



THE VALUE OF EMPATHY

Edited by

Maria Baghramian, Meliné Papazian and Rowland Stout



The Value of Empathy

The Value of Empathy explores various approaches to understanding empathy and investigates its moral and practical role.

The central role of empathy in understanding others, and the need for it in our social and inter-personal encounters, is widely acknowledged by philosophers, social scientists and psychologists alike. Discussions of empathy abound, not only in more specialised academic publications, but also in traditional and social media. Yet neither a clear understanding, nor a uniform definition of this relatively new term is available. Indeed, one difficulty in discussing empathy, in philosophy and beyond, is the profusion of definitions; the difficulty is compounded by a lack of clarity in the distinction between empathy and cognate concepts such as sympathy and compassion.

This book has two aims: Chapters 1–5 seek to address the dual concerns of the lack of clarity and profusion of interpretations by suggesting new ways of approaching the topic. The second aim of the book is to connect the more abstract discussions of empathy with its normative functions. Chapters 6–8 engage with the theoretical concerns relevant to the ethics of empathy and raise interesting points about its significance in ethical thought and action. The final four chapters focus on the practical normative significance of empathy by examining the connections between empathy, vulnerability and care in circumstances of ill health.

The chapters in this book were originally published in the *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*.

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First published 2021
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 13: 978-0-367-47818-6

Typeset in MinionPro
by Newgen Publishing UK

Publisher's Note

The publisher accepts responsibility for any inconsistencies that may have arisen during the conversion of this book from journal articles to book chapters, namely the inclusion of journal terminology.

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Citation Information

The following chapters, except Chapter 8, were originally published in the *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, volume 27, issue 2 (2019). Chapter 8 was originally published in the *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, volume 26, issue 3 (2018). When citing this material, please use the original page numbering for each article, as follows:

Chapter 1

The Relational Value of Empathy

Monika Betzler

International Journal of Philosophical Studies, volume 27, issue 2 (2019), pp. 136–161

Chapter 2

Relational Empathy

Mark Fagiano

International Journal of Philosophical Studies, volume 27, issue 2 (2019), pp. 162–179

Chapter 3

Language, Behaviour, and Empathy. G.H. Mead's and W.V.O. Quine's Naturalized Theories of Meaning

Guido Baggio

International Journal of Philosophical Studies, volume 27, issue 2 (2019), pp. 180–200

Chapter 4

No Empathy for Empathy: An Existential Reading of Husserl's Forgotten Question

Iraklis Ioannidis

International Journal of Philosophical Studies, volume 27, issue 2 (2019), pp. 201–223

Chapter 5

Finding Empathy: How Neuroscientific Measures, Evidence and Conceptualizations Interact

Riana J. Betzler

International Journal of Philosophical Studies, volume 27, issue 2 (2019), pp. 224–243

Chapter 6

The Contribution of Empathy to Ethics

Sarah Songhorian

International Journal of Philosophical Studies, volume 27, issue 2 (2019), pp. 244–264

Chapter 7

The Empathetic Soldier

Kevin Cutright

International Journal of Philosophical Studies, volume 27, issue 2 (2019), pp. 265–285

Chapter 8

Sentimentalist Practical Reason and Self-Sacrifice

Michael Slote

International Journal of Philosophical Studies, volume 26, issue 3 (2018), pp. 419–436

Chapter 9

Pathophobia, Vices, and Illness

Ian James Kidd

International Journal of Philosophical Studies, volume 27, issue 2 (2019), pp. 286–306

Chapter 10

Beyond Empathy: Vulnerability, Relationality and Dementia

Danielle Petherbridge

International Journal of Philosophical Studies, volume 27, issue 2 (2019), pp. 307–326

Chapter 11

Empathy, Respect, and Vulnerability

Elisa Magrì

International Journal of Philosophical Studies, volume 27, issue 2 (2019), pp. 327–346

Chapter 12*Empathy, Vulnerability and Anxiety*

Rowland Stout

International Journal of Philosophical Studies, volume 27, issue 2 (2019),
pp. 347–357

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Introduction: The Value of Empathy

