An Order-Based Theory of Morality

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Part I: PRELIMINARIES

1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Objectives

The principal claim made in this thesis is that the existence and practice of morality can be explained in terms of a kind of order. Morality, in David Wong’s view, ‘serves two universal human needs. It regulates conflicts of interest between people, and it regulates conflicts of interests within the individual born of different desires and drives that cannot all be satisfied at the same time.’

Some significant aspects of morality are evident in what Wong says. Morality has application to both interpersonal and intrapersonal conflicts of interest and desires, and it has application to them by means of regulation. Regulation is concerned with rule-setting and rule-observance; the rules with which morality is concerned are referred to as ‘norms’. Norms are unwritten rules that guide us with regard to what ought to be done in certain circumstances. What may be missing from Wong’s definition is a basis for the regulations, or norms. Why is it important that conflicts be settled? Why do we need to settle them? To what end are attempts made to settle them? It would seem that conflict-settlement is presumed to be good, and that settling them gives rise to some kind of good. To explain what good consists in is a major focus of moral theory.

Another feature of Wong’s definition that I want to highlight is his mention of needs. I will be arguing that interests and desires can be traced to basic human needs (such as the need for food and the need for love); and, just as importantly, that human beings have a need for morality itself. Human behaviour, including morally relevant behaviour, is generally aimed at the satisfaction of needs—by ‘morally relevant’ I mean behaviour that is susceptible to judgement in terms of good and right or bad and wrong. I will be trying to demonstrate that need-satisfaction stems from a fundamental need for order. How might the term ‘order’ be understood? According to John Finnis, order consists in ‘a set of unifying

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Despite its brevity, the definition captures some important aspects of the notion: especially its relational character, whereby parts of various kinds are somehow brought together to form a unified whole. Morality will be held to derive from our need for order, via behaviour that is directed towards need-satisfaction. I have called the proposed theory the ‘order-based theory of morality’.

The notion of order has been accorded great importance by some thinkers, for example Jean-Jacques Rousseau and David Hume. In Rousseau’s words, ‘the love of order which produces order is called goodness, and the love of order which preserves order is called justice.’ Hume not dissimilarly: ‘the same love of order and uniformity, which arranges the books in a library, and the chairs in a parlour, contribute to the formation of society, and to the well-being of mankind …’ Notwithstanding its importance to eminent theorists such as these, the relation between morality and order, as far as I am aware, has never been subjected to extensive treatment. I believe that a gap in our knowledge has been left by the inattention, and that the gap is worth trying to fill.

The idea that the concepts of morality and order might be deeply related grew from the juxtaposition of two quite diverse ideas. The first is Erwin Schrödinger’s proposition that life (including human life) depends on disorder-avoidance; non-life, by contrast, has no need of order. The second idea is that morality is essential to human life. Both ideas will be explicited in due course. Schrödinger’s thesis is concerned with the physical aspect of life, but morality clearly extends beyond the physical. That being so, if a connection between order and morality were to be made, the scope of order would have to be expanded: either that or different kinds of order would have to be brought into play. I reached the conclusion that two other kinds of order were capable of completing the picture: social order and what I describe as ‘eudaimonic order’, the latter consisting of a kind of psychological

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4 David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature* (London: Penguin Books, 1984 [first published 1739 and 1740]), 3.1.3. Rousseau’s and Hume’s ideas are in fact so similar that one might wonder whether they grew out of the time of Rousseau’s and Hume’s brief friendship. But that occurred in 1766, long after the words first appeared in print.
and spiritual order. The three kinds of order together constitute what I refer to as ‘homosapient order’, which I think can be shown to be morally relevant. Homosapient order is a kind of order that is exclusive to our species, since, as the term implies, it requires a particular level of sapience, or cognitive ability—a level not yet attained, as far as we know, by other species or organisms. Social order and eudaimonic order stand in an analogical relation to physical order, but I will also argue that a high degree of interdependency exists between them—so much so, that their amalgam, homosapient order, may reasonably be understood to be an operative reality.

My project is largely metaethical in nature. One of its aims is to explain how we came to be the moral beings that we are. A moral being is someone who understands what it means to be moral. What it means to be moral consists in having beliefs about what is morally good and right or bad and wrong. Ethics, as distinct from metaethics, is concerned with describing what moral good, right, bad and wrong all consist in. Derek Parfit has expressed the hope that metaethics ‘will imply conclusions in Ethics.’ Since any metaethical inquiry conducted by a human being is likely to entail some kind of understanding of what it means to be moral, it seems to me that the implications referred to by Parfit are nigh on being inevitable. In any case, my thesis certainly addresses ethical questions, i.e. questions of what is regarded as good, bad, right and wrong, and why they should be so regarded. My principal metaethical claim is that that we are moral beings because of our need for homosapient order. I also argue that the need is real, and that it is therefore something that is objectively true about us. The need gives rise to morally relevant behaviour when attempts to satisfy our need impacts on the needs of others. This leads to my principal ethical claim: that morally good or

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5 Derek Parfit, *Reasons and Persons* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987 [first published 1984]), p. 447). The distinction between ethics and metaethics is described by Parfit as follows: ‘Ethics asks which outcomes would be good or bad, and which acts would be right or wrong. Meta-Ethics asks what is the meaning of moral language, or the nature of moral reasoning. It also asks whether Ethics can be objective—whether it can make claims that are true’ (Parfit, p. 447).

6 There would be no inevitability about it if the inquiries were conducted by amoral beings, or beings whose moral beliefs were totally different from those of human beings; aliens from other worlds and computers possessed of artificial intelligence could ‘see’ things quite differently from us.
right behaviour is explainable in terms of its effect on the homosapient order of those involved.⁷

I believe the order-based theory to be novel, although many of the ideas from which it has been assembled are not: a lot of them come from antiquity, while others are quite recent. Various sources of Western philosophy both ancient and modern will be drawn upon in constructing the theory; support for it will also be sought from the physical and human sciences, and from literary fiction. Science and philosophy will be held to be indissolubly linked: science as a means of explaining what is, philosophy as a means of understanding what ought to be done.⁸ The link has been well understood by philosophers both ancient and modern; for example Pythagoras in the distant past, Immanuel Kant in the eighteenth century, and present day thinkers such as William Casebeer and Philip Kitcher.

Casebeer makes use of several sciences in his investigation of ‘natural ethical facts’ (the title of his book), including evolutionary biology and cognitive science. He writes, ‘[a]s we cast about for a post-Enlightenment normative anchor … it is imperative that we demonstrate the possibility of intelligent, useful interactions

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⁷ Dupré writes, ‘[i]t will not be an easy task to provide a convincing argument that that behaviour conducive to this interest should be explained not merely as a clearly sensible way to act, but as a kind of action driven by a specifically designed part of the mind’ (John Dupré, Darwin’s Legacy: What Evolution Means Today (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p.89). ‘This interest’ refers to the detection of violations of social rules, but the comment could be understood to apply to ethical interests in general. The criticism would encompass the kind of explanation I am looking for, with ‘homosapient order’ substituted for ‘a specifically designed part of the mind’. However, it would seem reasonable to ask of Dupré, why is it clearly sensible? Answers to that, and to any other why questions that follow, could lead to how-type questions being asked.

⁸ Both science and philosophy do much more than this simple schema suggests. Science is also deeply concerned with prediction, i.e. with what the case would be if events were to unfold in accordance with its explanatory generalisations; and it is concerned with how interventions in the ‘natural’ course of events might successfully be made, with a view to attaining some kind of practical end—this summation is based on Sandra D. Mitchell’s text, Biological Complexity and Integrative Pluralism (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Philosophy is also concerned with explanation, at the very least with a view to understanding how and why we came to be the moral beings that we are; and this may affect our views on what ought to be done. Understanding so attained provides rational justification of the explanatory theory. Philosophy is also concerned with understanding what the significance of morality is. Similarly in science: according Einstein and Infeld, ‘[t]he purpose of any physical theory is to explain as wide a range of phenomena as possible. It is justified in so far as it does make events understandable.’ (Albert Einstein and Leopold Infeld, The Evolution of Physics: From Early Concepts to Relativity and Quanta (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1966 [first published 1938]), p. 40). Philosophy also takes interest in scientific interventions, as contemporary debates surrounding global warming demonstrate.
between the human sciences and human ethics.' In Casebeer’s view, pre-Enlightenment religious foundations of ethics can no longer be guaranteed, and he obviously believes that something is needed to take their place. To speak of establishing interactions between science and ethics as ‘imperative’ in this regard suggests that the need for an anchor may be very strong indeed, at least for some people.

In his book *The Ethical Project*, Kitcher sets out to explain how ethics got started: the ethical project, he says, ‘began in response to central human desires and needs, arising from our special type of human existence.’ The central desires and needs referred to by Kitcher include our need to live together and cooperate with one another. Kitcher’s aim is to explain the origin of ethics in terms of evolutionary biology. He conjectures that the ‘first ethicists were probably concerned with the altruism failures that arose with respect to basic needs, but their efforts led to an evolved conception of the good life, one in which our interactions and relationships with others are fundamental.’ In other words, altruism of some kind has been a long-standing characteristic of *Homo sapiens*, but it is a characteristic that has undergone modification following changes to the circumstances in which people have found themselves.

I will comment further on Kitcher’s ideas in the course of the thesis; for the moment, I want to return to Casebeer’s point about the need for an anchor. For an anchor to be effective there must be grounds in which to grip, but the kind of grounds in which morality might be anchored is the subject of dispute. The mere fact of the existence of morality would seem to provide sufficient grounds for some thinkers. Hilary Putnam, for instance, maintains that some kind of shared sympathy between people is enough. In his view, ethics is concerned with ‘alleviating suffering regardless of the class or gender of the sufferer;’ he notes that the concern has ‘deep roots in the great religious traditions of the world—not in only the religious traditions of the West, but in Islam, Confucianism, Hinduism,

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9 William D. Casebeer, *Natural Ethical Facts: Evolution, Connectionism, and Moral Cognition* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2005), p. 1. Casebeer advocates the use of methodological naturalism in ethical research, i.e. methods based on those employed in the natural sciences. He also endorses ontological naturalism, i.e. reality is confined to nature (there are no non-natural entities). I am of the same view.


