

4. The region in which there are two *Xs* is that in which one will place one *X* when diagramming the premises to check whether one has correctly determined what the missing premise is. Should anyone find it inelegant to introduce two *Xs* in one area of the diagram when diagramming the premise and conclusion, he or she may stipulate that if there is already an *X* in an area by diagramming the premise, one should not introduce another into that area when diagramming the conclusion. The difference is merely aesthetic.

5. I wish to thank Ms. Ainsleigh Thomas for raising the question that resulted in this paper and Dr. Thomas Adajian and the referees for the *APA Newsletter on Teaching Philosophy* for their helpful comments on earlier versions of this paper.

BOOK REVIEWS

Ethics: The Big Questions. James P. Sterba, editor. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998. vii + 455 pp. \$32.95 (paperback).

Reviewed by Ben Eggleston, University of Pittsburgh

This book is an anthology organized around the following four questions: "What is the nature of morality? What is its justification? Its requirements? What important challenges have been raised against it?" (p. 1). According to Sterba's agenda, then, three of the four "big questions" of ethics are, in fact, meta-ethical.

The first part, "The Nature of Morality," begins with Plato's famous discussion, in the *Republic*, of the ring of Gyges. The remaining six readings in the first part are from twentieth-century authors united by a concern with what might be called the logical status of moral judgments: A. J. Ayer and Brand Blanshard (on emotivism), John Searle and Antony Flew (on deriving "ought" from "is"), Philippa Foot (on naturalism), and Alasdair MacIntyre (on the continuing relevance of emotivism). Although these readings address only a few of the many aspects of the question under which they are presented—"What is morality?" (p. 19)—the aspects they do address are, arguably, the ones to which twentieth-century moral philosophers have paid the most attention.

Passages from Hume's *Treatise*, on the passions' (and hence, in Hume's view, morality's) independence of reason, open the second part of the book, "The Justification of Morality." More optimistic accounts of grounding morality in rationality are presented in readings from

Kurt Baier, Alan Gewirth, and Sterba himself, while Foot's classic paper "Morality as a System of Hypothetical Imperatives" updates the skeptical view. Also included is some material by Bernard Gert, though it's hard to see why Sterba chose to include it in *this* part—whose subtitle is "Why be Moral?" (p. 63)—given that Gert deliberately bypasses this question by "presuppos[ing] that the readers of this chapter want to act morally" (p. 87).

In the third part of the book, "Alternative Moral Perspectives: What Does Morality Require?" disputes about the nature and justification of moral norms give way to a consideration of theories that set forth such norms, divided into three sections: "Utility," "Duty," and "Virtue." The first of these perspectives is provided by passages from chapters 1, 2, and 4 of Mill's *Utilitarianism*; and although Mill's work is a worthy object of study in its own right, certain idiosyncrasies of his theory (such as his evaluation of pleasures according to quality as well as quantity) prevent his text from being altogether representative of orthodox utilitarian thought. On this score, some of J. J. C. Smart's contribution to *Utilitarianism: For and Against* might have been a better choice, made all the more eligible by the fact that selections from Bernard Williams's "A Critique of Utilitarianism" (which forms the other half of that volume) are next in Sterba's lineup. In the other readings in this section, Kai Nielsen downplays the counterintuitive implications of utilitarianism, while Michael Stocker and Peter Railton debate whether utilitarianism requires people to be inappropriately alienated from important values and attachments.

The section on "Duty" begins, naturally enough, with excerpts from the first two chapters of Kant's *Groundwork*; the application of the categorical imperative to specific cases is discussed in the next two readings, from Fred Feldman and Christine Korsgaard. The section then explores the political arena, with John Hospers's advocacy of libertarianism, selections from Rawls's *A Theory of Justice*, and an attempt by Sterba to derive socialist conclusions from libertarian premises. Although these latter three readings advance broadly Kantian themes, they rely so tenuously on Kant and the concept of *duty* that their being placed in this section seems to be

little more than an organizational convenience.

Selections from the first two chapters of the first book of Aristotle's *Ethics* open the section on "Virtue." Aristotle's influence pervades the next reading as well, in which Martha Nussbaum tries to rescue virtue ethics from the "turn toward relativism" (p. 260) she sees it taking. Following a discussion by MacIntyre of different conceptions of virtue and the inadequacy of utilitarianism vis-à-vis virtue ethics, readings from William Frankena and Walter Schaller discuss whether and to what extent being virtuous amounts to being disposed to comply with certain rules. Julia Annas's paper, in which she explores—to quote the title of her paper—"Ancient Ethics and Modern Morality," is a fitting close not only to the section on virtue, but to the third part of the book as well.

Conspicuously absent from the fourth part, "Challenges to Morality," are selections from Nietzsche (perhaps the preeminent debunker of morality) and defenses of egoism (both ethical and psychological). In fact, instead of challenging morality *per se*, the readings in this part simply make the more modest claim that recent thinking about morality is deficient in certain ways. In the first section, "Feminism," after a brief selection from Musonius Rufus (an early Stoic) representing feminism's roots in ancient thought, readings from Annette Baier, Virginia Held, Joan Tronto, and Alison Jaggar emphasize the role in moral thinking of concepts such as trust, emotion, caring, and consensus-based moral reasoning. In the second section, "Environmentalism," selections from Frans DeWaal, Peter Singer, Paul Taylor, and Sterba address the anthropocentrism of recent moral thinking; the section ends with Karen Warren's paper on ecological feminism, which provides a helpful link to the earlier readings on feminism. Less helpful, however, is the continued attention to feminist issues in the "Postmodernism" section, which includes nothing more than a three-part exchange between Susan Moller Okin and Jane Flax, on whether the social and economic importance of factors such as race and class, highlighted by postmodernist thinkers, threaten the viability of feminism's emphasis on gender. One is left with the impression of having missed the postmodernist forest for just a single tree.