Maria Baghramian, Meliné Papazian and Rowland Stout

This collection brings together articles on the topic of empathy first published in the *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* (volume 27, issue 2, 2019 and volume 26, issue 3, 2018). Chapters 1–7 are the winning and short-listed articles from the 2018 Robert Papazian Essay Prize in Ethics and Political Philosophy, where the focus was on the moral and social roles and significance of empathy. The overall winner of the 2018 competition was “The Relational Value of Empathy” by Monika Betzler (LMU Munich). The paper was judged to be original, insightful with good use of textual evidence from various sources. The winner of the 2018 early career Robert Papazian Essay Prize was Mark Fagiano (University of Central Florida, Orlando), with the essay “Relational Empathy”. The next five articles were short-listed for the Robert Papazian Prize and were commended for a variety of reasons. The last four articles in this book, by Ian Kidd, Danielle Petherbridge, Elisa Magri, and Rowland Stout, are the proceedings of a symposium held at the UCD Centre for Ethics in Public Life on the topic of “Empathy, Vulnerability and Illness”. Connecting the two sets of entries is “Sentimentalist Practical Reason and Self-Sacrifice” by Michael Slote (University of Miami), originally published in *IJPS* 2018, vol. 26, issue 3.

A major difficulty in discussions of empathy, in philosophy and beyond, is the profusion of definitions and a lack of clarity in our understanding of the concept, its range and applications. Every article published in this volume, in different ways, engages with this difficulty. We will introduce the articles later in this introduction but an initial brief overview of current discussions of empathy, in so far as they bear on the themes picked out by the articles in this collection, may help to set the scene.

The usage of the word ‘empathy’ may be traced to the beginning of the 20th century with the translation of the term *Einfühlung*, which had currency in aesthetics and phenomenology in the late 19th century. Current discussions of the topic are also influenced by earlier debates on the cognate notion of sympathy, discussed by David Hume (1739) and Adam Smith (1759), among

others, as well as by more recent empirical studies by psychologists and cognitive scientists.

The last decade has seen an explosion of books, articles and scholarly studies on empathy in fields as diverse as cognitive science, psychology, neuroscience, arts and aesthetics, politics, management theory, philosophy, education and the social and health sciences. Within philosophy, discussions of empathy are most common in the philosophy of mind, philosophy of cognitive sciences, phenomenology and moral philosophy. Calls for greater empathy have also become common in our social discourse and references to it abound in both the traditional and social media.

No doubt the abundance of research on empathy has enriched our understanding of the topic, but it has done little to give precision to the underlying concept. Indeed, neither a uniform definition, nor an uncontested account of the role, implications and range of applications of empathy seems to be available. The difficulty is compounded by a lack of clarity in the distinction between the concept of empathy and those of sympathy and compassion.

While the articles included in this collection were not initially written on a narrowly specified theme, there are common threads connecting them which reflect the current state of play in discussions of empathy. They address the lack of clarity in the concept of empathy, suggest new ways of approaching the topic, and connect abstract discussions of empathy with its applications to the moral domain and to the practical issue of care for vulnerable people. The collection fulfils two functions: it offers philosophical *accounts of empathy* that illuminate some of its defining characteristics, shedding light on some of its roles and applications; it also examines the moral significance of empathy by teasing out its normative features and its place in our moral life. By giving the collection the title *The Value of Empathy*, we are alluding to both of these functions simultaneously: to understand not just the value of empathy itself, but also the value of the concept of empathy.

Because empathy is taken to play a role in so many different aspects of human life, it is likely that a number of different ideas are covered by the term 'empathy'. Many see this diversity as an indication of confusion in the concept. Some argue that to overcome the confusion we should either come up with a better, more precise definition, abandon the talk of empathy altogether, or replace it with closely related terms, such as 'sympathy' or 'compassion'. Also, there are a variety of concepts in the neighbourhood of *empathy*, such as emotional sharing or emotional contagion, which are at times used interchangeably with empathy and at other times used as distinct notions. Further distinctions are made regarding types of empathy (e.g., emotional or affective vs cognitive empathy) and between contextual or functional variants of empathy (e.g., empathic concern, empathic caring, empathic perception, empathic understanding, empathic distress, empathic accuracy, among others), without

any apparent consensus about their scope, connections, or differences. What everyone seems to agree on, however, is that the discussion about empathy, while high in volume, is low on agreement.

