

REASON,  
METAPHYSICS,  
*and* MIND

*New Essays on the Philosophy  
of Alvin Plantinga*



*Edited by*  
KELLY JAMES CLARK  
*and* MICHAEL REA

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OF ALVIN PLANTINGA

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## **Reason, Metaphysics, and Mind**

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## Introduction

Kelly James Clark and Michael Rea

In the very first saying of Confucius, the Master says, “Is it not pleasant to learn with a constant perseverance and application? Is it not delightful to have friends coming from distant quarters?” These apparently mundane observations actually reveal some of the deepest truths of Confucian philosophy: there is nothing to be gained in the development and fulfillment of human life without the constant endeavor to learn. Confucian learning, we should keep in mind, was not abstract philosophizing, it was moral education—how does a person become virtuous? It involved careful and constant attention to and reflection on the rituals and traditions of China’s golden age of peace and harmony. One developed fluency in the language of that golden age while transmitting it in the language of one’s current age. In so doing, one would become a person of virtue. The person of virtue, according to Confucius, possessed a sort of attractive power—she was the kind of person who people wanted to be around. So while it is surely fun when friends come to visit, Confucius had much more in mind. Friends come to visit the virtuous person because they are gathered to her like a magnet gathers iron shavings in a harmonious and beautiful pattern. Friends don’t so much come as they are *drawn* by the moral force of the virtuous person.

On May 21–23, 2010, about three hundred friends were drawn to the University of Notre Dame to celebrate the career and retirement of Alvin Plantinga, widely recognized as one of the world’s leading figures in metaphysics, epistemology, and the philosophy of religion. They came, as Confucius commended, from afar—China, Great Britain, Iran, France, Germany, the Netherlands, South Africa, and Israel—in gratitude and admiration for the work of a philosopher who had not only played a central role in shaping the most important debates in the fields to which he contributed but who had also served as a personal and professional role model to a generation of Christian scholars. Plantinga has earned particular respect within the community of Christian philosophers not only for the pivotal role that he played in the renewal and development of philosophy of religion and

philosophical theology in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries but also for his patience and good humor in public philosophical debate and for his compassion and generosity in dealing with students and other younger scholars.

All of the essays but one in this volume engage with some particular aspect of Plantinga's views about metaphysics, epistemology, or philosophy of religion. The one exception is Nicholas Wolterstorff's essay, "Then, Now, and Al," which concludes the volume and provides a retrospective survey of Plantinga's impact on the various fields to which he has contributed. Wolterstorff opens by describing the intellectual climate that provided the backdrop for the early part of Plantinga's career in the 1950s and 1960s. Logical positivism exalted physics and denigrated metaphysics. Metaphysical statements were considered cognitively meaningless—some, perhaps, being expressions of feelings or attitudes, but none rising to the level of factual assertion. Religious claims fell under the same umbrella of criticism as other metaphysical claims, and so they likewise were considered meaningless. Even those who rejected the excesses of positivism fell under the spell of Humean empiricism. The general spirit of the age held that good philosophy had long since routed religious belief as outdated superstition. Belief in God was widely regarded as, at worst, meaningless, and, at best, false or irrational.<sup>1</sup> It was from within this general climate that Plantinga undertook to defend the rationality of religious belief, the viability of traditional Christian theism, and—later in his career—the untenability of materialism and evolutionary naturalism.

Plantinga's early work in religious epistemology sought to show that belief in God is, rationally speaking, (at least) on a par with belief in other minds. Belief in other minds, Plantinga thinks, does not depend for its justification or warrant upon arguments or (propositional) evidence. But if we can be justified in believing in other human minds in the absence of arguments or evidence, then why, in principle, could we not be justified in likewise believing in a divine mind? This basic intuition has found various forms of expression throughout Plantinga's career. Belief in God, he famously argues, is properly basic; argument or proof is not necessary for rational belief in God. We *start* with belief in God, we don't reason to it. One may be within one's epistemic rights if one accepts belief in God without inferential evidence. The *sensus divinitatis*, the sense of the divine, may immediately trigger belief in God in a wide but typical variety of circumstances. The existence of God is not a scientific hypothesis or theory that is accepted tentatively, if at all, and only on the basis of compelling empirical evidence. Rather, belief in God may enjoy direct warrant for properly functioning human beings. So belief in God may be rational, justified, and even warranted without the support of a theistic argument. Such a believer could even know that God exists.