11 Kitcher, p. 327.
and Buddhism as well.\textsuperscript{12} Putnam doesn’t go as far as eschewing an articulation of ethics, but he certainly denies that its roots need be justified and explained in terms apart from the aforementioned shared sympathy. Instead, Putnam regards ethics as a wholly practical response by one human being to another’s suffering, a response characterised by sympathy and ameliorative endeavours. Putnam may well have been right about the religious traditions, but I will be arguing that roots just as deep can be found in grounds devoid of supernatural elements.\textsuperscript{13} Non-supernatural grounds are secular grounds. My argument is that the need for homosapient order provides a secular basis in which morality can be grounded, hence the term ‘based’ in the title of the thesis. ‘Basis’ for my purposes means ‘cause’: the putative need for homosapient order is the cause of morality for the reasons outlined a moment ago: the reasons will be fully explained in due course.

The idea that morality possesses origins that are susceptible to explanation has a long history. Explanation is the business of philosophers, research scientists and theologians, and it is of interest to many other people as well. Explanation is a source of philosophical grounds on which beliefs can be based; it helps us make sense of what is going on around us. The Stoics, Plato, Spinoza and Kant are some of the many schools and thinkers who have felt the need for a philosophical basis of morality. For example, in the \textit{Laws}, Plato maintains that living well depends on ‘thinking rightly about the gods;’\textsuperscript{14} while not everyone would agree with him on what ‘thinking rightly’ consists in, the basic idea can be applied more generally. Spinoza spoke frequently of God and sincerely believed in the deity’s existence, but God for him was equivalent to nature—or, in another guise, equivalent to a single monistic substance: so much so, that Spinoza has attracted accusations of pantheism, even atheism. Spinoza is justly famous for his contribution to moral philosophy, most extensively articulated in \textit{The Ethics} (published posthumously in 1677). The appendix of Part IV of the book deals with social order and moral order. The moral standards promoted there are held to emanate from nature, and since nature is all there is, supernaturalism can be


\textsuperscript{13} My theory is therefore akin to Buddhism in this regard.

discounted. Spinoza’s attempt to find a basis for ethics in nature was one of the inspirations for the present thesis.

I obviously have a lot of explaining to do, but there is a question that can be broached here: might the idea of a philosophical ground be indicative of a need for one? I believe that could well be the case. In the absence of an anchor in fundamental reality, ethics could be regarded as an intellectual abstraction; and, as Albert Camus said, ‘virtue has need of justification in order not to be abstract.’ 15 Virtue is justified when reasons can be given for abiding by what one believes virtue to consist in. Whether causal explanation can assist in providing justificatory reasons is a moot point, but the interplay between metaethics and ethics mentioned a moment ago suggests that it might be possible. I will refer to the need for morality to be grounded as the ‘philosophical need’. Our philosophical need gives rise to how and what questions with respect to reality (or what we believe to be real). How did X come about? What is X? Answers to what questions may help explain why we do certain things, or should do them. What we believe to be right provides reasons for behaving the way we do, or should do. 16

‘Philosophical need’ could be regarded as a kind of ‘metaphysical need’, a notion that some would baulk at. Nietzsche, for instance, wrote about taking an axe to the ‘root of the “metaphysical need” of man,’ 17 but very soon after wielding the axe he can be found in the same book acknowledging that the ‘question as to the origin of moral values is … a question of primary importance to me because it determines the future of mankind.’ 18 In my opinion, the search for origins is

15 Albert Camus, The Rebel, translated by Anthony Bower (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1962 [first published 1951]), p. 101. 16 It is not my wish to imply that human nature is wholly explainable in terms of biological factors. Biology and contextual factors (nature and nurture) are both influential with regard to human behaviour: how (i.e. causal) questions may be answered in terms of either or both of them. In other words, when answers to why questions lead ultimately to how questions being asked, the answers to them could refer either to biological factors or contextual factors, and most likely (and effectively) to both kinds of factors. In his book Darwin’s Legacy, John Dupré insists that both be taken into account; he is especially critical of evolutionary psychologists for seeking explanations predominantly in terms of biology; and within biology, genetic science. See Dupré chapter 6, ‘Human Nature’. 17 Friedrich Nietzsche, Ecce Homo, ‘Human All-Too-Human’, in The Philosophy of Nietzsche (New York: The Modern Library, 1927), s. 6. 18 Ecce Homo, ‘The Dawn of Day’, s. 2. Moral values are described by Isaiah Berlin as ‘ultimate ends’, i.e. ends to which ‘wise human beings, who understand reality, will dedicate their lives’ (Isaiah Berlin, Against the Current: Essays in the History of Ideas, edited by Henry Hardy, introduced by Roger Hausheer (London: Pimlico, 1997 [first published 1979]), p. 45).
symptomatic of the philosophical need. What were the origins for Nietzsche?—
eschewing the traditional ‘selflessness’, he gave pride of place to ‘self-
preservation and the increase of bodily energy.’\textsuperscript{19} Satisfaction of the
philosophical need by a Nietzschean would be attained without reference to the
supernatural. Similarly for the American psychologist Abraham Maslow, who
spoke of attaining ‘religious states insofar as they are naturalistic.’\textsuperscript{20} Maslow’s
theory of needs-based motivation is central to the order-based theory of morality,
so his ideas on this matter are worth noting.

Maslow considered the naturalistic religious state to be a condition of maximum
human potential. The state of which he speaks could be said to reflect the essence
of Tao, for he often invoked Taoist thinking when articulating his own ideals.
According to the \textit{Tao Te Ching} (Taoism’s ‘bible’), the essence of Tao consists in
knowledge of ‘the ancient beginning,’\textsuperscript{21} which is described as ‘natural’. In the
words of the book: ‘Man follows the earth. /Earth follows heaven. /Heaven
follows the Tao. /Tao follows what is natural.’\textsuperscript{22} Knowledge of the ancient
beginning would surely go a long way towards satisfying one’s philosophical
need: it would enable one to form a view of the place occupied by human beings
within nature.

In sum, the objectives of the thesis are as follows:

A. Explain how we came to be moral beings;
B. Demonstrate that the proposed theory explains what right and good consist in;
C. Show what kind of moral norms issue from the theory;
D. Show why adherence to norms generated by the theory is justifiable;
E. Show that the norms issuing from the theory are consistent with extant moral
   theory, both consequentialist and non-consequentialist;
F. Differentiate the proposed theory from extant moral theories; and
G. Show that the order-based theory provides a plausible secular foundation on
   which morality can be based.

\textsuperscript{19} \textit{Ecce Homo}, ‘The Dawn of Day’, s. 2.
published 1971]), p. 124. Primarily a psychologist, Maslow was also something of a
philosopher—he was well acquainted with the work of Nietzsche and Spinoza, amongst others.
\textsuperscript{21} Lao Tzu, \textit{Tao Te Ching}, translated by Gia-Fu Feng and Jane English (New York: Vintage
\textsuperscript{22} Gia-Fu and English, \textit{Tao Te Ching}, chapter 25.
Aims A and G are strictly metaethical issues, while B, C and D are predominantly ethical in nature. E and F pertain to both spheres.

**1.2 An Outline of the Argument**

After dealing with some definitional issues, the argument of the thesis begins by addressing the metaethical *how* question: i.e., how did it come about that we are moral beings? The assumption that we are moral beings is based on the observation that most if not all mature adult human beings have a conception of right and wrong, good and evil. Our conceptions may vary, but their mere existence is sufficient to confirm that morality helps define what human nature consists in. For the reasons mentioned above, answers to the metaethical *how* question arguably point towards how ethical *what* and *why* questions might also be answered, i.e. describing *what* we believe moral good and right consist in and explaining *why* we should have those beliefs (and act upon them).

As well as being defined by morality, I will argue that human nature is such that we are needful creatures, that what we need are survival and well-being, and that the need for these things finds expression in the kinds of needs articulated by Maslow. We have a common set of basic needs, but we set about satisfying our needs in various ways, where the means of satisfaction depend partly on our social, cultural, geographical and political circumstances. Our genetic inheritance is another determinant of how needs might be satisfied (for example, if we are born with impaired vision, the tools we use to obtain knowledge may differ from those employed by fully-sighted persons). The motivational force of the various needs may similarly vary between people. Furthermore, the ways in which we satisfy our needs, and which needs are given priority, will also be determined by our personal character, which may be either well-disposed towards other people or ill-disposed towards them. Our genetic inheritance and the various circumstances in which we find ourselves are likely to have a bearing on our character. All of this is remains to be explained. For the moment, I simply wish to note that some agents will be seen to attend to their needs by interacting with others in a humane manner, whereas other agents act inhumanely.

The thesis is divided into four parts. Part I consists of the present introductory chapter and two further chapters. Chapter 2 is a synopsis of ethical issues: based
on a discussion of means and ends, a distinction is drawn between, on the one hand, morally good ends and morally bad ends; and, on the other hand, between morally right means and morally wrong means. Two umbrella terms are introduced: ‘moral commendability’, to cover that which is morally good or morally right; and ‘moral condemnability’, to cover that which is morally wrong or morally bad. Chapter 3 introduces the concept of order. The distinction between life and non-life is explored, with genetics and entropy-avoidance being found to be significant differentiating factors; the notion of order is shown to be central to both factors.

Part II (Chapters 4-6) of the thesis is concerned with the metaethical how question. Chapter 4 explicates the concept of homosapient order, which is shown to consist of three kinds of interrelated order—physical, social and eudaimonic, the last deriving from Aristotle’s conception of the highest form of human flourishing. Homosapient order is said to be necessary to human well-being, i.e., that it is needed by us. It is also shown to be analogous to justice. Maslow’s hierarchy of needs is outlined in Chapter 5, where the motivational force of homosapient order is also investigated. Each of the needs identified by Maslow is described and linked to the need for homosapient order. The contention is that all of the Maslovian needs are expressions of the need for homosapient order. Chapter 6 presents evidence for the moral relevance of needs. The answer to the question of how we came to be moral beings stems from the fact of our needfulness, that our needs are morally relevant, and that our various needs have their basis in the putative need for homosapient order.

Part III (Chapters 7 and 8) focuses on the ethical relevance of the order-based theory. In Chapter 7 the theory is shown to have a utilitarian aspect in the way in which moral commendability and condemnability are determined: morally classifiable behaviour is held to be condemnable where satisfaction of an agent’s

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23 The continuity discerned by Aristotle between politics and ethics could be seen to offer a means of linking the concepts of order and morality. Politics is concerned with government, and government is concerned with the imposition of order. If ethics and politics are indeed continuous, then morality would also be concerned with the imposition of order. And so it is, but I will argue that it is order mediated by needs (such as the need for food and shelter), and many more kinds of needs reside in individuals than in social entities such as political organisations. The Aristotelian connection between politics and ethics will not be pursued at any length in this thesis.
need occurs at the expense of a respondent’s more basic or weightier need. Chapter 8 considers the moral relevance of human character. The order-based theory is shown to encompass a character-based ethics as well as a utilitarian one.