Attempts to distil some common features of empathy to facilitate a consensus and reconcile opposing views have neither proved very informative nor very helpful. For example, Derek Matravers suggests a broad definition: “using our imagination as a tool so as to adopt a different perspective in order to grasp how things appear (or feel) from there” (2017, 1–2). But he admits that even this definition cannot resolve controversies in the discourse on empathy, since many of the descriptions in this discourse are incompatible with one another. Compare, for instance, Dan Zahavi’s (2011) direct perceptual account of empathy, where empathy is a precondition of any kind of intersubjectivity or social cognition, with Coplan’s (2011) view of it as a complex imaginative process of simulating another person’s states, or Goldie’s view that empathy is “a process by which a person centrally imagines the narrative (the thoughts, feelings and emotions) of another person” (2000, 195), or with de Vignemont and Jacob’s (2012) view which introduces the element of care to their multiple conditions of empathy.

Given the difficulties with the conceptualization of empathy, might avoiding the use of the term, a strategy suggested by Noel Carroll (2011) among others, be a reasonable option? The strategy promises to allow us to sidestep some of the more troublesome conceptual and definitional debates. However, it would also result in substituting for empathy a variety of narrower technical concepts, which, while convenient for researchers, might make a much used and presumably important notion less accessible to the wider public. Replacing ‘empathy’ with a similar concept such as sympathy does not seem to resolve the conceptualization problems either, since similar discussions and disagreements will arise for the replacement concept.

Many other concepts central to our social and psychological lives – ‘love’, ‘happiness’, ‘friendship’ come to mind – are equally messy, yet continue to be used in academic studies and in our daily lives. Despite some dissonance between the technical and daily use of such terms, we neither stop using them in everyday language nor do we stop investigating the concepts in theoretical or empirical research. Admittedly there are disanalogies between ‘empathy’ and ‘love’ and ‘friendship’. The term ‘empathy’ is rather new in English, and has only approximate translations in different languages, while those other terms have close equivalents.¹ But, considering the widespread common use of ‘empathy’ and the extensive theoretical and empirical research on the topic, we shouldn’t give up the term without a fight.

An empirical approach to our understanding of empathy might be a unifying strategy. There has been a lot of empirical research on its role in psychotherapy and social behaviour. Various tools, including scales to measure empathy, its

individual and cultural variations, and its role in social relations have been widely used by psychologists. Since the 1990s, an important contribution to the empirical research on empathy has come from the neurosciences. The discovery of mirror neurons – a class of neurons first identified in the brains of macaque monkeys, which are activated not only when an action is performed but also when that action is observed – has presented a way of explaining the physical source of empathy (Iacoboni, 2009). Empirical studies have been aided by technological advances in areas of research such as the neuropsychological basis of empathy (Preston et al 2007; Decety, 2011), differences in empathy among children and adults (Eisenberg and Fabes 1990) and in relation to both personality disorders and autism spectrum disorder (Nichols 2004; Baron-Cohen, 2009; Marsh, 2014), as well as the growing area of social neuroscience (Decety and Lamm, 2006; Singer and Lamm, 2009). This research, however, has not been free of controversy. Critics, such as Lamm et al (2017), question the results of empirical studies that focus on empathic abilities or lack of empathy in people with ASD or those with psychopathic tendencies. They argue that such studies overlook the fact that empathy is a result of a complex process involving multiple intermediate steps. In this collection, Riana Betzler (Chapter 5) addresses some of the complexities and the advantages of empirical studies of empathy.

Arguing about the correct definition of empathy risks descending into a merely terminological dispute. But not defining the term and assuming a common understanding can lead to what Dan Zahavi (2014) portrays as different discussions passing by one another, because they are dealing with different phenomena. A productive approach in research on empathy would be to present a working definition of the term, based on the parameters of a specific topic under investigation, and occasionally supplementing this with further theoretical and empirical studies or accounts of empathy. In recent years, this approach is increasingly becoming common practice, especially in empirical research on empathy.

