in somewhat different terms than I do. Shoemaker claims that what the two contexts have in common – and, what differentiates them from the normal interpersonal context – is that both the criminal justice system and the relationship of parents to their children involve asymmetrical relations. The legitimacy of parental punishment, he says, "is grounded in [parents'] authority over their children, who themselves are proper subjects of that authority" (2013, 113-4). He claims that the contexts in which sanctioning rule-breakers is acceptable – including the military, school, the workplace, and sports teams – all share the asymmetrical "authority over" structure of the relationships constituting the context. Shoemaker argues that the relations that ground interpersonal moral blame do not have this asymmetrical structure, so moral equals can blame one another *via* reactive attitudes, but lack the requisite authority to punish one another.

But very different sorts of reasons justify punishment in the various "authority over" relations Shoemaker mentions. For instance, if the state gets its authority to punish wrongdoers from a social contract, it might just be because we have given up this power to the state in order to reap the benefits of living in civil society. But on such a picture, the power to punish *was* morally ours, in the state of nature. The nature of the relationship between parents and children is obviously quite different on this front. Social contract theory plays no role: clearly asymmetrical relations between parents and their children were not created by a hypothetical agreement among equals. Children do not – indeed, cannot – agree, as equals or otherwise, to be subject to their parents' authority. Rather, the asymmetrical relationship between parent and child is permitted – in fact, *required* – because children are not yet

steer their children to do the right thing by sanctioning them, hoping to teach them how to make responsible choices in the future, even if the parents think their children are not always capable of making responsible choices. Yet in other contexts, parents may be truly reactive toward their children. For instance, I might blame my teenage son (truly) for neglecting to do his homework – as I regard him as perfectly capable of keeping on top of his schoolwork – and I might feel grateful toward him for doing all of the laundry (without being asked) while I was at work and he had the day off of school. While I might adopt a non-reactive stance toward my son in certain of my interactions with him, I might yet recognize him as a moral agent. So it is normal – that is, it is appropriate – within the parent-child relational context for parents to sometimes adopt the objective attitude in their interactions with their children.

Adopting a non-reactive stance toward one who is nonetheless recognized as a responsible person occurs in other relational contexts as well. For instance, a therapist understands her patient to be a moral agent, but she may suspend certain of the reactive attitudes – for instance, the blaming attitudes – in order to treat her patient objectively and effectively. When a therapist is interacting with a patient *qua* therapist, she may take up the objective attitude in her interactions with her patient; after all, *qua* therapist, she is *treating* her patient. But she might also only take up a non-reactive stance with respect to some aspects of her interactions with her

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moral agents in their own right, but are, instead, moral agents in training (or proto-moral agents). While paternalism is not (generally speaking) permissible in interactions between fellow citizens, paternalism is the norm in the parent-child context; parents are responsible for their children's well-being and for teaching their children to be good moral agents.

The other asymmetrical relations Shoemaker mentions (but does not discuss in as much detail) can be compared for similarities and differences to the state-criminal relationship as well. Suspending or expelling students from school for misconduct might be paternalistic, for instance if the students are relatively young and the sanctions aim – at least in part – to teach them a lesson. But getting suspended from school might seem more like a sanction in the criminal context, if having been suspended follows a student through life as a "black mark" on his record, and restricts his future opportunities. Being fired or suspended from one's job for misconduct does not seem to have much in common with the parent-child case – all of the actors are responsible adults, and are held fully responsible for their actions. But workplace sanctions do not seem to have much in common with the criminal context, either, since workers do not agree as equals to be subject to sanctions if they break the rules.

patient – say, suspending her susceptibility to moral reactive attitudes, while still feeling sympathetic. In such a case, the non-reactive stance is available to the therapist as a tool, to be used in the service of the ends of therapy; the therapist does not thereby regard her patient as a non-agent, incapable of normal interpersonal relationships. The suspending of certain reactive attitudes in cases like this one is a part of the particular relationship: within the therapy relationship, the therapist takes an objective stance toward her patient while simultaneously regarding her as a responsible agent;[84] but outside of the therapy context, the therapist and patient stand in normal participatory relations to one another and so are reactive toward one another in this context.