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<sup>1</sup> You can read more about this background as well as Plantinga's autobiography, in Kelly James Clark, ed., *Philosophers Who Believe* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993); and in James E. Tomberlin and Peter van Inwagen, eds., *Alvin Plantinga* (Boston, MA: D. Reidel Publishing, 1985).

The opening salvo in one of Plantinga's best known early essays on the epistemology of religious belief was a critique of classical foundationalism, commonly attributed to Rene Descartes and other philosophers from the early modern period.<sup>2</sup> As Plantinga understood it, Descartes' epistemology was self-defeating, incapable of justifying obviously justified beliefs, and inconsistent with the idea that religious belief might be properly basic. By contrast, Ernest Sosa's contribution to this volume—"Descartes and Virtue Epistemology"—offers a novel interpretation of Descartes as a virtue epistemologist, thus locating him outside the tradition of classical foundationalism and instead within a tradition that seems to be in some ways more hospitable toward Plantingian epistemology.

Another key component in Plantinga's overall defense of the rationality and viability of traditional theistic belief has been his development of the free-will defense against the so-called "logical problem of evil," and his trenchant critiques of various formulations of the evidential argument from evil. The free-will defense was developed at the end of *The Nature of Necessity*, a landmark work devoted primarily to the metaphysics of modality but which concluded with groundbreaking discussions of the problem of evil and the ontological argument for the existence of God. Trenton Merricks's contribution to this volume, "Singular Propositions," engages some of the important nonreligious themes discussed in *The Nature of Necessity* and in related articles. In particular, it focuses on the question of whether singular propositions have as constituents the objects to which they directly refer. Belief in singular propositions is an important component of the sort of modal realism that Plantinga endorses and defends; but, according to Merricks, among the problems with the "received view" about singular propositions is the fact that, if the view is true, belief in singular propositions seems to be incompatible with serious actualism—another component of the sort of modal realism to which Plantinga is committed.<sup>3</sup> Merricks's paper provides five distinct arguments against the received view of singular propositions.

In addition to Merricks's paper, two other essays in this volume—those by Thomas P. Flint and Dean Zimmerman—engage themes dealt with in *The Nature of Necessity*. One of the central features of Plantinga's free-will defense is the idea that God might know, in advance of creation, what free creatures *would freely do* even in circumstances that are not and never will be actual. This sort of knowledge is called "middle knowledge" because it is seen as lying "between" two other kinds of knowledge: God's natural knowledge, which is his knowledge of necessary truths lying outside his volitional control, and his free knowledge, which is his

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<sup>2</sup> Alvin Plantinga, "Reason and Belief in God." In *Faith and Rationality*, ed. Alvin Plantinga and Nicholas Wolterstorff (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983).

<sup>3</sup> Plantinga's understanding of modal realism is developed most fully in "Two Concepts of Modality," *Philosophical Perspectives* 1 (1987): 189–231.



knowledge of contingent truths that are under his volitional control.<sup>4</sup> God's having middle knowledge implies his having foreknowledge, but not the other way around; and, as just noted, the assumption that God has middle knowledge played a pivotal role in the free-will defense as Plantinga developed it. In the years since Plantinga's version of the free-will defense appeared in *The Nature of Necessity*, there has been a great deal of work done both on the question whether middle knowledge is possible, as well as on the question whether divine foreknowledge of free creaturely actions is possible. In his "Varieties of Accidental Necessity," Thomas Flint explores one of the issues that lies at the heart of this debate—namely, the idea that facts about the past (and so, among other things, past facts about God's beliefs about future free acts) are in some sense *necessary* and therefore constitute a constraint upon what creatures can freely do. There has also been a great deal of debate about the question whether simple foreknowledge (without middle knowledge) would be of any providential use even if it were possible. Some have seen a negative answer to this question as reason to accept middle knowledge. Others, however, have argued that "libertarians"—those who believe that we are free and that freedom is incompatible with determinism—ought simply to reject middle knowledge and foreknowledge entirely, opting instead for Open Theism, according to which God is a risk taker who lacks complete knowledge of the future. Dean Zimmerman's "The Providential Usefulness of Simple Foreknowledge" takes a careful look at these issues, arguing that believers in simple foreknowledge are, like Open Theists and unlike believers in middle knowledge, committed to the view that God takes risks, but that the simple foreknowledge view does, nevertheless, seem to offer providential advantages over Open Theism.