Some general points of agreement about key features of empathy are also beginning to emerge. Empathy does not happen in a void but in encounters with another, even if those encounters are not face to face or occur only in imagination. Empathy is elicited by another person's real or imagined experience, behaviour and psychological states rather than one's own. In Hoffman's (2000, 2001) words, empathic emotions are more appropriate to another person's situation and states than those of the person experiencing them. Empathy is *about* that other, and goes back to the *other*, or what sometimes is called, rather inelegantly, the 'target of empathy'. But it seems that even this characteristic of empathy is not accepted by all. There are views that count phenomena such as emotional contagion, personal distress, or sharing thoughts and emotions as empathy (Eisenberg and Fabes, 1990; Darwall, 1998; Preston

and de Waal, 2002; de Waal, 2009). If we accept that the initiator of empathy is another's situation and experience and not one's own and that empathy is directed towards the other and is about the other, and that the empathizer is more or less aware of the distinction between the situation of oneself and the other person, none of these cases would be considered empathic. Researchers on the topic, including most contributors to this collection, agree that empathy is prompted from and directed towards the other. But even if this is a common feature of empathy, it is not sufficient for defining empathy. Moreover, accepting that empathic experience is about another person's emotional experience does not in itself rule out the possibility of an empathizer having abusive, manipulative, or simply unfavourable motives towards the other. For instance, the accounts that see empathy as a precondition of all other kinds of social understanding do not discount the possibility of this sort of abusive empathy. On the other hand, those who are inclined to see empathy as a positive prosocial attitude and consider self-interest or other manipulative and negative motives as the antithesis of empathy would reject it. Thus, the debate continues.

Many of the entries in this collection, including the two winning essays, address either directly or indirectly the question of how to define and understand empathy. Monika Betzler (Chapter 1) argues that adopting a relational understanding of empathy could overcome many of the problems encountered in empathy-related discussions, Mark Fagiano (Chapter 2) proposes a pluralist view of empathy characterized as a relation "between things, between activities, or between a thing and activity". Some suggest more specific definitions; Kevin Cutright (Chapter 7) provides a working definition of empathy as "grasping the felt characteristic of another person's experience" including their feelings, desires, intentions, commitment and worries. Rowland Stout (Chapter 12) describes empathy as being open to and adopting the emotional perspective of another person.

One of the most crucial and yet controversial roles assigned to empathy is in the moral domain. The question, put simply, is what, if anything, is the connection between empathy and morality? The answers, not surprisingly in the light of what has been discussed, are varied and at times conflicting.

Some deny that empathy is either a causal or a constitutive element of moral judgements and actions at all. They view empathy as a capacity which may have positive, negative, or neutral outcomes depending on the circumstances (Decety and Lamm, 2006, 2009). Zahavi (2014) sees empathy as a morally neutral precondition for any intersubjective understanding. Prinz (2011a, 2011b) argues that empathy is not necessary for moral judgement, moral motivation, moral development, or improving moral sensibility. And empathy is sometimes criticized for being biased and partial towards those close to us, not motivating us to help those in need but instead being prone to favouring

the members of our in-group. From this perspective, empathy is regarded as potentially immoral, while sympathy and rational compassion are the morally superior capacities (Bloom, 2016).

On the other hand, empathy is viewed by many as a moral virtue, the very basis of our moral judgement and motivation. Empathy is described as “the spark of human concern for others” (Hoffman, 2000, 3) with a crucial role in moral development, prosocial and altruistic behaviour (Eisenberg, 2005, Eisenberg et al., 2010; Batson, 2011). Michael Slote, in particular (2010, 2017 and in this volume), takes empathy to be not only a primary moral motivator, a mechanism for care, benevolence and compassion, but also epistemically central in our moral life. He argues that cognitive empathy, which typically involves understanding the thoughts, emotions, intentions, beliefs or desires of others, enables us to recognize those in need of help. If this is right then cognitive empathy provides moral insight and moral intuition, and those who have rational capacities but lack empathic skills may have difficulties in making appropriate moral choices and judgements. With this in view, there are ongoing debates as to whether the autism spectrum involves a deficiency in some aspect of empathy and to what extent this is reflected in one’s capacity to make moral judgements. Also, starting from the assumption that psychopathic personality disorder involves immoral behaviour and attitudes, it is important to ask whether this is associated with a reduced ability to empathize with people.