Part IV of the thesis consists of Chapters 9-11. Chapter 9 completes the order-based theory by arguing for the reality of homosapient order. The need for homosapient order is posited as a basis for morality and therefore as a means of satisfying the philosophical need of a secularist. Chapter 10 investigates some possible challenges to the theory, namely determinism, moral relativism, whether morality can arise independently of needs, genetic fallaciousness and naturalistic fallaciousness. All of the challenges are deemed to be rebuttable. Chapter 11 brings the thesis to a conclusion with consideration of whether the theory meets the stated objectives.

A Note on Structure
The first sections of each of the chapters that comprise the substance of the argument of the thesis (Chapters 2-9) include a review of background literature pertaining to the issues at hand. I do not pretend to have covered all of the literature that might be deemed relevant—the fields are simply too big. But I hope that the sources I have used at least generate appropriate questions against which the order-based theory might reasonably be evaluated.

Before beginning the argument I should also mention that I will be using the terms ‘morality’ and ‘ethics’ (and their derivatives) interchangeably, notwithstanding variations in usage by proponents of other theories. For instance, virtue ethicists tend to speak more about ethics than they do about morality, whereas, for deontologists, the reverse is usually the case. The virtue ethicist focuses primarily on the agent’s character: she asks whether an act is consistent with whatever is conducive to living well, i.e. to living virtuously. Deontologists instead ask whether an act is consistent with the maxims of moral law; for example, whether someone affected by an agent’s action is being treated as an end in herself, as distinct from a means to the agent’s end. I will elaborate on these matters in the next chapter: all I want to say here is that I believe that both theories have good and sensible things to say about the ways in which human beings may reasonably
be expected to behave: neglect of either of them would produce an outcome of dubious worth.
2: ENDS AND MEANS, GOOD AND RIGHT

2.1 A Note on Moral Theory

Over time, numerous moral theories have been proposed, but it is generally agreed that the theories resolve into two major kinds, consequentialist and non-consequentialist; or, in an older terminology, teleological and non-teleological. The teleological encompasses virtue ethics and utilitarianism, while the non-teleological is predominantly deontological. Virtue ethics has ancient roots, for instance in Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*, which begins with the words ‘[e]very art and every inquiry, and similarly every action and pursuit, is thought to aim at some good; and for this reason the good has been rightly declared to be that at which things aim.’ Good action is virtuous action. Utilitarianism is a more recent development, having been initiated in the eighteenth century by Jeremy Bentham. Deontology began with Kant, with the demand that each of us be bound by and act in accordance with an internally formulated moral law consisting of a set of categorical imperatives. ‘Deontological’ derives from the Greek for ‘that which is binding’. Consequentialists prioritise the good, while deontologists focus more on the right.

Since it would be nonsensical to claim that everything that we describe as either good or right is of moral relevance, I should emphasise that it is moral good and moral right that are in view here. An ice-cream on a hot day might be considered good to eat, and we would have good reason (i.e. it would not be wrong) to purchase it: but neither the eating nor the purchasing would be likely to have any moral significance. To explain what is of moral significance is one of the aims of

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24 The non-teleological, Pettit observes, ‘is sometimes identified with, and sometimes taken just to include, the deontological.’ See Philip Pettit, ‘Consequentialism’, in Singer (editor), *A Companion to Ethics*, p. 230.


26 The Categorical Imperative is a complex notion with several layers of meaning, but its dominant sense is that of a self-imposed unconditional principle of conduct, or maxim, that one believes worthy of universal enactment. In another sense, each person is to be treated as an end in him- or herself, and not as a means to the achievement of someone else’s ends. In addition, the maxims adopted by any one person should be such that universal adoption of them would give rise to a kingdom of ends, where everything has either value or dignity. Anything that has a value may be replaced by something that is equivalent, and is of relative worth. By contrast, that which possesses dignity is irreplaceable; dignity is said to be of intrinsic worth.
this chapter. The results will be used in Chapter 4 to test the moral relevance of homosapient order.

As well as the divide between consequentialist ethical theories and non-consequentialist ethical theories, another line of demarcation separates cognitivist theories from non-cognitivist theories. Cognitivists maintain that moral attitudes are based on beliefs, and issue in propositions that are capable of objective truth and falsity. Non-cognitivists consider moral attitudes to be more like desires:27 as Philippa Foot puts it, the non-cognitivist links moral judgements ‘to an individual speaker’s subjective state.’28 The deepest roots of non-cognitivism go back to Hume,29 who located the basis of morality in what he and others refer to as ‘moral sense’, i.e. a kind of instinct that orients people towards benevolence. I will not have very much more to say about this second line of demarcation, which could in fact turn out to be unsustainable. The cognitive neuroscientist Antonio Damasio has demonstrated that ‘thinking always involves the emotions;’ and, conversely, that ‘our feelings about human relations almost always involve thought.’30 In other words, reason and the emotions are generally inseparable, in which case cognitivism and non-cognitivism could be found collapsing into one another. Instead of either/or, it would be a case of both/and, i.e. emotion and reason in conjunction.

However, assuming for a moment that cognitivism and non-cognitivism can be kept apart, the principal issue for both camps would seem to be how determinations of good and right are made. Consequentialists and non-consequentialists, by contrast, tend to focus more on what is good or right. The two lines of demarcation on that account can be envisaged as intersecting. Hume could reasonably be seen in terms of consequentialism plus non-cognitivism, and Kant in terms of non-consequentialism plus cognitivism. The order-based theory will be found to be closer to Hume than it is to Kant, although I hope also to be

29 Foot, pp. 5-6.
able to show that deontological principles such as prescriptiveness in relation to conduct can be accommodated without too much difficulty.

The ice-cream example was about ends and means—cooling down was the end, and eating an ice-cream was the means of getting cool. Morality is also concerned with ends and means.

2.2 Ends and Means

William Casebeer usefully distinguishes between instrumental norms and final norms.\(^{31}\) The distinction is one of means and ends: means are employed as instruments to attain certain ends, which are final. In talking about means and ends some ideas from Dewey are worth noting. Dewey rejected the dualism between means and ends, and instead regarded means as ‘intermediates’ or stages along the way towards an end, which in turn consists in ‘merely a series of acts viewed at a remote stage.’\(^{32}\) In other words, means and ends constitute a continuum. For example, a tool-user would tend to regard the tool as a means of getting something done, whereas the tool-maker would see it as an end of the process employed in making it. But the tool-user may also look upon the tool as an end, i.e. as one of the intermediate stages referred to by Dewey; and the tool-maker would very likely regard the tool as a means of earning a living. Nevertheless, it will still be useful to retain the terminology of means and ends. The terms, I believe, reflect the main issue that separates deontologists from consequentialists, with the former being primarily interested in means and the latter focusing on ends. Or, to use slightly different terminology, deontologist ethics is action-orientated and consequentialist ethics results-orientated.\(^{33}\) But even this distinction is porous, since action generally has some kind of aim, and results are usually obtained by means of some kind of action.

Norms may be associated with either means or ends. Norms are rules of conduct, and can be either morally relevant or not morally relevant. Rules of etiquette, for example, would generally be regarded as being of no moral significance. In light of the differing emphases of consequentialists and non-consequentialists, I am

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\(^{31}\) Casebeer, p. 13.


tempted to link the concept of good to that of ends, and the notion of right to that of means. There would then be four possibilities: morally good ends, morally bad ends, morally right means, and morally wrong means. But that would be too simplistic, and a violation of common usage. For instance, deeds (i.e. means) are widely described as either good or bad, and we find a reference in Foot, who is a consequentialist, to ‘right ends’ (I will come to that shortly). Furthermore, Kant, the archetypal deontologist, may be presumed to have ends in mind when he described the moral law (i.e. the Categorical Imperative) as the *summum bonum* (highest good): in his words, the moral law is ‘the highest good in the world possible through freedom.’

A more plausible taxonomy would be based on the final end/intermediate end distinction drawn by Dewey. For the consequentialist, final ends would consist in ultimate goods, such as (on my thesis, yet to be demonstrated) homosapient order. Intermediate ends, which are also means, would be viewed by the consequentialist in terms of either good or right. Some ends, either final or intermediate, are morally irrelevant (like the ice-cream). For the deontologist there are no intermediate ends. Dutiful deeds that accord with the Categorical Imperative are final ends; they are actions performed for the sake of duty alone. Whether they are always morally relevant is another matter.

Morally relevant ends are ends that invite moral judgement: ‘he was right (or wrong) to seek attainment of his particular objective’. Morally relevant means are those that also invite moral judgement: ‘he was right (or wrong) to seek fulfillment of his objective in the manner that he did’. Good and right are commendable; bad and wrong are condemnable. Morally commendable means will typically be employed in the attainment of morally commendable ends, and morally condemnable means will be directed towards morally condemnable ends. It is difficult to imagine how morally condemnable means could serve morally commendable ends, or how morally commendable means could be directed towards morally condemnable ends. In order to explain which ends and means are morally commendable I must first distinguish between morally classifiable behaviour and behaviour that is morally irrelevant. After doing that I will discuss moral commendability and condemmability.

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2.3 Morally Classifiable Behaviour

Morally classifiable behaviour is action by an agent that invites judgement in terms of moral right or wrong. Several conditions need to be fulfilled for moral classifiability to obtain. First, there must be alternative courses of action from which to choose; second, the agent must be a human being; third, the agent must be capable of choosing between the alternatives; and fourth, the action of the agent must affect others in a reasonably significant way. Each of the conditions will now be discussed.

For behaviour to be morally classifiable there must be alternative courses of action from which an agent may choose; this is also a condition of freedom. The alternative courses must also be feasible for the agent: as Daniel Dennett puts it, he or she must have the power or ability ‘to do otherwise.’\(^{35}\) In order for choice to be possible, alternative courses of action must first be perceived and comprehended. Comprehension may entail assessment of which course would be best to adopt. Community standards and one’s own moral principles would enter into the assessment.