Although the context is different again, criminal trials and punishment involve similar suspensions of reactive attitudes toward those we nevertheless recognize as responsible moral agents. The state itself does not stand in normal interpersonal relations with the accused person – nor, indeed, with *any* persons. The state cannot be reactive: it lacks the affective, cognitive functions that are the mark of moral agency. But this is not the main reason that I am claiming the state and its actors ought to be non-reactive in the criminal justice context. Of course, human actors will act on behalf of the state in this context, and they are, of course, capable of reactivity. But reactivity is not the appropriate stance to take in this context. The relational context of the criminal process is distinct from that of normal interpersonal relationships.

I suggest that within the relational context between accused persons and those who act on the state's behalf in criminal proceedings, it is normal – that is, appropriate – for state actors to suspend normal participatory attitudes toward accused persons, while simultaneously regarding

[84] If at some point in her interactions with her patient a therapist comes to resent her patient – despite her avowal to suspend judgment of her patient within the context of therapy – she either is now in a participant role with her patient, or she is mistaken about their relationship, or her reactive attitude is inappropriate to their relationship; which of these is the case will depend upon the facts of the situation.

accused persons as responsible moral agents. The criminal context is thus analogous to the other sorts of relational contexts just considered – the parent-child context, and the therapist-patient context – in that all of them involve suspensions of normal interpersonal reactive attitudes without thereby disrespecting another's moral status. But the criminal justice context is importantly disanalogous to these other non-reactive stances as well, in that it simultaneously recognizes the wrongdoer's agency in specific ways – namely, that she is the agent responsible for the wrongdoing, that she has an opportunity to explain herself and be heard, and that she has a right to understand what is happening and why she is being held accountable. But in adopting a non-reactive, quasi-objective stance toward a wrongdoer, the state's actors are able to better promote the goals and values of the criminal system without disrespecting the wrongdoer as a moral agent.

Understanding the criminal justice context as involving this kind of non-reactive stance toward a wrongdoer makes sense when thinking about procedural fairness. At trial, the facts and evidence are presented and considered as objectively as possible, in order to determine whether there is sufficient reason to remove the offender from usual relations with others. While it might be difficult for individuals to sustain the objective attitude for long within normal interpersonal interactions with one another,[85] it would be much less difficult for the state's agents to maintain a non-reactive stance toward criminals for long stretches of time, given that they stand in a different relational context to an accused. Further, we tend to think that juries ought to be impartial; holding back one's normal participatory reactions in order to more effectively assess the evidence impartially is appropriate in the criminal context. Of course, the defense may try to appeal to normal human emotions so that respect, and perhaps compassion, will work in his

[85] On this, I agree with Strawson (1962/2003, 79-80).

client's favor against conviction. But in offering his defense, the accused gives a rational account of his actions as a morally responsible agent – that is, he is given the opportunity to assert his responsibility.[86] So despite the suspension of reactive attitudes, within the criminal justice context an accused person is still recognized and respected as a moral agent through the process itself.

Understanding the relational context in this way also helps to reconcile punishment and respect for persons. In punishing, the state intervenes to *stop* normal interpersonal relations with the criminal. He is removed from the community, barred from participating with others in the usual ways due to his disrespectful actions. But his actual status as an agent remains intact and is still recognized as such, at least at certain stages of the process. The moral relationship with other individuals is not severed during this stoppage time, and normal interpersonal relations can be resumed when the criminal is in the normal participatory context with other individuals. Understanding the criminal justice context as suspending reactive attitudes while simultaneously keeping an agent's moral status in mind can also help understand why we must place constraints on punishments, to ensure that criminals' treatment is properly respectful: they are recognized as moral agents, and that recognition entails that their capacities of moral reasoning and understanding be recognized and protected. In punishing a criminal, respect demands that the state protect his well-being.[87]

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[86] For an account of the value of the trial process as a venue for accused persons to give rational accounts of themselves – that is, to assert their responsibility – see Gardner (1996/2007, 1998/2007, 2002/2007, 2003/2006/2007)