Clearly, the selection and arrangement of readings in this book is imperfect. But probably the same may be said of any anthology, just by the nature of the work (anthologies are too-easy targets in this respect); and it is only fair to acknowledge that Sterba's editorial judgment is, on the whole, judicious, and appears to reflect an impressively wide-ranging familiarity with the views and voices that have shaped contemporary thinking about ethics. Indeed, despite its faults, this anthology provides—perhaps as well as any—appropriate and ample resources for a semester-long course in ethics.

It should be noted, however, that this book is not ideal (and perhaps not intended) for an *introductory* course in ethics. Students who still need to be introduced to the academic study of moral problems are likely to be nonplussed by the meta-ethical issues that the book emphasizes (as well as overwhelmed by the book's prose, intended in most cases for an audience of professional philosophers); such students would be better served by Sterba's *Morality in Practice*, with the present book being more suitable for advanced undergraduates and beginning graduate students. Moreover, although any anthology can be immensely labor-saving, a course based on this book will definitely not be a course that teaches itself. On the contrary, it will require the expertise of an instructor already knowledgeable about the positions and, in some cases, about the specific readings, that comprise the book. Of the 43 readings, nearly half are short excerpts from monographs, and a responsible instructor will want to preface each of them with some account of the author's aims and assumptions. Even most of the free-standing papers were, presumably, written as contributions to ongoing conversations in the literature and so will require some stage-setting of their own.

One might expect Sterba to have provided such introductory material, and it would have been helpful had he done so. Instead, Sterba has provided one 18-page introduction, consisting almost entirely of summaries of the readings. Certainly these summaries may help instructors to decide which readings to include in a course (and, with the readings spanning 428 pages of fairly small type, most instructors will need to be selective), but the summaries' relative inaccessibility and dense style will probably drive students to use them primarily after

the fact, to make sure they haven't missed the main point of the readings they've studied (or—dare I say it?—as substitutes for the readings themselves). Also, students and instructors alike should read the summaries only with some critical alertness: Sterba refers to Jaggar's *Feminist Practical Dialogue* as "Feminist Practical Discourse" (p. 15), caricatures Aristotle's notion of *eudaimonia* (pp. 10–11), and says that "According to welfare liberals, what is necessary and sufficient is that people would agree to such rights and duties under fair conditions" (p. 9)—as if all welfare liberals were contract theorists. And although some effort seems to have gone into compiling the five-page index, the "Suggested Further Reading" section merely contains eight mini-bibliographies (one for each part or section of the book), with none of the annotations that might enable it to function as a genuine *guide* to further reading.

Still, the weaknesses of the supporting material will not prevent the rest of the book from being put to good use. The resources it offers are more than adequate, at least for those instructors willing to provide the necessary context and perspective.

William H. Shaw. *Contemporary Ethics: Taking Account of Utilitarianism*. Blackwell, 1999. x+311 pp. \$59.95 (cloth). \$26.95 (paper).

Reviewed by Dale E. Miller, Old Dominion University

As the end of the Fall semester of 1998 neared, I found myself in an uncomfortable position. I was scheduled to teach a course on ethical theory for advanced undergraduates in the Spring, and I planned to spend a considerable amount of time discussing utilitarianism. My problem was that I could not find a suitable text. I wanted to spend at least as much time on contemporary developments in consequentialist thought as on the history of the tradition, and thus Geoffrey Scarre's *Utilitarianism* (Routledge, 1996) was not really what I was looking for. While there are some excellent anthologies devoted to utilitarianism, none seemed entirely appropriate as a classroom text; the one possible exception, Jonathan Glover's *Utilitarianism and Its Critics* (MacMillan, 1990), is unfortunately out of print.

Searching Amazon.com one last time, I saw that a new textbook entitled *Contemporary Ethics: Taking Account of Utilitarianism*, by William Shaw, was to be published in December. With the book order deadline fast approaching it was too late to ask for page proofs, so I took a chance and ordered the book sight unseen. It proved to be a happy choice.

Simply put, each chapter of *Taking Account of Utilitarianism* contains a wealth of information about and insight into a different facet of utilitarianism, presented in a remarkably lucid and accessible manner. The book has eight chapters, and the best way to indicate the range of subjects discussed therein may be simply to list their titles: Introducing Utilitarianism; Welfare, Happiness, and the Good; Arguing for Utilitarianism; Refining Utilitarianism (this chapter deals with the more sophisticated forms of utilitarianism which have been developed in response to the objections of critics; rule-utilitarianism falls under this heading, as do forms of act-utilitarianism in which the "principle of utility" figures as a criterion of rightness but not a decision procedure for agents); Rights, Liberty, and Punishment; Justice, Welfare, and Economic Distribution; and Virtue, Personal Life, and the Demands of Morality.

In every chapter Shaw demonstrates his extensive knowledge of both the history of utilitarian thought and contemporary work in the area. The second chapter, for example, which is concerned with theories of the good, begins with a discussion of Bentham's relatively simplistic hedonism and of Mill's more complex "qualitative" hedonism; after considering desire-satisfaction and objectivist accounts of welfare Shaw concludes by outlining the "hybrid" views of David Haslett, Richard Brandt, and L. W. Sumner. The arguments for utilitarianism examined in Chapter 3 include not only Mill's notorious "proof" but also, *inter alia*, Sidgwick's assertion that the principle of rational benevolence can be inferred from self-evident axioms and R. M. Hare's deduction of utilitarianism from his analysis of moral language. Much of this material is complex, but—to emphasize a point already made above—Shaw's presentation of it is wonderfully clear. The book is suitable for undergraduate courses beyond the introductory level, and one might even consider it for use in a graduate course. It