Moral classifiability can arise from non-action as well as action. An act that is chosen is also an act that can be refrained from. Drunkenness is usually avoidable, and morally reprehensible behaviour during a state of drunkenness is deserving of sanction, provided the perpetrator is responsible for his or her condition (someone whose drink had been spiked may not be). The same applies to impulsive action. The capacity to refrain from acting is constitutive of freedom. Morality is non-action in so far as it arises from a consciously taken decision to avoid a course of action that would be morally wrong. In the same way that right can consist in wrong not done, wrong can arise from not doing something that would be right, for example refusal to donate to a deserving charity when it is within one’s power to do so. Morally classifiable behaviour will henceforth be understood to encompass non-action as well as action.

The second and third conditions for moral classifiability will be taken together: the agent must be a human being, and must be capable of choosing from the alternative courses of action that present themselves. Morally classifiable

behaviour is the exclusive province of human beings because, as far as we know, human beings are the only entities equipped with (1) the ability to envisage and understand alternative courses of action, (2) sufficient powers of rational choice to weigh up the consequences of pursuing the various alternatives, and (3) an inclination to choose from the alternatives on the basis of right and wrong. The ideas are consistent with Dewey’s understanding of moral agency as an ‘activity in a situation where voluntary choice is made between incompatible, character-determining courses of action by an agent exercising some degree of foresight and deliberation.’

Because reason is necessary to choosing, an inability to reason (for example because of intellectual disability, or immaturity) has a bearing on moral classifiability. Morally classifiable behaviour arises from relationships between particular kinds of entities, at least one of which must be a human being, i.e. relationships between two or more people, or between one or more human beings and other entities such as whales and rainforests.

An agent and at least one respondent are always needed for moral behaviour to occur. As the term ‘respondent’ implies, someone (or something) needs to be affected by the agent’s behaviour (or intended behaviour: see below) in order for the question of moral classifiability to arise. The term’s suitability is enhanced by the verbal connection between ‘respondent’ and the expressions ‘responsibility’ and ‘responsiveness’. A respondent is someone (or something) to whom (or which) an agent has some kind of responsibility—an agent, moreover, who is responsible for his or her behaviour, by having chosen it. Then again, a respondent is someone or something to whom or which an agent is required to be responsive.

Prima facie, the need for an effect on a respondent would seem to disqualify unsuccessful attempts at reprehensible action from moral judgement, for example where an assassin’s bullet misses the target. This raises the question of the

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37 The notions of responsiveness and anti-responsiveness are central to Nozick’s theory of ethical pull, i.e. the moral claims that others exert upon an agent.
38 According to Foot, when practical rationality is brought to bear in moral decision-making, a kind of ‘all-things-considered’ judgement is made (Foot, chapter 4). She also asks whether ‘considerations that are about right and wrong’ may be included among ‘rationalizing considerations’ (Foot, p. 62). Right and wrong would thereby be among the all-things-considered.
moral significance of an agent’s intentions. Broadly speaking, it would be fair to say that intentions are highly significant. For example, deontologists maintain that one ‘is not said to have done something wrong if one did not intend to do the thing in question.’ Hume, who was not a deontologist, seems to have been of the same mind: ‘[b]y the intention we judge of the actions, and according as that is good or bad, they become causes of love or hatred.’ A brief discussion of the concept of intention will help explain its relevance to morality.

Kieran Setiya observes that intention can be understood in either of three ways: as a plan for the future, or as the purpose or goal for which action is undertaken, or as intentional action itself. To adapt Setiya’s examples, I am writing this with a view to completing my thesis by the due date (plan for the future); the words I am writing now are intended to recognise the philosophical complexities involved in the notion of intention (purposeful or goal-directed action); and I am intentionally writing what I am now writing (intentional action). The three aspects of intention have attracted a great deal of philosophical attention. All three are indicative of ways in which intention would normally be understood and spoken about.

‘Plan for the future’ intention is distinguishable from its other two aspects by virtue of the fact that plans may be unconsummated by action, whereas action is necessarily involved in both goal-directed action and intentional action. Because of the consequences entailed in action, the action-orientation of intention is certainly important; but its planned-but-not-acted-upon orientation also requires recognition. Just as some consequences of our actions may be unintended, some of our intentions might not result in action, or at least the intended action. A driver who speeds through a red light at an intersection and kills someone crossing it from another direction would generally not be considered to have intended the dreadful outcome of his actions, but he would nonetheless be held to be morally responsible. A would-be assassin who conspires to kill may have his plans

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40 Hume, Treatise, 2.2.3.
42 He would also be legally culpable, at least in some jurisdictions: the maximum penalty under the Victorian Crimes Act 1958 is twenty years imprisonment plus a possible fine (Sec. 318).
thwarted, but the conspiracy as an action would still be morally classifiable.\textsuperscript{43} It would also be morally condemnable; why that is so will be explained in Chapters 7 and 8, under the heading ‘Unconsummated Intentions’. (The question of unintended consequences is examined in the same chapters.) A plan that gets past the conspiracy stage and culminates in an unsuccessful attempt to kill would be similarly morally classifiable and condemnable.

Unsuccessful actions such as those of the ineffectual assassin may nevertheless affect their intended victims; and their perpetrators as well. From the latter’s perspective, the very failure would presumably have some kind of effect. From the victim’s perspective, murder might not have occurred, but were the person to learn of the assassin’s intentions, he or she would probably feel significantly threatened. Of course that would not be the case if the perpetrator had quietly left the scene and no-one else ever became aware of what had happened. Would his action still be morally classifiable? And who could possibly do the classifying? With regard to the first question, I would want to say that the agent’s action is morally classifiable, but on what basis? Who might be the respondent? As implausible as it might sound, I think the would-be assassin himself could be regarded as respondent, in addition to being agent. In other words, agent and respondent may be the same person. Other such cases are imaginable, for example excessive self-indulgence such as gluttony (see p. 146). The glutton harms himself by over-eating; the assassin conceivably harms himself by having to live with the knowledge of having acted in a way that would generally invite opprobrium. Even a psychopath who feels no remorse would probably be aware of the legal consequences of his action and their possible connection with moral culpability: otherwise why the stealth? The remorseful would-be assassin is clearly affected by his action. Either way, remorseful or not, the agent would be affected by his (failed) action. In sum, where the agent’s intentions remain unknown to anyone apart from himself, the agent is respondent to his own action. As to who might deem the agent’s action morally classifiable, I think the answer

\textsuperscript{43} It would also be legally punishable. For example, the Victorian Crimes Act 1958 imposes the same maximum penalty for conspiracy to murder as that attracted by actual murder (Sec. 321). Attempt to murder likewise (Sec. 321P).
to that must also be the agent-cum-respondent. Where an agent’s intentions are more widely known, respondency would rest with the intended respondent and possibly also with society in general.

Before intentions and acts can become morally significant, an informed assessment must be made by an agent of the alternative courses of action that are available to him. As mentioned, some people might not be able to make informed assessments; for example, young children, and persons suffering from severe mental impairment. If they seem at times to be acting upon a choice from alternative courses of action, we would nevertheless generally want to exclude them from moral responsibility—but on what basis? When does the capacity for responsible choice kick in? A hard and fast rule would be difficult to devise, and would, in any case, be likely to vary depending on time and place. But some broad criteria for responsibility are conceivable. First, a person would need to have had sufficient opportunity to develop an awareness of his or her community’s moral standards: young children (how young?) would be excluded on this criterion. Second, a person would need to have the capacity for developing such awareness: the young would again be excluded, as would the insane. Both conditions would have to be met before moral responsibility becomes applicable.

The discussion has brought us to the point where reasoned choice emanating from freedom would seem to be sufficient to render behaviour consequent upon the choice morally classifiable. Whenever we choose to act in accordance with a choice, our action affects someone or something somewhere, potentially for better or worse: that being so, the effect may be measured in terms of moral significance. Which brings me to the fourth condition for moral classifiability: the action of the agent must affect others in a reasonably significant way. The significance of an agent’s behaviour may be very small, as, for example, action following a choice

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44 A theist would have a ready answer to this question: God would deliver the verdict. But that option is not open to an atheistic thinker. Nor, I believe, could there be recourse to the notion of an Archimedean point, i.e. a hypothetical perspective from which an observer might view all of the circumstances objectively and independently. Anyone with the omniscience implied by the notion would be rather too much like a supernatural deity—which leaves only the parties (or party) with knowledge of the action.

45 Foot speaks of culpable ignorance, i.e. of not knowing something that one should have known, and acting reprehensibly because of it (Foot, p. 71). The actions of children and intellectually disabled people could be excusable on the grounds of non-culpable ignorance.
between chocolate ice-cream and vanilla ice-cream. In this regard, Dewey’s view that ‘it would be morbid to subject each act to moral scrutiny’ might be noted.\(^{46}\) The consequences of choices between ice-cream flavours would be minuscule, although the producers of the flavour not chosen could conceivably suffer from it in some small way—and we know from chaos theory that large effects can arise from small causes.\(^{47}\) On the other hand, the moral significance attached to a choice may be momentous, as would be the case if we decide to get drunk and then kill someone whilst driving in an inebriated state.

The conjunction of moral classifiability and moral significance may be viewed in the form of a chiasmus, with morally classifiable/not morally classifiable and morally significant /morally insignificant as its axes.

![Figure 1: Moral Classifiability of Behaviour](image)

In the north-east quadrant, moral classifiability combined with moral significance is the region of all the morally praiseworthy or culpable behaviour that we have been discussing. While some kind of non-triviality test might also be required for moral classifiability, there need be no doubt that free and reasoned choice is necessary to morally classifiable behaviour. Moving anti-clockwise, morally

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\(^{46}\) See Ruth Anna Putnam, ‘The Moral Life of a Pragmatist’, in Owen Flanagan and Amélie Oksenberg Rorty (editors), *Identity, Character, and Morality: Essays in Moral Psychology* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1993), p. 71. Following a point made by Anscombe, Foot observes that the ‘use of “should” [which is close to “ought” (Foot, p. 80)] in … practical contexts tells us of a possible defect in action, but does not tell us whether or not anything of importance is involved’ (Foot, p. 67).

