Relational Moral Address -- Prof Fricker and Professor McGeer
Wednesdays 9.00-11.50; 201 Marx Hall

These classes are student-oriented seminar discussions where everyone participates in close
discussion of the two asterisked readings (these are the ‘required’ readings). Please read at least
these required readings carefully ahead of time, taking your own notes, and bring them to class
with you so we can all refer to the text if we need to. **Come ready to take an active part in
constructive critical discussion.**

Part of our aim will be to provide an opportunity for students to cultivate certain key professional
skills: **participation in constructive collective discussion**, and **giving presentations with a
handout** (or PowerPoint, but we have a preference for always having a brief handout too). At the
first meeting, we will invite students to sign up to do at least one **10-minute presentation** on a
reading of their choice. The purpose of the presentation is to provide a springboard for collective
discussion by giving a **brief summary of key points, and to raise a question, a point of
confusion, or objection in order to open up the discussion.** It’s also fun and great practice.

**Overview:**
‘Moral address’ is a phrase used to signify our moral responses to wrongdoing. We will explore
explicitly second-personal conceptions of moral address, and also the ways in which our second-
personal responses are relational, socially embedded and scaffolded. We will start, however, with
the prior question of the relationality that is already involved in the business of determining
one’s own actions, with readings about autonomy and specifically the feminist re-envisioning of
autonomy as essentially relational and socially embedded. These theorists saw that the capacity
for autonomy was socially sustained in relation to others and could be eroded if those relations
failed. Similarly, the second-personal responses of moral address might be viewed as essentially
relational, and therefore similarly socially sustained and trained. We will explore various
‘reactive attitudes and feelings’ to invoke P. F. Strawson’s conception developed in ‘Freedom
and Resentment’ **(NOTE: we would strongly recommend this as a background reading to the
course as a whole, though it is not a set reading below)**. These reactive attitudes form the basis
of how we respond to wrongdoing and engage in the to and fro of moral address. We will also
examine the idea of moral obligation from a relational point of view (for instance, what it is to
have an obligation to someone else), and how proleptic mechanisms (i.e. taking up a ‘hopeful’
stance towards someone else’s capacity to reason and behave better) can both be an essential part
of our relations of moral address, and yet also sometimes tip over into corrupting them so that
they deteriorate into forms of moral control.

All readings are available on dropbox:
https://www.dropbox.com/sh/n68a7x00w51wasq/AAB2QRBJEhop7V_tbWzeaMca?dl=0
Or on the canvas course website: https://princeton.instructure.com/courses/4647
Seminar Schedule

1. **Relational autonomy – Sept. 1st**


2. **Blame – Sept. 8th**


   Miranda Fricker (2014) ‘What’s the Point of Blame? A Paradigm Based Explanation’, *Noûs* 50 (1) 165-183


3. **Constraints on Moral Address – Sept. 15th**


Linda Radzik (2011) ‘On minding your own business: Differentiating accountability relations within the moral community’ *Social Theory and Moral Practice* 37(4):574-98

4. **Relational/Directed Obligations – Sept. 22nd**


5. **Shame and Shamelessness – Sept. 29th**


Bernard Williams (1993) ‘Shame and Autonomy’, ch. 4 in *Shame and Necessity*

6. **Remorse and Regret – Oct. 6th** (NB three asterisked readings this week; the third is v short)


* and
7. **Apology – Oct. 13th**


*Jeffrey Helmreich 2015 ‘The Apologetic Stance’ Philosophy and Public Affairs 43(2): 75-108*


[No class Oct 20]

8. **Trust – Oct. 27th**


*Stephen Darwall (2017) ‘Trust as a Second-Personal Attitude of the Heart’ in Paul Faulkner & Thomas Simpson eds. The Philosophy of Trust (OUP)*

Margaret Urban Walker (2006) ‘Damages to Trust’ ch. 3 in Moral Repair: Reconstructing Moral Relations after Wrongdoing

*Benjamin McMyler (2017) ‘Deciding to Trust’ essay 10 in The Philosophy of Trust, eds. Paul Faulkner and Thomas Simpson*

9. **Hope – Nov. 3rd**


10. **Forgiveness – Nov. 10th**


11. **Proleptic Relational Response—to self and other – Nov. 17th**

[For her expanded view, see her 2019 book *Aspiration: The Agency of Becoming* (OUP)]