Plantinga's free-will defense was primarily a response to the logical problem of evil, which purports to show that the existence of evil is logically inconsistent with the existence of God. In the wake of Plantinga's work on this topic, discussion of the problem of evil has shifted to various probabilistic formulations that aim to show that evil in the amounts and varieties found in our world is unlikely on the supposition that God exists and therefore constitutes evidence against God's existence. Richard Otte's essay, "Theory Comparison in Science and Religion," engages this topic by examining questions about how, in general, evidence bears upon religious belief, and then by drawing out some of the implications of his view for debates about the so-called "evidential problem of evil." Michael Bergmann's essay, "Commonsense Skeptical Theism," draws on the epistemological "commonsensism" of Thomas Reid in developing a defense of one of the most important contemporary strategies for responding to this argument. That strategy—skeptical

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. Thomas P. Flint, "Two Accounts of Providence," *Divine and Human Action: Essays on the Metaphysics of Theism*, ed. Thomas V. Morris (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988). Reprinted in Michael Rea, ed., *Oxford Readings in Philosophical Theology* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2009), 17–44.

theism—is not one that Plantinga has defended in any detail; but there are, nevertheless, strong affinities between Bergmann’s work on this topic and Plantinga’s own epistemological views, in no small part by virtue of the inspiration both have drawn from the work of Thomas Reid.

Philosophy of mind has been another longstanding interest of Plantinga’s. Plantinga has been an enthusiastic defender of dualism—the view that minds, or souls, are immaterial substances distinct from material bodies.<sup>5</sup> He has likewise been an enthusiastic critic of materialism, the view that minds are material objects or are, in some other sense, “wholly material.” Much of Plantinga’s sympathy for dualism is grounded in metaphysical intuitions about differences between minds and brains, as well as in the apparent intractability of familiar problems with materialist-friendly accounts of consciousness and intentionality. But at least some of the sympathy arises out of religious considerations: God is a mind, and God is not material; and much in the Christian scriptures and tradition seems to suggest that human beings are to be viewed as fundamentally immaterial, or at least endowed with an immaterial component as well. Peter van Inwagen, however, has taken precisely the opposite view. For van Inwagen, materialism is a natural, intuitive starting point; and nothing in scripture or tradition requires that we abandon that starting point.<sup>6</sup> In his contribution to the present volume, “Causation and the Mental,” van Inwagen further develops his defense of materialism by exploring the way in which his views on causation, conjoined with his views about the traditional opposition between the mental and the physical, help to provide responses to familiar problems about mental causation.

The essays on religious themes thus far discussed primarily concern what might be called “generic” or “bare” theism: the view that there exists a divine creator who is omnipotent, omniscient, and perfectly good. But no one worships *as such* the god of bare theism, so Plantinga is keen to defend specifically Christian theism. His work, furthermore, has emboldened Christian philosophers to devote time and attention to clarifying and defending distinctly Christian doctrines. In his “Advice to Christian Philosophers,” he encourages Christians to be less defensive, and to start with and reflect upon their own Christian beliefs. Subsequent decades have witnessed a flood of essays on various Christian beliefs: incarnation, resurrection, the Trinity, New Testament scholarship, the doctrines of heaven and hell, and religious pluralism. Eleonore Stump’s essay, “The Nature of the Atonement,” takes inspiration from Plantinga’s charge. Central to Christianity is the idea that God became incarnate, suffered, and died on a cross somehow to atone for human sin. In his most recent work on the problem of evil, Plantinga argues that it is

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<sup>5</sup> His most recent work on the topic: “Against Materialism,” in *Faith and Philosophy* 23 (January 2006): 3–32.

<sup>6</sup> Peter Van Inwagen, “Dualism and Materialism: Athens and Jerusalem?” *Faith and Philosophy* 12 (1995): 475–88.

plausible to think that what justifies God in permitting the evil we find in this world is precisely the tremendous value that comes of having a world in which incarnation and atonement take place, together with the necessary and sufficient conditions for bringing about such a world. Taking this idea as her point of departure, Stump proposes to address two prior questions in her essay: What exactly is atonement? and Why is it so valuable?