\(^{47}\) Parfit considers it a mistake to believe that an act cannot be morally wrong merely on the grounds that its effects on others are trivial or imperceptible (Parfit, p. 443). Since most people in the present age live in large communities, perceptibly small initial effects can develop into large effects. Reasonable care would need to be taken in deciding what to ignore. See also Foot on the matter of culpable ignorance.
classifiable/morally insignificant behaviour involves trivial choices like those concerning ice-cream flavours; these should obviously be excluded from scrutiny, at least in normal circumstances. Next, not morally classifiable/morally insignificant behaviour is behaviour that is constrained by the unavailability of alternative courses of action or an inability to choose on the basis of right and wrong; for example, a young child stealing a plum from his neighbour’s fully-laden tree. Finally, the conjunction of non-moral classifiability with moral significance could appear to be oxymoronic, but betrayal of his country by a prisoner-of-war because of brain-washing might be placed here: treachery might be dimly viewed, whatever the circumstances.

To sum up, morally classifiable behaviour is possible only when there are alternative courses of action from which a reasonably competent agent may choose. The resultant behaviour will be either morally commendable or morally condemnable. It is time to consider what moral commendability and moral condemnability consist in.

2.4 Moral Commendability and Condemnability

Moral commendability encompasses the notions of moral good and moral right: it refers to either action or results. For deontologists, what counts is the spirit in which morally classifiable behaviour is undertaken and the thought involved in it. In Kant’s view, the will is the only thing that can be unqualifiedly good (see p. 161). Dutiful action is generally regarded as an end in itself. Dutiful action is right action; it is action that accords with the Categorical Imperative. Deontologists also tend to rule some actions totally out of court, typically lying and murder; such things are categorically impermissible, no ifs and buts about them.48

Categorically prescribed action (or non-action) would always be regarded as morally relevant, and tell us in no uncertain manner what is morally commendable

48 Davis, p. 209. Davis writes, ‘[f]or the deontologist, an act may be permissible without being the best (or even a good) option. For the consequentialist, however, a course of action is permissible when and only when it is the best (or equal best) option to an agent ….’ Davis notes that consequentialism has attracted criticism because permissibility under its auspices leaves ‘agents with insufficient breathing room’ (Davis, p. 209). By ‘insufficient breathing room’ I understand Davis to mean that a consequentialist agent tends to be overloaded with obligations. Although impermissibility would seem simply to be the obverse of permissibility, i.e. opposite sides of the same coin, Davis may well have a point: for instance, the order-based theory finds that there are many more ways of doing right than doing wrong.
or condemnable. This is an extreme position, and contemporary deontologists such as Nancy (Ann) Davis have sought to modify it. As Davis says, ‘the notion of “wrong” could not intelligibly be regarded as possessing absolute or categorical force; faced with the prospect of doing wrong by lying or doing wrong by causing harm, the unfortunate agent would have to consider which action would be more wrong. And from here it is but a short step to a view that looks much more like some form of consequentialism than deontology.’\(^{49}\) It would look more like consequentialism because of the implicit weighting involved in the agent’s considerations, and because of the presence in his or her mind of a notion along the lines of ‘that which is best’.

The deontologist’s requirements for moral commendability are also important to consequentialists. Foot considers goodness of the will to be that which determines ‘the goodness of human beings in respect of their actions.’\(^{50}\) Recalling David Wong’s proposition that morality involves conflict resolution (see p. 1), it would seem fair to say that moral behaviour requires a willingness on the part of a human being to resolve moral conflicts. However, unlike deontologists, at least those deontologists who hold extreme views in respect of the categorical nature of prescriptions and proscriptions—unlike them, consequentialists do not regard action as its own final end. Consequentialists also look to the intended purpose of an action. Virtue ethicists like Elizabeth Anscombe are critical of doctrines that have no reference to the good. In the mid-twentieth century, Anscombe had become concerned that the notions of moral duty and obligation had been rendered ‘anchorless’ because of a lack of understanding of what the good consists in. Without an anchor, ethical doctrines had, in her view, become corrupted into unintelligible stipulations such as ‘act not to satisfy any want of yours but simply because it’s morally right to do so.’\(^{51}\) Anscombe believed doctrines like these to be harmful; as Greg Spence puts it, ‘[v]irtue perniciously becomes an end in itself, unattached to human needs and desires.’\(^{52}\)

\(^{49}\) Davis, p. 214.

\(^{50}\) Foot, p. 14.


\(^{52}\) Spence notes that Elizabeth Anscombe helped revive interest in virtue theory in the mid twentieth century. See Spence, pp. 250-251. Anscombe served as a source of inspiration for Philippa Foot.
What, then, is there about the consequentialist final end that makes it morally commendable? Philippa Foot has many interesting things to say about the good in her book *Natural Good*. It is possible, Foot believes, ‘that the concept of a good human life plays the same part in determining goodness of human characteristics and operations that the concept of flourishing plays in the determination of goodness in plants and animals.’

It is a matter of instantiating ‘the life form’ of the relevant species, human beings included. A very important aspect of the human life form is what Foot refers to as ‘practical rationality’, which consists in action (practice) that is informed by reason (rationality). Some thinkers tie practical rationality to self-interest, or the satisfaction of present desires, but Foot’s aim is to show that it issues from an individual’s natural goodness and that it is therefore good in its own right. ‘Considerations’, she writes, ‘about such things as promising, neighbourliness, and help for those in trouble have … the same kind of connection with reasons for action as do considerations of self-interest or of means to our ends: the connection going in each case through the concept of practical rationality and the facts of human life.’ It is virtue theory that is in view here, where virtuous action is held to be guided by that which is believed to be good. For Foot, the good that is practical rationality is a fact of human life, and it is practical rationality that guides virtuous actions such as promising and the provision of aid. It also culminates in sociable dispositions such as neighbourliness.

One of Foot’s stated aims is to break the utilitarian nexus between virtue and happiness. She writes, ‘[w]hat is problematic about the relation between virtue and happiness … [comes] from the idea that happiness is Man’s Good, together with the idea that happiness may be successfully pursued through evil action.’

Similarly, satisfaction of the need for homosapient order, assuming for now that such a need exists, may be accompanied by significant pain. Anticipating the argument of Section 8.3, humaneness is an important feature of homosapient order, and to act humanely may involve some kind of self-sacrifice. Aesthetic

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53 Foot, p. 44.
54 Foot, p. 91.
55 Foot, p. 13.
56 Foot, p. 18. Although Foot makes no mention of Finni’s concept of ‘practical reasonableness’, the two ideas are quite close in tenor, as might be expected from the terminology involved. Both carry significant moral weight.
57 Foot, p. 82.
experience and intellectual achievement are also aspects of homosapient order, and they too may involve self-sacrifice. For example, there would surely be few who would think of Proust as having lived a life of unadulterated bliss while he was piecing together *In Search of Lost Time* in his cork-lined room in Paris. On the other hand, as Foot points out, a Nazi facilitator of the Holocaust might have been perfectly happy in his work.\(^{58}\) It all depends on what one understands ‘happiness’ to mean. Enjoyment of an activity consistent with one’s character would be part of it.\(^{59}\) Enjoyment gives rise to joy, but even this may be attended by suffering. Proust would be one example; another is the story recounted by Foot of a Quaker who suffered a great deal of persecution whilst preaching the Word, but who nevertheless described her life as happy.\(^{60}\) All in all, Foot prefers to speak in terms of happiness as ‘the enjoyment of good things, meaning enjoyment in attaining, and in pursuing, right ends.’\(^{62}\)

According to Foot, then, the good consists in something like ‘good for purpose’. As she says, ‘there is no change in the meaning of “good” between the word as it appears in “[a tree’s] good roots” and as it appears in “good dispositions of the human will”’.\(^{63}\) The emphasis is Foot’s so it is an important aspect of her theory. She effectively abolishes the distinction between moral good and all other kinds of good, at least in respect of their purposive or teleological nature. But purposiveness is assuredly not sufficient for moral commendability (recall the ice-cream). For moral commendability to obtain, something else is required. Three things, I suggest. First, the end must be such that only morally classifiable behaviour can attain it (thereby ruling out the ice-cream). Second, and this is implicit in the first condition, the end cannot be viewed in isolation from the means used to attain it: the two go together. This is why the deontologist’s requirements for moral commendability are important, namely the thought that goes into decisions, and the spirit in which morally classifiable behaviour is

\(^{58}\) This is why Anscombe’s cautionary words were timely, and still worth heeding. In the absence of reference to any kind of good apart from duty-for-duty’s sake, categorical prescriptions could finish up serving the interests of evil. They might also become trivial, i.e. morally insignificant. For instance, I regard it as my duty to put the recycled waste out for collection every second week and this is probably something that I could reasonably universalise into a categorical imperative. But its moral relevance is minuscule.

\(^{59}\) Foot, p. 83. See also Spinoza on the subject of joy later in this thesis.

\(^{60}\) Foot, p. 85.

\(^{62}\) Foot, p. 97.

\(^{63}\) Foot, p. 39.
undertaken. A deed done grudgingly is unlikely to be adjudged morally commendable, even if its results are good.

The third requirement for moral commendability is some kind of criterion that distinguishes commendability from condemnability. If one is asked why a particular instance of morally classifiable behaviour should be commended, then the reason given would probably be based on one’s beliefs with regard to what is deontologically right or consequentially good. And that may well be the end of the story. However, if one were to probe more deeply, along the lines suggested in Chapter 1, then a causal explanation may also be hit upon. The causal explanation proposed in this thesis centres on the notion of homosapient order—the answer to the question of commendability criteria is that morally classifiable behaviour is commendable when the quantum (however measured) of homosapient order increases across agent and respondent. How this works is explained in Chapters 7 and 8.

In sum, moral commendability for a consequentialist is a matter of both action and results. However, having said that, there may still be a way of relegating action and bringing results into the foreground. That would be possible if the purposes of human beings were understood to include the attainment of morally commendable ends; in other words, if we are essentially moral beings. If that were the case, then our purposes would necessarily be served by morally commendable action.

If that is what moral commendability consists in, how might its opposite—moral condemnability (wrong, bad)—be defined? One way would be simply to say that it consists in morally classifiable behaviour that is not morally commendable. Interestingly, Foot offers a negative definition of goodness (she follows Aquinas here): for goodness to prevail, she says, ‘it is sufficient for an action not to be bad: if it is no way bad then it is good.’ But that of course merely shifts the problem. How are we to define moral badness? Foot writes, the ‘social and emotional surroundings of our use of the vocabulary of moral censure are very different from those in which we speak of rashness, obstinacy, imprudence, and folly.’ Nevertheless, in the same way that the virtues such as temperance, courage and

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Foot, p. 76.
wisdom should, in Foot’s view, be treated as a whole, she considers that all such defects may be labelled ‘evaluations of the rational human will.’ As in cases of moral evaluation, they are concerned with ‘voluntary action and purpose.’ But the notion of moral badness still seems rather vague. One way through the fog could be along the lines of—moral badness consists in morally classifiable behaviour that is contrary to our natural purposes. I believe this would be consistent with Foot, and it pretty well reflects the essence of the order-based theory of morality.

