

From the Editors

Like much of the rest of the world, *De Ethica* is making a new start this year. After a few, but long, years of hoping for normality to return, we are re-launching the journal. However, the focus remains the same. *De Ethica* is a journal devoted to publishing articles in philosophical, theological, and applied ethics.

It is commonplace to refer Socrates saying, in *The Republic*, that it is no small question we are investigating, but how to live (352b), however for *De Ethica* it is also topical. The general question of how to live is a hard question that ethicists have been working on for millennia without reaching agreement on the answer. There are, of course, giants in the history of ethics, but no fully agenda-setting giants like in, say, physics or biology. Approaches to ethics are plural, and it would be counter-productive to settle on one such approach a priori. This is why *De Ethica* has taken a pluralist approach to the articles we publish. We look forward to publishing articles from philosophy and theology, continental and analytical philosophy, as well as from east, west, north, and south.

We also look forward to publishing articles that are clear in exposition. The distinction between different traditions in ethics is not helpfully understood as delineating a difference between clarity and obscurity, but as concerning different ideas about how to approach the problem of how to live. *De Ethica* will emphasize clarity in argumentation and exposition and welcome articles from all philosophical and theological traditions.

The present issue contains articles that deal with the moral status of the fetus, the status of self-ownership and its relationship to freedom, the foundation of ethics, and the relationship between ethics and policy.

William Simkulet investigates the moral status of the fetus by looking closer at the technology of ectogenesis. This is a technology that allows the fetus to survive outside of the womb of the mother. It is also a technology that raises issues regarding the implications of Judith Jarvis Thomson's violinist argument; the gestational mother has a right to disconnect herself from the fetus, but ectogenesis could mean that the child could live on after abortion. Simkulet takes issue with an argument proposed by Joona Räsänen to the effect that parents have a right to secure the death of a fetus. He argues that this position ignores the moral status of the fetus. If the fetus has moral status, then even if there is a right to abortion, parents will not have a right to secure the death of the fetus. However, Simukulet argues, if the fetus lacks moral status, then the right to secure its death may be philosophically uninteresting.

With Jesper Ahlin Marceta, we move from moral status to self-ownership. In his article, Ahlin Marceta takes issue with a common way of arguing for libertarianism in political philosophy. This is the argument that self-ownership can ground liberty claims. However, Ahlin Marceta claims that self-ownership is insufficient to protect freedom, since people can use their self-ownership to interfere with others' actions and subject them to arbitrary dominance. This seems to leave libertarians with two options. Either they should offer an independent defense of freedom, outside of the argument from self-ownership, or they need to bite a bullet and agree that they value freedom less than self-ownership. If neither of these positions are palatable, Ahlin Marceta directs this kind of libertarian to re-evaluate the moral basis of his or her political views.

One of the libertarians that Ahlin Marceta is arguing against is, of course, Robert Nozick. His approach to ethical theory was among other things an attempt to spell out the political implications of Kantianism. In Samuel Kahn's article, we turn to the core of Kant's theory. Kahn's goal is to show that the universalization formulations of the Categorical Imperative are unable to ground obligations. He makes this strong claim by examining five different approaches to deriving obligations from the universalization. He argues that each fail due to failures regarding understandings of concepts of obligations and maxims, problems regarding action descriptions, or misunderstanding of the universalization formulations.

From these negative results, we move to the sphere of policy where action must be taken regardless of philosophical results. Wibren van der Burg investigates how researchers can go from ethical normative judgments to recommendations for legal reform. He outlines the issues to be address in going from ethics and law and clarify three stages in this process: the translation of ethical claims into judicial terms, the transformation of ethical analysis to make it directly relevant to the law, and the incorporation of such analyses and claims into policy. This work implies the need to address empirical and legal issues in addition to only the ethical question. Finally van der Burg argues that we should pay more attention to pluralism and variation.

We hope that we have provided the reader with an issue that offers just that: pluralism and variation.

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