Plantinga's more than fifty-year career covered a wide range of important topics in metaphysics, epistemology, and the philosophy of religion. He carved out intellectual space within which Christian thinkers could operate; and, through the Society of Christian Philosophers and his work with students and colleagues at Calvin College and the University of Notre Dame, he helped to create a community of Christian scholars who were committed to understanding and developing Christian belief with the best philosophical tools of the age. He did all of this with brilliant insight, painstaking argumentation, good humor, and unfailing generosity and kindness. We offer this book to him in gratitude and respect.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> We thank Michael Bergmann for helpful comments on an earlier draft of this introduction.

# Commonsense Skeptical Theism<sup>1</sup>

Michael Bergmann

Commonsensism takes commonsense starting points seriously in responding to and rejecting radical skepticism. Skeptical theism endorses a sort of skepticism that, according to some, has radical skeptical implications. This suggests that there is a tension between commonsensism and skeptical theism that makes it difficult for a person rationally to hold both. And yet many who endorse the skeptical theist's skepticism also claim or would want to claim allegiance to commonsensism. In this chapter I'll argue that there is no tension between commonsensism and the skeptical theist's skepticism.

In section I, after briefly defining commonsensism and skeptical theism, I'll explain why there is no tension between these two positions. In section II, I'll consider the view that common sense itself tells us what skeptical theists think we have no good reason to believe—namely, that there are no God-justifying reasons for permitting certain horrific evils. I'll argue that this view is mistaken and I'll offer an explanation for why this mistake is so tempting. In the third section, I'll show how the points made in sections I and II provide material for responding to some objections to skeptical theism found in the recent literature. In the final section, I will issue a challenge to those who object to the skeptical theist's skepticism.

## I. Combining Commonsensism with the Skeptical Theist's Skepticism

It's very easy to see how commonsensism can be combined with *some* sorts of skepticism. This is because commonsensism doesn't assert that humans are omniscient. Instead, it allows, indeed insists, that there are many things that humans don't know

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<sup>1</sup> I'm very pleased to be presenting this chapter in honor of Alvin Plantinga. His philosophical writings are brilliant, field defining, and full of wit, all of which make them both hugely beneficial and a great pleasure to read. Even more impressive and meaningful to me, however, is the manner in which he has modeled in his own life, in multiple ways that I think about often, how someone with a career in philosophy can be a faithful Christian.

even if there are also many things that they do know. There's nothing remarkable about a view that says we know some things and we don't know others. This double claim is itself the epitome of common sense. So the question before us is whether the skeptical theist's skepticism is among the varieties of skepticism that are consistent with commonsensism. In answering this question, it will be helpful to start with more careful definitions of both commonsensism and the skeptical theist's skepticism.

#### A. DEFINING COMMONSENSISM AND SKEPTICAL THEISM

G. E. Moore begins his paper, "A Defence of Common Sense,"<sup>2</sup> by listing a number of things he and the rest of us know are true: that we have bodies that are extended physical objects located near the surface of the earth, that many other extended physical objects exist and (like our bodies) have existed for many years, and that we have had thoughts and feelings and dreams and imaginings of many different kinds. In short, he lists many perceptual, memory, and introspective beliefs that he and others have had and says they are *clear cases* of knowledge. Taking Moore's lead and elaborating upon it a little, I propose that we think of commonsensism as follows:

*Commonsensism*: the view that (a) it is clear that we know many of the most obvious things we take ourselves to know (this includes the truth of simple perceptual, memory, introspective, mathematical, logical, and moral beliefs) and that (b) we also know (if we consider the question) that we are not in some skeptical scenario in which we are radically deceived in these beliefs.

My elaboration adds to Moore's list of obvious things we know simple mathematical, moral, and logical beliefs (e.g.,  $2 + 2 = 4$ , it's morally wrong to torture children for amusement, and if either A or B is true and B is false, then A is true).<sup>3</sup> It also includes the claim that we know we aren't deceived in some radical skeptical scenario in believing the things listed. This latter claim shows how commonsensism differs from contextualism, contrastivism, and denials of closure, each of which tries to combine clause (a) from the definition of commonsensism with the denial of clause (b).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> G. E. Moore, "A Defence of Common Sense," in *Philosophical Papers* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1959), 32–59.