2.5 Further Objectives

Several objectives of the thesis were listed in Section 1.1. A further two might usefully be added, based on the discussion of this chapter:

H. To show that the order-based theory provides reasonable answers to the fundamental questions emanating from the consequentialist/non-consequentialist divide. The questions are: for consequentialists, ‘what kind of person should I be?’ and for deontologists, ‘what ought I to do?’ In view of the putative interplay between results and action (i.e. ends and means), plausible answers to both questions are required.

I. According to Dewey, ‘[t]o say that an end is remote or distant, to say in fact that it is an end at all, is equivalent to saying that obstacles intervene between us and it. If, however, it remains a distant end, it becomes a mere end, that is a dream.’ This poses a very serious question for the order-based theory. I need to show that homosapient order is something more than merely a dream, that it is not too distant (or even chimerical) to be of any practical (i.e. moral) concern.

To place homosapient order in context, it will help to expand on the concept of order. That is the subject of the next chapter.

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65 Foot, p. 69.
66 Dewey, p. 36.
3: ORDER: AN INTRODUCTION

3.1 General Characteristics of Order

Finnis’s proposition that order involves a set of unifying relations (see p. 1) is an echo of Aristotle. In a discussion of some ideas of Democritus on the subject of substance, Aristotle equates order with ‘inter-contact’ between things, where ‘inter-contact’ can be understood to signify ‘interconnectedness’. The things of which the world is composed were thought by Aristotle to be connected with one another; in his words:

> We must consider … in which of two ways the nature of the universe contains the good and the highest good, whether as something separate and by itself, or as the order of the parts. Probably in both ways, as an army does; for its good is found both in its order and in its leader, and more in the latter; for he does not depend on the order but it depends on him. And all things are ordered together somehow, but not all alike,—both fishes and fowls and plants; and the world is not such that one thing has nothing to do with another, but they are connected. For all are ordered together to one end ….

The passage raises many issues, including the inherent goodness of order, and the interconnectedness of things. Further discussion of the goodness of order occurs later in this chapter; for the moment, I want to focus on the notion of ‘order of parts’. It seems that parts that are interconnected may be ordered either in terms of time or place, or in terms of both time and place. With regard to temporal priority, using an illustration provided by Aristotle, we would know something was wrong if dinner were served when we would normally expect breakfast. With regard to place, the positions of participants in a ceremonial procession would often be determined by their rank, or status. With regard to the conjunction of time and place, we would believe, other things being equal, that queues should be ordered in terms of the times that people join them. We can infer from Aristotle’s

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account that order denotes a kind of connective relationship between entities, whereby wholes are assembled from a variety of parts.

Definitions of order abound: there are thirty-six of them in the term’s noun form in the Web-based Dictionary.com; similarly in other dictionaries. Six of the definitions relate to the notion of ‘command’, and are of no immediate concern here: in that sense, the reference is to a *cause* of order (a command is given with a view to creating some kind of order). Homosapien order, as I will be defining it, excludes order in the sense of command. My interest lies more with order as an *effect*, or state-of-affairs (or state-of-being), whilst acknowledging that the effects themselves may be causes of things that are important to my study, for example beauty and goodness.

Several of the definitions of order have general application. They refer to the notion of order in terms of arrangements or dispositions of things, and classes of things (including persons) that ‘are distinguished from others by nature or character.’ Aristotle’s concept of prioritisation is explicit in one of the definitions: ‘the disposition of things following one after the other, as in space or time; succession or sequence.’ Broadest of all we have ‘state or condition generally.’ Any of these could be applied to physical matter, to social arrangements, and to eudaimonic dispositions. The notions of composition, coherence, wholeness and integration are implicit in the definitions, as I will now attempt to demonstrate.

Beginning with composition, a thing that is a composite is a ‘state or condition’ that consists in an arrangement or disposition of other things; in other words, it is a whole of some kind. Some composites may also be groups. A group is an assemblage of things, i.e. a composite, but it is a composite that is compiled in a special way. Grouping requires an act of abstraction, whereby things that constitute a group are considered to be related in some way. The very act of abstraction entails that some things are set apart from other things—of positioning.

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70 Isaiah Berlin remarks that moral goals are neither ‘states of affairs like growing a tree’ nor ‘facts like the fact that Julius Caesar crossed the Rubicon. They are orders or commands, and commands … are not something which can be discovered by observation … they do not describe anything’ (Isaiah Berlin, *Freedom and its Betrayal: Six Enemies of Human Liberty*, edited by Henry Hardy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), pp. 59-60). I think Berlin’s point may be conceded, but, in the sense in which it is relevant to this thesis, order is discoverable and describable. Order is morally relevant in both senses, Berlin’s and mine.
them in a particular way within space and time. In other words, spatial and temporal prioritisation occurs, and with it some kind of order. To illustrate, otherwise disparate human beings might form a group because of a common characteristic, or a perception of such, for example shared aims: to a measure of orderly integration might be expected of such an entity, and its aims are what sets it apart from those who do not share them.

The concept of orderly integration mentioned just now is a close relative of two of the other general characteristics of order, namely coherence and wholeness. My discussion of them begins with a text from Spinoza.

By the coherence of parts ... I understand nothing but that the laws or nature of the one part so adapt themselves to the laws or nature of the other part that they are opposed to each other as little as possible. Concerning whole and parts, I consider things as parts of some whole insofar as the nature of the one so adapts itself to the nature of the other so far as possible they are all in harmony with one another. But insofar as they are out of harmony with one another, to that extent each forms an idea distinct from the others in our mind, and therefore it is considered as a whole and not as a part.

If parts fail to cohere, Spinoza tells us, each of them would be viewed as a whole in its own right, while the entity in which they are combined would not be viewed as such. Coherence connotes good order, for example through the appropriate prioritisation of parts, which in turn is cognate with harmony. Coherence signifies that parts have been brought together in such a way as to form a whole; in other words, it is a mark of integration and consequently of integrity, in the sense of good working order. Coherence, wholeness and integrity therefore have a functional aspect. They may also have an aesthetic one, for we find Aquinas associating wholeness with perfection, which he identifies as one of three conditions of beauty. The other conditions of beauty are said by Aquinas to be due proportion and clarity: due proportion is equated with harmony, and is therefore cognate with coherence and order; clarity is likened to brightness,

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71 See Finnis, p. 152.
whence, Aquinas maintains, ‘things are called beautiful which have an elegant
colour.’\textsuperscript{73} The mention of elegance of colour suggests that Aquinas had aesthetic
beauty in mind when he was writing this. On Aquinas’s reading, a beautiful thing
is necessarily an integrated coherent whole. But the reverse does not apply: a
whole need not be beautiful.

The concept ‘unity’ can also help explain that of ‘whole’. In his treatise
\textit{Metaphysics}, Aristotle defines unity—or oneness—in terms of indivisibility, of
‘being essentially a “this” and capable of being isolated either in place, or in form
or thought.’\textsuperscript{74} Various kinds of unities are catalogued, including those that exist
by virtue of being continuous (such as dots that are joined to form a line), those
whose substrata are identical (water and ice would be an example), and those with
parts that together constitute a particular form (Aristotle’s example is that of a
shoe and the materials used to make it). With regard to formal unity, the
composite entity is such that the totality of the parts is not ‘a mere heap;’ the parts
are brought together by a cause consisting in form.\textsuperscript{75} A thing’s form, Aristotle
says, is its shape,\textsuperscript{76} which can be understood to refer to its structure; and a whole
is said to be a thing that has unity of form.\textsuperscript{77} A unified whole is a particular kind
of composite entity, from which it would follow that a unified entity, in at least
one sense of ‘unified’, is an entity that evinces order.

The final general characteristic of order that I want to consider is its goodness.
The etymology of the term ‘good’ is indicative of its relation to ‘order’. As
Robert Nozick observes, ‘good’ stems from the root ‘Ghedh’, which means ‘to
unite, join, fit, to bring together.’\textsuperscript{78} the relationship between unity and order again
comes into view, now with the addition that an orderly thing is also good in some
sense of the term ‘good’. What sense? It is apparent from the earlier quotations
(see p. 2) that Rousseau and Hume were clear about the goodness of order, and

\textsuperscript{74} \textit{Metaphysics} X.1, 1052b.
\textsuperscript{75} \textit{Metaphysics} VIII.6, 1045a. Non-random organisation would be another way of putting it.
\textsuperscript{76} \textit{Metaphysics} X.1, 1017b.
\textsuperscript{77} \textit{Metaphysics} V.6, 1016a.
that its goodness for them extended to moral goodness.\textsuperscript{79} I will address the question of whether order (specifically homosapient order) is morally good in Section 4.4; here I wish simply to note that order is good in a very general sense of the term ‘good’. General goodness may or may not be moral goodness.

Two of the dictionary definitions of order are concerned with general goodness. First, we see that order is ‘a condition in which each thing is properly disposed with reference to other things and to its purpose; methodical or harmonious arrangement.’ Second, we have ‘proper, satisfactory, or working condition.’ Goodness in respect of purpose is obviously contrary to badness in that respect, on which account there could be no such thing as ‘bad order’. Orderliness is good because it contributes to the fulfillment of the orderly thing’s purpose; conversely, disorderliness is bad because disorder works against attainment of the disorderly thing’s purpose. This is consistent with a definition from Spinoza: ‘[b]y good I shall understand what we certainly know to be useful to us.’\textsuperscript{80} If the shoes mentioned by Aristotle fail to fit their intended wearer, they fail in their purpose; they are therefore bad, although, \textit{prima facie}, without moral significance.\textsuperscript{81} Order is an organising principle whose end is fitness for purpose of the orderly object.

Orderliness in this general sense is fundamental to life, including the life of \textit{Homo sapiens}. Order contributes to the attainment of a very basic purpose of living entities—the purpose being, to stay alive. The distinction between life and non-life is examined in the next section.