Even if there is a connection between a lack of empathy and a diminished capacity to make moral judgements, the question remains as to whether this is due to an inability to take another’s perspective, an inability to feel certain things, or just an inability to work out what other people are feeling.²

Contributors to this collection agree that empathy, at the very least, plays an indirect role in our moral life. According to Monika Betzler (Chapter 1), giving and receiving empathy can lead to developing meaningful relationships and cultivating trust, attachment, or recognition. Elisa Magri (Chapter 11) suggests that empathy may enable moral behaviour and Rowland Stout (Chapter 12) argues that it may be necessary for moral development. For Sarah Songhorian (Chapter 6), empathy, although not necessary for morality, enables the development of sympathy, which in turn enables moral behaviour. For Kevin Cutright (Chapter 7), empathy improves moral judgements among soldiers at war. Some of the more concrete features of an empathetic engagement are investigated in Chapters 9 and 10 where Ian Kidd and Danielle Petherbridge explore the connections between empathy and vulnerability in experiences of illness and dementia.

In the remainder of this introduction we briefly introduce each article.

In “The Relational Value of Empathy” (Chapter 1), Monika Betzler argues that empathy is not best understood as something happening in an individual’s mind. Rather, both the nature of empathy and its value depend

on the relationship between the empathizer and the person being empathized with. Empathy is directed not only towards another person but also towards the relation with that person. This relational property is valuable for its own sake, both intrinsically and extrinsically, because of the kind of meaningful relationships it creates and the positive experiences, such as self-esteem, trust and self-trust, attachment, affection and recognition, it fosters. Understanding why someone feels a certain way is an important feature of moral judgement and is made possible through the relational value of empathy. It explains why we are at times morally required to empathize and at other times to abstain from it; we have only 'defeasible' moral reasons to empathize.

In "Relational Empathy", Mark Fagiano (Chapter 2), instead of looking for a single answer to the question of what is the nature of empathy, argues for a pluralistic understanding of it. Empathy, he argues, is a social construct, so there is no need for a full consensus on its conceptualization. Each approach serves a different purpose and the value of each study depends not so much on being right but on what it achieves, how it explains the experience and how it tries to change the quality of our experiences. Fagiano characterizes empathy not as a thing or an activity, but as a set of three conceptually distinct, though experientially overlapping, relations: the relations of *feeling into*, *feeling with*, and *feeling for*. He traces all three uses of empathy, and the closely related concept of sympathy, in texts dating from the late 18th century to the present and claims that his version of 'relational empathy' not only avoids but also potentially resolves the conflicting conceptualizations of the term. Finally, using this broad pluralistic and pragmatic approach, Fagiano proposes a conceptual framework which can be applied to problems in the US healthcare system.

"Language, Behavior, and Empathy. G.H. Mead's and W.V.O. Quine's Naturalized Theories of Meaning" by Guido Baggio (Chapter 3) provides a scholarly account of empathy in the context of the behavioural/behaviouristic theories of meaning and language of Mead and Quine. The article examines the similarities and differences between Mead's notion of sympathy and Quine's notion of empathy, and their roles in interpreting and using language. Baggio finds parallels between Mead's less ambiguous notion of sympathy as a natural capacity to depict others' beliefs, attitudes and intentions, and recent neuroscientific and neurophenomenological research on empathy, which similarly sees empathy in terms of pre-reflexive mechanisms that ascribe meaning to facial expressions and bodily attitudes. According to Baggio, for both Quine and Mead empathic identification is at the core of social interaction and the emergence of the linguistic from pre-linguistic communication. The article concludes with a description of the various stages of the formation of the mind of a child in terms of an interaction between neurological processes and interpersonal relations based on notions of 'gesture' and 'behavior'.