[87] Jean Hampton (1984) offers an account of punishment as moral education that, although different than the account I offer here, is at least consistent with what I am arguing. She argues that criminal punishment itself is like an electrified fence: *at least* punishment can serve as a deterrent, showing wrongdoers that certain behaviors will not be tolerated and thus providing non-moral incentive for them to conform to the rules of society so as to avoid the discomfort of running into the fence/barrier; further, incarceration also provides a space for contemplative reflection as to *why* the electrified fences are where they are. understanding of punishment recognizes the agency of the wrongdoer, allowing her to learn for herself (if she autonomously chooses to do so) why her transgressions constitute moral wrongs and thus resulted in her being (justifiably) punished.

§ 3: CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have defended the proposition that blame and punishment are less continuous than most people assume them to be, since each occurs in a different relational context: blame is part of normal interpersonal relations, and punishment is part of relations between the state and accused persons in the criminal justice context. Punishing criminals is not merely a way of blaming them harshly but, rather, involves a kind of *stopping* of ordinary participatory relations with them, given what we take to be their flagrant disregard of a rule we deem especially important for society. As a result, I have argued that respect need not entail understanding that punishment is intentional infliction of suffering that is deserved and that regarding an offender with non-reactive attitudes in the criminal context need not entail disrespect. This picture of punishment and the criminal justice process, I suggest, presents a coherent alternative to retributive views of blame and punishment.

If my picture presents a plausible alternative, we may do well not only to rethink the justification of punishment, but also its referent. I have suggested that punishment might be understood as a sort of stopping of normal interpersonal relations with a wrongdoer while still recognizing and respecting her agency. Such an understanding, maybe, does not constitute *punishment* as generally understood (indeed, it certainly *cannot* constitute punishment in the retributivist's sense of the word); but it is not quite *therapy*, either, since therapeutic treatment in the criminal context is generally understood as how to best deal with those who break the law but are *not* responsible agents. On the picture of punishment I have suggested, persons are respected *qua* persons because their agency remains always in view – unlike in the case of therapeutic treatments – and understanding the relational context of the criminal process as outside normal interpersonal relations allows that non-reactive attitudes toward wrongdoers need not entail

disrespect. So although traditional retributive views think of punishment and therapy as binary alternatives, perhaps my suggestion shows that there is another plausible way of understanding criminal justice.

I began this dissertation by puzzling over Strawson's description of blaming attitudes as partial withdrawals of goodwill that modify the general demand that another be spared suffering; such a description implies that it is morally appropriate to blame wrongdoers with the same lack of goodwill for which they are being blamed. Similarly, as discussed in this chapter, the retributive idea that criminals deserve suffering in return for their wrongdoing entails the puzzling claim that inflicting suffering is justified as a respectful response to inflicting suffering that was understood to be disrespectful. Given the account of blaming appropriately I have defended, I suggest that while much of Strawson's description of our normal interpersonal practices provides helpful insights into the nature of moral responsibility and blame, we ought to reject these puzzling retributive sentiments. Blame is not properly described as a withdrawal of goodwill – partial or otherwise – and we need not feel ill will toward a wrongdoer for the state to be justified in punishing criminals.

Blame is, instead, a reactive attitude that recognizes a wrongdoer's agency by attributing disrespectful attitudes and actions to her; *respectful* blame is a reactive attitude that satisfies this description and is primarily *about* the wrong, and is capable of being understood by the wrongdoer in moral terms. Respectful attitudes of blame seek a moral response from the wrongdoer – at least, they are capable of seeking such a response – engaging with the wrongdoer as one who is capable of engaging in respectful moral relations.

I have focused my discussion mainly on participatory relations in the interpersonal context, considering the relationship of respect for persons to goodwill and reactive attitudes. But the

consideration of punishment in this chapter shows that we interact with one another in different relational contexts, and that understanding that there are different contexts helps make better sense of respect for persons. Keeping agents' moral capacities in mind – even when blaming them – entails maintaining attitudes that constitute respectful moral address. If we do this, we can blame and punish in the appropriate circumstances by continuing to respect wrongdoers in the same manner as we respect *all* persons, regarding them as capable agents, and so engaging with them as such.

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