\subsection*{3.2 The Orderliness of Life}

Life on Earth is generally believed to have begun approximately 5.5 billion years ago, and Earth and the universe of which it is a part is thought to be several times older than that. Every physical existent can be understood to be composed of material that has existed since the beginning of time—material in the form of either matter or energy. This might come as something of a surprise. Much of life as it is now understood is based on the processes of cell division and

\textsuperscript{79} Cf. Midgley’s description of the converse of good, namely evil. Evil, she say, is ‘something for which we are equipped to do and to which we are drawn—but outrageous, damaging to the proper arrangement of the whole’ (Mary Midgley, \textit{Beast and Man: The Roots of Human Nature} (London, Routledge, 2002 [first published 1979]), p. 77).

\textsuperscript{80} \textit{The Ethics}, 4d1.

\textsuperscript{81} If the shoe-maker intentionally puts a shoddy product on the market, morality would then be involved.
differentiation (in mitosis and meiosis)—where does the material for new cells come from? Science tells us that the material’s primary source is the sun’s thermonuclear conversion of atomic particles into the light energy that plants use to convert CO₂ and water into life-giving carbohydrates, by means of photosynthesis. Plants serve as food for our mothers and us, and for the animals eaten by us and our forebears. On this view, our universe and everything in it consists of ever-changing assemblages of material. Material that was energy and which becomes matter takes the form of particles (quarks, electrons, and so forth; perhaps strings) that in turn are aggregated into the composites we perceive as physical entities, such as stones, trees, and people. All of this is fully consistent with what Antoine Laurent de Lavoisier in the eighteenth century posited as the supreme principle of chemistry: ‘matter is neither created nor destroyed, all it knows is transformation.’

How should life be understood, as distinct from non-life? According to the biologist Ernst Mayr, ‘life must be able to replicate itself and make use of energy either from the sun or from certain available molecules, like sulfides in the deep sea vents.’ Non-life possesses neither of these characteristics. The notion of order will now be shown to be involved in both of them, beginning with genetics.

The geneticist H. J. Muller considered life to be defined by the ability of deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) to replicate itself, either in its original form or in a form that has undergone some kind of change. Things that have forever been devoid of life are devoid of DNA. DNA in its own right may be viewed as a form of life, demonstrated most remarkably by the still-potent DNA often retrieved from dead organisms, including fossilised ones. DNA can be used to replicate a dead organism, or some part of it. But for that to happen, the DNA would first need to be implanted in a living host, perhaps a cell of some description—which is what genetic engineering is about.

James Watson and Francis Crick found order to be central to fundamental life processes. DNA was the key, but instead of being explained merely by the

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chemical constituents of the molecule, life and genetic inheritance were shown by them (assisted by others) to depend on the way in which base elements are symmetrically arranged along its two helical strands. As Brenda Maddox says, ‘the DNA molecule is a set of chemical instructions which reverses the tendency of matter to become disordered and allows new molecules to be the same as the old.’ The term ‘symmetry’ is used here in its general sense of ‘harmony of proportions’, which derives from its etymological sense of ‘similarity of measure’, i.e. commensurability. (Mathematically, symmetry obtains when an object remains perceptibly the same after having undergone some kind of motion, for example rotation.) As well as symmetry, equivalent amounts of the four base elements of the molecule and identically shaped pairings of them were found to be features of its organisation.

Symmetry, equivalence, identical shapes—all are suggestive of order. Perhaps more than merely suggestive, for some scholars have considered the relation to be very close indeed. In a commentary on George Birkhoff’s theory of aesthetic value, the mathematician Mario Livio virtually equated symmetry with order. Very briefly, Birkhoff proposed that aesthetic value may be represented by the formula ‘order divided by complexity,’ implying that aesthetic value increases when order increases relative to complexity. Livio’s chief interest was symmetry, but, according to him, ‘for most practical purposes, the order is determined primarily by the symmetries of the object.’ In Livio’s words, symmetry has been ‘identified as the foundation from which all the laws of nature ultimately spring;’ nature’s laws on that account would surely be instantiations of order. Bearing that out, we find the mathematician Hermann Weyl declaring ‘[a]s far as I see, all a priori statements in physics have their origins in symmetry.’ The physics referred to by Weyl included relativity theory and quantum mechanics, as well as earlier theories such as Newton’s. Symmetry can

86 Nozick also refers to Birkhoff’s theory, noting that it bears some resemblance to his description of organic unity as ‘unity in diversity.’ Organic unity is central to Nozick’s ethical theory, and is equated with ‘value’. See Nozick p. 415.
88 Livio, p. 197.
reasonably be regarded as a mathematical lens through which physical order might be perceived.

Perceptible order via symmetry has long been the subject of comment. For instance, in his book The Garden of Cyrus, first published in the seventeenth century, Sir Thomas Browne remarks on the various kinds of symmetry in animals and plants; which, he says, ‘doth neatly declare how nature Geometrizeth, and observeth order in all things.'\(^{90}\) All things, it should be noted, non-living as well as living. The geometry of non-living nature is typified by the sinuosity of rivers (my example, not Browne’s). Sinuosity is the ratio between, on the one hand, the distance travelled by a river along its entire winding course, and, on the other hand, the distance as the crow flies between mouth and source. For the average river, sinuosity works out to be about the same as the ratio between a circle’s circumference and its diameter, i.e. \(\pi\). From the realm of living nature, snail shells provide a similar example. Gaston Bachelard was in awe of them: ‘[a] snail shell,’ he declares, ‘is one of the marvels of the universe ….. The shell is the clearest proof of life’s ability to constitute forms.'\(^{91}\) Snail shells, indeed mollusc shells in general, take the form of spirals which conform to another mathematical rule, the Golden Ratio, whose signature is the Greek letter \(\phi\).\(^{92}\) The form taken by a shell is largely governed by the organism’s genetic components, which are themselves structured symmetrically—symmetry and order, therefore, from beginning to end. The sinuosity of rivers shows that order is evident in at least some non-living entities, but the genetic conveyance of information that finds expression in successive generations remains the exclusive property of life.

Order in nature runs deep, so deep, I suggest, that its reach extends to human nature and from there to morality. But these are matters for later parts of the thesis: the other factor that differentiates life from non-life still has to be considered. Besides genetics, life is also distinguished by the capacity to make

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\(^{90}\) Browne quoted by D’Arcy Thompson, in On Growth and Form (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997 [first published 1961]), p. 103. Whether God (possibly in the guise of nature) is the geometer, or whether it is us, is a question that would divide theists from atheists.


\(^{92}\) Refer Mario Livio, The Golden Ratio: The Story of Phi, the Extraordinary Number of Nature, Art and Beauty (London: Review, 2003), p. 9. As defined by Euclid, the Golden Ratio is the ratio between the greater segment and the lesser segment of a straight line that has been divided in two in such a way that the ratio thus obtained is the same as the ratio borne by the whole line to the greater segment. Its approximate value is 1.6.
use of energy from either the sun or certain kinds of molecules. Organisms take in energy and they also discharge it. The processes involve what I will refer to as ‘entropy-avoidance’. The concept of entropy comes from physics and cosmology, where the Second Law of thermodynamics stipulates that closed systems such as the universe tend towards disorderliness. Closed systems are those that are unable to interact with their external environment (the universe in its entirety has no external environment). Disorderliness culminates in thermodynamic equilibrium, i.e., within a system, an even spread of matter that is utterly without composition or design. Thermodynamic equilibrium is the ultimate entropic condition: it is the state of maximum thermodynamic disorder, and is generally held to be irreversible.

Erwin Schrödinger, whose work is known to have influenced Watson and Crick, argued that ‘the device by which an organism maintains itself stationary at a fairly high level of orderliness (= fairly low level of entropy) really consists in continually sucking orderliness from its environment.’ By sucking in orderliness, life-forms are able to avoid (or forestall) thermodynamic disequilibrium. Organisms are living entities; non-living entities are not organisms. Entropy is an inevitable product of life, and to compensate for it, thereby avoiding death, organisms extract what is called ‘negative entropy’, or orderliness, from the external environment. To illustrate, life depends on nutrition, which involves the absorption of energy from foodstuffs, in exchange for an increase in energy in the form of heat in the surrounding environment. The initial absorption represents the extraction of orderliness, and the consequential heat contributes to the disorderliness of the encompassing system. The process of exchange is what we call ‘metabolism’, in which, Schrödinger says, ‘the essential thing is that the organism succeeds in freeing itself from all the entropy it cannot help producing while alive.’

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93 Some of the following on entropy previously appeared in my MA thesis, *Harmony in and between Aesthetic Experience and Moral Experience* (Melbourne: Deakin University, 2007).
96 Schrödinger, p. 88. In recent years the process of exchange of orderliness has been couched more in terms of ‘Gibbs free energy’ than Schrödinger’s ‘negative entropy’. Schrödinger himself referred to free energy (see Note to Chapter 6 of his book), but felt that the technicalities involved were beyond the grasp of the average reader. For the purposes of this thesis, the technicalities are not important. What is important is that life necessarily involves the transfer of entropy (i.e. disorder) to the external environment, whereas non-life does not.
A propos of the foregoing, some comments on the aetiology of order, specifically physical order, would be timely. What, if anything, first brought orderliness into being? Assuming for now that order exists, what might have been responsible for its beginning? Those who believe in an infinite deity would probably respond—it was God: some might even identify order with God, in which case order would be eternal.\(^97\) Atheistic thinkers would of course have to look elsewhere; Schrödinger may be able to help here as well.

We know that bacteria were the first living inhabitants of Earth,\(^98\) and that one of the steps crucial to the emergence of life is the development of mechanisms that provide energy.\(^99\) The photosynthesis previously referred to is one such mechanism: photons from sunlight are used by plants and some bacteria to produce food. Plants, Schrödinger says, ‘have their most powerful supply of “negative entropy” in the sunlight.’\(^100\) More generally, energy is needed to transform disorder into order, so it would seem that energy was implicated in some way in the first appearance of order. But no more than as an efficient cause thereof: ‘supply’ as used by Schrödinger connotes ‘source’, which connotes ‘cause’. Energy alone is not sufficient to produce order; other factors or materials are also required. Can any conclusions with regard to primal order be drawn from this? If entropy-avoidance were the only means of producing order, then the origin of order would consist in ‘life processes’ themselves, for example metabolism; or, even more succinctly, in life \textit{per se}. On that basis, while disorder (i.e. entropy) certainly existed before life, order (negative entropy) would only have come into being with the emergence of life. After its inception, life’s reproductive processes would have brought further instances of entropy-avoidance.