Iraklis Ioannidis in “No Empathy for Empathy: An Existential Reading of Husserl’s Forgotten Question” (Chapter 4) challenges the idea that empathy should be characterized in terms of knowing another person’s feelings. In particular, the working of biological or neurological mechanisms such as mirroring could not provide such knowledge. Empathy, understood as knowing what the other feels, is impossible, because we cannot appropriate someone else’s experience and deliver it as our own. At best, we can only think or imagine that we know what another person thinks or feels. To substantiate his claim, Ioannidis looks back at Husserl’s use of the term ‘empathy’ in some of his key texts. He maintains that, contrary to mainstream interpretations, for Husserl, any understanding of others through empathy is epistemically only partial. To understand how knowing another person is possible, Ioannidis argues, we need to look at the social and communal dimensions of empathy where knowing another person’s feelings and intentions involves creating a community with them. He concludes that to know another is to co-create with them, to project ourselves in ‘reciprocal creation’, or in co-constitution, which would allow us to create what Ioannidis calls a ‘sympathy of feelings’ or the ‘blending or attunement with the other’.

In “Finding Empathy: How Neuroscientific Measures, Evidence, and Conceptualizations Interact” (Chapter 5), Riana Betzler examines some remedies for the conceptual confusion in discussions of empathy in both philosophy and psychology, and challenges the idea that we can ‘find empathy’, i.e., achieve conceptual clarity and better understanding of the processes underlying it, by doing more neuroscientific research. She attempts to unpack the relationship between conceptual diversity and neuroscientific evidence by looking at how social neuroscientists use the concept of empathy in the development of their measures at the outset of their studies and in the interpretations of their data. She argues that within the same research community, researchers can communicate better despite the absence of consensus on definitions, but that conceptual diversity and disagreements create difficulties when it comes to interdisciplinary and applied research on empathy. These obstacles, however, are not insurmountable. Betzler argues that researchers need to pay attention to the definitions of empathy employed in their area of investigation as well as to the definitions used by investigators in other research groups that they refer to. This can be done by examining how the measures are conceptualized, developed and used in those other research areas. She suggests this model can be used to detect areas of convergence, as well as divergences, within communities of researchers. She concludes that while we cannot ‘find’ empathy through neuroscience, we can learn about *empathic* processes. Using established measures, she concludes, leads to continuity and stability in research, and progress comes from the expansion of these measures along with the increased flexibility of the concepts.

In “The Contribution of Empathy to Ethics” (Chapter 6), Sarah Songhorian investigates the extent to which moral behaviour should be understood in terms of empathy. She resists any attempt to reduce the notion of morality to that of empathic response, pointing out that empathy involves biases and other ethical limitations; empathy does not always lead to helping others or caring for them. She takes emotional attunement to be the minimal and non-reducible feature of the ordinary ways we talk about empathy, and argues that this minimal notion can explain behaviours such as partiality, sadism and psychopathy. This minimal notion is related to cognitive empathy and perspective-taking, which have a central role in understanding others’ behaviour and developing moral capacities, but neither are strictly necessary for empathy. On the other hand, attuning with another’s emotional states may have an enabling role in developing sympathy. While empathy is neither normative nor imaginative, according to Songhorian, sympathy is both. She concludes that while empathy is neither necessary nor sufficient for moral behaviour, it does have an affective route to morality through its role in developing a sympathetic engagement by the impartial spectator.

“The Empathetic Soldier” (Chapter 7) by Kevin Cutright deals with the important but neglected topic of the role of empathy in relation to the conduct of war. Cutright aims to show the relevance of empathy and its various benefits to the tactical and ethical demands of war. To do so, he starts with a survey of contemporary theories of empathy: theory-theory, simulation theory, direct perception, narrative theory and theories of low-level and high-level empathy. He thinks that empathy offers an *experiential* understanding of others, in the sense of enabling one to grasp the ‘felt characteristic’ of others’ experiences, including their emotions, beliefs, perspectives, intentions, worries, or commitments. Having empathy does not mean agreeing with others’ perspectives or adopting them as our own; *understanding* another’s experience is distinct from *identifying* with it. Empathy is not only a sort of understanding of others from ‘inside’, but it also has corresponding moral benefits in that it expresses recognition and respect, and reinforces the humanity of others. Applying his views to the army, Cutright concludes that empathy bolsters the attitudes and moral judgements of soldiers, improving their understanding of human actors in the war environment.