<sup>3</sup> I'm not sure these added claims are ones Moore himself would want to add to the list of obvious things we know. In particular, I'm doubtful that Moore (an ideal consequentialist) would want to say we know many obvious moral truths (since according to him these depend on total consequences and we're often, maybe always, in the dark about these). But, I want to focus on a kind of commonsensism that takes certain moral truths as obvious. My reason for wanting this focus is that one popular objection to skeptical theism claims that it conflicts with our knowledge of obvious moral truths. Thus, by thinking of commonsensism as broad enough to include obvious moral truths, I'm trying to make things more challenging for myself.

<sup>4</sup> For an explanation and defense of contextualism, see Keith DeRose, "Contextualism: An Explanation and Defense," in *The Blackwell Guide to Epistemology*, ed. John Greco and Ernest Sosa (Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell, 1999); for an explanation and defense of contrastivism, see Jonathan

(Radical skepticism differs from all these views insofar as it denies the knowledge claimed in (a) *and* the knowledge claimed in (b).)

In order to explain what skeptical theism is, it will be helpful to understand the context in which it originated. Some arguments from evil for atheism go something like this:

1. For some actual evils we know of, we can't think of any God-justifying reason for permitting them.<sup>5</sup>
2. So probably there aren't any God-justifying reasons for permitting those evils.
3. If God existed, he wouldn't permit those evils if there were no God-justifying reason for permitting them.
4. Therefore, probably God does not exist.<sup>6</sup>

The inference from 1 to 2 is a noseenum inference: it says of God-justifying reasons "we don't see 'em so they probably ain't there." The skeptical theist's response is that this particular noseenum inference isn't a good one: the fact that humans can't think of any God-justifying reason for permitting an evil doesn't make it likely that there are no such reasons; this is because, if God existed, God's mind would be far greater than our minds, so it wouldn't be surprising if God had reasons we weren't able to think of. The skepticism here has to do with our lack of certain kinds of knowledge of what God's reasoning is or would be like.

With that background in mind, we can see that skeptical theism has two components: a skeptical component and a theistic component. These components are detachable so that an agnostic or an atheist could endorse the skeptical theist's skepticism. The skeptical theist's skepticism (detached from the theism) includes as a main ingredient the endorsement of skeptical theses such as the following:

*The Skeptical Theist's Skeptical Theses*

ST1: We have no good reason for thinking that the possible goods we know of are representative of the possible goods there are.

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Schaffer, "From Contextualism to Contrastivism," *Philosophical Studies* 119 (2004); see Robert Nozick, *Philosophical Explanations* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1981) for an explanation and defense of denying closure.

<sup>5</sup> A God-justifying reason for permitting an evil E is, as you might guess, a reason for permitting E that would justify God, if God existed, in permitting E. We can describe a God-justifying reason roughly as follows: a good state of affairs G—which might just be the prevention of some bad state of affairs E\*—counts as a God-justifying reason for permitting an evil E if and only if (i) G's goodness outweighs E's badness and (ii) G couldn't be obtained without permitting E or something as bad or worse. For further refinements, see Michael Bergmann, "Skeptical Theism and the Problem of Evil," in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophical Theology*, ed. Thomas Flint and Michael Rea (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), n. 3.

<sup>6</sup> This argument is intended to capture the summary of some of his earlier arguments that Rowe gives in William Rowe, "The Evidential Argument from Evil: A Second Look," in *The Evidential Argument from Evil*, ed. Daniel Howard-Snyder (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1996), 262–63.

ST2: We have no good reason for thinking that the possible evils we know of are representative of the possible evils there are.

ST3: We have no good reason for thinking that the entailment relations we know of between possible goods and the permission of possible evils are representative of the entailment relations there are between possible goods and the permission of possible evils.