Michael Slote, in “Sentimentalist Practical Reason and Self-Sacrifice” (Chapter 8), seeks to show that the moral objectivity defended in his 2010 book, *Moral Sentimentalism*, allows for full moral normativity along sentimentalist lines. He defends what he calls ‘sentimentalism’ about practical reasons, according to which all reasons for action, whether prudential or moral, are grounded in emotional states. The role of empathy in this model is not only as a mechanism for the transmission of emotions but also as a mechanism for the transmission of reasons for action. If someone, through their

well-grounded fear, has a reason to escape a burning building and someone else empathizes with this fear, the second person now has a reason to help the person escape the burning building. It is a reason grounded in their own emotional state, derived through empathy from the frightened person's emotional state. In this way, empathy is taken to be the basis of altruistic behaviour. Slote claims that this model explains why we have stronger reason to help others in need who are closer to us in one way or another than we have to help very distant people in need. We empathize and sympathize more with family members and have more reasons to react to their needs compared to strangers with similar problems. He adds that psychopaths lack the moral reasons to help others because they lack associative empathy. These are things that Slote argues cannot be explained in rationalist/cognitivist approaches, such as Nagel's in *The Possibility of Altruism* (1970).

In "Pathophobia, Vices, and Illness" (Chapter 9), Ian Kidd introduces the concept of 'pathophobia' as a morally objectionable attitude towards somatically ill people. Kidd sees 'vice ethics' (by analogy and contrast with virtue ethics) as the way to frame pathophobia and suggests that instead of imposing an artificial moral framework, it is vital for philosophical analysis to be based on narrative descriptions of the lived experiences of somatically ill people. Using testimonies, narratives and the literature related to ill people's experiences, he describes five clusters of pathophobia that are shaped by the character of the illness itself and social factors such as identity, gender, race, and class, as well as cultural norms, behaviours and stereotypes. These are aversion to and avoidance of illness, trivialization of illness through banality, callousness towards ill people, insensitivity to the ill person's experience and untruthfulness about illness. This taxonomy, he contends, may guide our practices of moral appraisals based on testimonies of ill people's experience of how they are treated. He argues that the failure to empathize with people who are ill is bound up with these pathophobic vices. Certain types of illnesses or identities elicit more empathy, credibility, sympathy and trust than others, while certain vices, such as individual and structural callousness in healthcare, are opposed to compassion and kindness and thereby lead to increased failure of empathy, compassion and care.

In "Beyond Empathy: Vulnerability, Relationality and Dementia", Danielle Petherbridge (Chapter 10) challenges the traditional view of dementia according to which people with dementia have lost their personhood and the capacity for subjective experience and meaningful interactions. She argues against the conventional view that personhood is associated with a conception of autonomy in which persons must be seen as rational and independent decision makers. She defends instead a relational view, where personhood and selfhood are based on intersubjectivity and intercorporeality, i.e., the dynamic interconnection between embodied creatures to one another, which

begins in infancy. Petherbridge argues that this view of vulnerability extends 'beyond or behind' empathy, providing a primary form of openness towards others upon which empathic responses are built. In this sense, vulnerability as openness to the other is a precondition of empathy, but not sufficient for it. In the case of dementia, mutual empathy is not possible due to the asymmetrical nature of the interaction. Yet mutual vulnerability is possible, creating reciprocal openness, and forming the basis of a relationship that involves empathic responsiveness and supports full recognition of the other as a person and the locus of respect.

Elisa Magri starts her treatment in "Empathy, Respect, and Vulnerability" (Chapter 11) with a consideration of the relationship between empathy and moral motivation. She agrees with Heather Battaly's (2011) view that empathy is not itself a moral virtue, but rather should be seen as a capacity that is fundamental for moral behaviour. But while Battaly argues that empathy must be driven by *care* to have this role in moral motivation, Magri argues that it is respect and not care that is the main moral feeling that is distinctive of empathy. Empathy can exist without care but not without respect. The feeling of respect for another person's experience in the situation they face grants what Magri calls 'epistemic dignity', which amounts to the recognition of the significance of their subjective experience. This involves recognizing an individual's affective experiences as worthy of attention and discernment, even when one disagrees with them. For Magri, empathy is a second-person relation that opens up the realm of interpersonal relatedness, whether one intends to act for another's good or not. It attends to another person's specific horizon, informed by respect towards their autonomy. She concludes that even when someone's personal agency seems inhibited, as in the case of having OCD and being driven to repetitive behaviour in response to a lack of trust in their world, empathy, as understood in this way as driven by respect, is still possible as a way of vindicating the autonomy of their subjective experience.

Rowland Stout in "Empathy, Vulnerability and Anxiety" (Chapter 12) holds that empathy is openness towards the emotional perspective of another person, an openness to their *way* of seeing, thinking and feeling about things. He argues that empathizing is not about *what* others feel but about *how* things are for them in that situation; in empathy, one looks outwards to another person's emotional world and not into their mind. Stout calls this phenomenon *adopting* someone's perspective, but distinguishes this from accepting or sharing that perspective, which Stout takes to be characteristic of what he terms sympathy. In empathy, someone else's perspective is adopted for the sake of the encounter only. This means that while empathizing one holds two emotional perspectives in mind simultaneously, one's own as well as the adopted perspective in a kind of dialogue with

each other. Being *open* towards another's perspective is being vulnerable to it, and this is why adopting another's emotional perspective may be difficult, according to Stout – posing a challenge to one's own perspective and identity. For example, if one is insecure about one's own identity, empathizing may become threatening.

The articles published in this volume, in different ways, engage with problems of defining and understanding empathy. They also raise new questions about the range of its roles and applications, and in the process engage directly with the ethical concerns related to empathy and raise interesting points about its moral dimension. We therefore hope that this collection will go some way towards addressing these widely recognized concerns.

Maria Baghrmian and Rowland Stout's work on this volume was supported by funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement **No 870883**.

The symposium on "Empathy, Vulnerability and Illness" was jointly organized by University College Dublin and the University of Nottingham and was sponsored by Universitas 21 and UCD Centre for Ethics in Public Life.

Notes

1. In recent years, the term 'empathy' itself, rather than its translations, is increasingly being used in different languages.
2. For further discussions regarding the causal and constitutive roles of empathy in moral judgments, if any, see Kauppinen (2017) and Maibom (2014, 2017).

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The Relational Value of Empathy

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ABSTRACT

Philosophers and scholars from other disciplines have long discussed the role of empathy in our moral lives. The distinct relational value of empathy, however, has been largely overlooked. This article aims to specify empathy's distinct relational value: Empathy is both intrinsically and extrinsically valuable in virtue of the pleasant experiences we share with others, the harmony and meaning that empathy provides, the recognition, self-esteem, and self-trust it enhances, as well as trust in others, attachment, and affection it fosters. Once we better understand in what ways empathy is a uniquely relational phenomenon, we can unveil its relevance to morality, which avoids the strictures of both partiality and impartiality. On the one hand, it is the relational value of empathy that grounds defeasible reasons to empathize insofar as empathy is morally called for by a particular relationship (or if we have defeasible reasons to establish a relationship by empathy). On the other hand, it is precisely empathy's relational value that allows us to show that it can be kept within bounds. To realize empathy's relational value, we are not constantly required to empathize. Instead, once we properly appreciate empathy's distinct relational value, we can show that this leaves us room to respond to impartialist concerns.

1. Introduction

Philosophers and scholars of other disciplines have long discussed the role of empathy in our moral lives. Upon first inspection, one may think that those who are able to empathize with others care more about their well-being, are more attentive to their needs, and have more respect for their autonomy. As a result, they seem more likely either to do more for others than they otherwise would (Sober and Wilson 1998, 236f.), or to behave morally by being empathic (Slote 2007). One may therefore conclude that there exists either a causal or a conceptual link between empathy and morality.

After careful consideration, however, the link between empathy and morality turns out to be more complicated. There are many cases in which empathy does not lead to moral motivation. Taking delight in the