ST4: We have no good reason for thinking that the total moral value or disvalue we perceive in certain complex states of affairs accurately reflects the total moral value or disvalue they really have.<sup>7</sup>

Two brief clarificatory comments: First, as William Rowe emphasizes, possible goods are abstracta—good states of affairs that could obtain.<sup>8</sup> Thus, if we set aside concerns about God being a necessary being, if he exists at all, atheists can agree that the beatific vision is a possible good, despite the fact that they think it isn't an actual good since it entails God's existence. Likewise, possible evils are bad states of affairs that could obtain. Second, a sample of Xs can be representative of all Xs relative to one property but not another. To say a sample of Xs is representative of all Xs relative to a property F is just to say that if  $n/m$  of the Xs in the sample have property F, then approximately  $n/m$  of all Xs have F. In ST1–ST3, what we are interested in is whether our known sample of possible goods, possible evils, and entailment relations between them is representative of all possible goods, possible evils, and entailment relations there are *relative to the property of figuring in a (potentially) God-justifying reason for permitting the inscrutable evils we see around us*.<sup>9</sup>

## B. ARE THEY IN TENSION?

In light of these more careful statements of commonsensism and the skeptical theist's skepticism, we can ask ourselves again whether it is problematic to combine the knowledge claims of the former with the knowledge disavowals of the latter. It will help to focus on an imagined nontheist commonsensist named Sally who is an agnostic<sup>10</sup> and yet endorses the skeptical theist's skeptical theses, ST1–ST4. Because she's a commonsensist, Sally thinks many of the most obvious perceptual, memory, introspective, logical, mathematical, and moral beliefs she has count as knowledge. But she also thinks her knowledge has its limits and that there are many things she doesn't know. She thinks there are many facts about the physical universe of which

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<sup>7</sup> The skeptical component of skeptical theism also includes the view (which can reasonably be endorsed by both theists and nontheists) that skeptical theses like ST1–ST4 undermine the noseem inference from 1 to 2 mentioned in the previous paragraph.

<sup>8</sup> Rowe, "The Evidential Argument," 264.

<sup>9</sup> The *inscrutable* evils we see around us are those that many thoughtful theists and nontheists agree are ones for which we can't think of a God-justifying reason.

<sup>10</sup> The benefit of focusing on an agnostic is that it helps us to keep separate the reasons for and against the skeptical theist's skepticism from the reasons for and against her theism.

she is ignorant—facts about what is happening at the subatomic level or in distant galaxies or on other planets in our solar system or even across the city or behind a nearby closed door. There is much about what others are thinking or feeling that she doesn't know, much of her own past that she can't remember, and many logical, mathematical, and moral truths about which she is in the dark. None of these claims to ignorance seems the least bit in tension with her commonsensist knowledge claims.

Now, suppose Sally goes on to add that among the things she thinks she doesn't know are certain facts about the possible goods and evils there are. In particular, she has no idea how likely it is that the possible goods, evils, and entailments between them that she knows of are representative of the possible goods, evils, and entailments between them that an omniscient being would take into account when considering whether to permit evils. Likewise, for certain of the more complex possible goods and evils she knows of, she has no idea how likely it is that the total value or disvalue she perceives in them accurately reflects the total value or disvalue that an omniscient being would see in them. These claims about human ignorance also seem highly plausible. Are they in tension with Sally's commonsensist knowledge claims?

Here is a way in which they might be in tension. Perhaps Sally claims to know, of some act, that it would be morally wrong for her to perform it. Her main reason for thinking that the act would be wrong is that she can see that the immediate result of the action would be enormous harm to a child, and she has no reason for thinking any significant good will come from it. But perhaps (because of considerations like those mentioned in ST1–ST4) she also thinks that she has no idea how likely it is that the consequences of the act would, in the long run, be for the best—for all she knows it might be *highly likely* that the long-run consequences of performing the act would be much better than the long-run consequences of her refraining from it; then again, for all she knows, this might be *highly unlikely*. She really has no idea what the remote connections might be between this act and other possible goods and evils. Now we have a possible tension: as a matter of common sense, Sally thinks she knows it's wrong to perform the act because of its harmful consequences (the immediate ones she can foresee); and yet, because she accepts ST1–ST4, she also thinks she has no idea whether or not its ultimate consequences are likely to be for the best overall. Does this skepticism about ultimate consequences threaten her moral knowledge?

It needn't. Suppose Sally also reasonably holds the following view about morality:

M: Some actions are *intrinsically* wrong (i.e., wrong regardless of their consequences). But for some other actions, our judgments about their consequences matter much more, morally speaking. For these latter actions, we morally *ought* to (a) consider (for an appropriate length of time) the consequences we can reasonably expect of performing them and