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\(^{97}\) The last might be regarded as a Spinozistic solution, and therefore amenable to a naturalistic interpretation. The notion of eternity is itself problematic, especially if time is considered to have begun with the Big Bang, as proposed by Stephen Hawking in \textit{A Brief History of Time}. If Hawking is right, then timelessness may be presumed to have preceded the Big Bang, and in a timeless state there would be no arrow of time, and therefore no entropy. If order were equivalent to the absence of entropy, then, in this scenario, order would have prevailed before the Big Bang—timelessly and therefore eternally. This is all very speculative, and I will not pursue the line of thought any further.

\(^{98}\) Richard Southwood, \textit{The Story of Life} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007 [first published 2003]), p. 16. Southwood notes that ‘prokaryota’ would be more precise than ‘bacteria’, but the latter is the commonly used term. At a very basic level, organisms are divided into two groups: Prokaryota, the cells of which lack a nucleus, and Eukaryota whose cells have nuclei. Animals and plants are eukaryotes.

\(^{99}\) Southwood, p. 12.

\(^{100}\) See Schrödinger, p. 92.
into being. As one of the section headings in Schrödinger’s book says, order is based on order.\textsuperscript{101}

But Schrödinger also has this to say: ‘[l]ife seems to be orderly and lawful behaviour of matter, not based exclusively on its tendency to go over from order to disorder, but based partly on existing order that is kept up.’\textsuperscript{102} For its inception, life depended on the capacity of carbon to form chains, rings and polymers,\textsuperscript{103} all of which are composite structures: their various shapes suggest that they were (and still are) non-random, i.e. orderly. The order that was characteristic of the first life-forms was therefore based on the orderliness of their constituent non-life-forms. Vestiges of order predate even such rudimentary forms of life as single-celled organisms with their organelles. In other words, while life is sufficient for order it is not necessary to it; and, conversely, although order is necessary to life it is not sufficient for it.

We are no closer to finding the origin of primal order, and I am unsure whether further investigation would bear any fruit.\textsuperscript{104} However, Schrödinger’s position on which came first, order or life, is clear—it was order. If that is accepted, then order \textit{per se} could not be that which differentiates life from non-life. Rather, the distinction would consist in Schrödinger’s notion of disorder-avoidance. Life can be seen as having first come into being when a particular arrangement of matter enabled a composite thing to resist the effects of the Second Law of thermodynamics, i.e. to resist disorder.

To sum up, life as distinct from non-life is generally characterised by disorder-avoidance. As a consequence, life is always structured in an orderly fashion, at least to some extent, whereas non-life may not be. The biologist Steven Rose encapsulates the point in his assertion that the persistence of life ‘depends above all on the maintenance of order: order within the cell, order within the organism, order in the relationship of the organism to the world outside it.’\textsuperscript{105} Genetics and

\textsuperscript{101} Schrödinger, p. 84.
\textsuperscript{102} Schrödinger, p. 85.
\textsuperscript{104} The inconclusiveness leaves the door ajar through which a religionist might enter with a supernaturalistic explanation. The possibility cannot be dismissed, but neither can the possibility of a naturalistic explanation.
entropy-avoidance both point in that direction. Order, then, is essential to life. That being the case, living beings can reasonably be said to have a ‘need for order’, in some sense of the term ‘need’, and in some sense of the term ‘order’. In precisely what sense or senses will soon be explained, but here I should make clear that the concept ‘need for order’ is central to my thesis. The need in question will be found in Chapter 5 to be implicated in the various human needs identified by Maslow, and those needs will be shown in Chapters 7 and 8 to provide a means of explaining moral commendability and condemnability.

**An Objection: Biochemical Asymmetry**

A possible objection to the primacy of order in the demarcation of life from non-life can be considered at this stage. While physics points to order as a means of differentiation through entropy-avoidance, chemistry seems to take a different direction. It has been known for some time that life depends on the asymmetric properties of the biological chemicals, i.e. the amino acids and sugars. Amino acids and sugar molecules are asymmetric in their chirality (i.e. handedness): the first are left-handed and the second right-handed, a feature that refers to the way they rotate a polarised plane of light. Non-biological chemicals are devoid of the characteristic, which led Louis Pasteur, in 1860, to speculate that ‘this was perhaps the only well-marked line of demarcation that can be drawn … between the chemistry of dead and living matter.’\(^{106}\) The principle remains as much in force today as it was then.

The chemical technicalities are irrelevant to this study, but the dependence of life on asymmetry is not. Symmetry has been seen in this section to be viewed by some (for example Livio) to be akin to order, even identical to it, in which case the asymmetrical nature of the building blocks of life could cast doubt on the proposition of an order-based demarcation. However, in defence of the proposition, asymmetry could be said to culminate in orderliness by virtue of its contribution to an organism’s ability to survive and propagate. Furthermore, balance between the asymmetrical elements is required: life obviously depends on the existence of both kinds of molecules, and on cooperation between them. Balance is implicit in order, and it reaches deep into nature. For instance, there is

\(^{106}\) Pasteur quoted by D’Arcy Thompson, pp. 137-138.
Goethe’s law of ‘compensation or balancement of growth,’ according to which—in Goethe’s words (quoted by Darwin)—‘in order to spend on one side, nature is forced to economise on the other side.’

D’Arcy Thompson observes that Goethe’s law is fundamentally underwritten by Aristotle’s principle of unity, which maintains that a whole is not simply a ‘bundle of parts but an organisation of parts.’ Orderliness is implicit in organisation, i.e. parts need to be in the right places at the right times. As has been noted, order is an organising principle. Etymologically as well as physically, organisms are supreme forms of organisation. Symmetry and balance are not necessary to the organisation of non-living entities, but the survival of living organisms depends on them.

This completes the preliminary part of the thesis. The second (metaethical) part begins with an explanation of the concept of ‘homosapient order’.

108 D’Arcy Thompson, p. 264.
Part II: ORDER-BASED METAETHICS

4: HOMOSAPIENT ORDER

4.1 Why Order?
Since the concept of homosapient order is new, any attempt to find support for it (or refutation of it) in the existing literature would presumably be a futile exercise. But we can at least say that order of some kind is fundamental to life; we might also infer from Rousseau and Hume that the relevance of order (again, of some kind) extends beyond the physical (see p. 2). William James seems to have been thinking along similar lines to Rousseau and Hume when he wrote, ‘[t]he course of history is nothing but the story of men’s struggles from generation to generation to find the more and more inclusive order.’ For James, order is an evolving phenomenon. For another writer of interest, Nicolas Malebranche, a Roman Catholic priest and philosopher, it was an immutable reality.

Around the turn of the eighteenth century, Malebranche proposed that God’s power is subordinate to the ‘immutable order’ (Malebranche’s term), not dissimilarly to Plato’s subordination of the gods to the Forms. Stephen Nadler explains that, for Malebranche,

Order consists in the eternal, immutable verities that stand above all things. These are pure logical and mathematical truths, absolutely true with the highest degree of necessity, but also moral and metaphysical principles about what Malebranche calls “relations of perfection”…. The dictates of Order serve as universal reasons for everything He does…. Thus, when God, considering the infinite possibilities in His understanding, chooses to create a world, Order sets one of His attributes (simplicity) above the others…. God’s wisdom, the dwelling place of Order, stands above his will and guides it.

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Further, ‘the immutable, necessary dictates of Order surpass the laws of nature and grace.’

Order is immutable and expressed through God in natural phenomena. Order was obviously of huge importance to Malebranche.

Although homosapient order might be absent from the literature, its three components—physical order, social order and eudaimonic order—have all been subjected to extensive treatment. With regard to physical order, Stephen Buckle observes that Aristotle adopted a biological model ‘for explaining all kinds of natural forces.’ For Aristotle, ‘a thing’s nature is its inner principle of change, and a change will be natural if it is the work of this inner principle.’

Aristotle was an essentialist, i.e. he subscribed to the view that entities such as human beings are characterised by at least one thing that is unique to the kind of entity in question, and that the particular kind of entity would cease to exist if the characteristic or characteristics were to vanish. My postulated ‘need for homosapient order’ is of that nature: it is a defining feature of humanness; were it to disappear, the species Homo sapiens would disappear with it.

Besides being an essentialist, Aristotle was also a teleologist, which is to say that the natural changes referred to by Buckle work towards some kind of end, or purpose. The following from Philippa Foot is apposite in this regard: ‘the teleological story [of human beings] goes beyond a reference to survival itself.’

Within the context of order, ‘survival’ can be understood to be a matter of physical order; in the terminology of Section 3.1, physical order is characterised by ‘general goodness’ because it contributes to the purpose of our survival. However, as Foot says, human purposes are not confined to survival. As well as having purposes pertaining to physical order, I would want to say that we also have purposes related to social order, and others related to eudaimonic order. I

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113 Foot, p. 43.
believe that homosapient order constitutes an important part of the story referred to by Foot, though not just as an end, but also as a beginning, in the form of a human need. Foot speaks of ‘human necessities,’ which consist of ‘what is quite generally needed for human good.’\textsuperscript{114} They might also be called what Elizabeth Anscombe referred to as ‘Aristotelian necessities’, which Foot glosses as things necessary ‘because and in so far as good hangs on it.’\textsuperscript{115} The need for homosapient order, I will argue, is one such necessity. In addition to survival, such things as ‘the mental capacity for learning language’ and ‘powers of imagination that allow [us] to understand stories’ are considered by Foot to be aspects of human good.\textsuperscript{116} Foot also speaks of the need for ‘the ability to form family ties, friendships, and special relations with neighbours;’\textsuperscript{117} these are what I regard as expressions of one of the components of the need for homosapient order, namely the need for social order.

I signalled earlier that social order and eudaimonic order may be regarded as analogues of physical order. What the three kinds of order consist in and how they combine to form homosapient order will now be explained.

4.2 The Components of Homosapient Order

Physical order and social order are not alien ideas, but eudaimonic order may be for some people. Very briefly, and as mentioned earlier, eudaimonic order entails psychological and spiritual order, and involves a sense of flourishing. The three classes of order together constitute what I am referring to as homosapient order, which encompasses various kinds of order, but not all kinds.\textsuperscript{118} The term

\textsuperscript{114} Foot, p. 43.
\textsuperscript{115} Foot, p. 15.
\textsuperscript{116} Foot, p. 43.
\textsuperscript{117} Foot, p. 44. Some people may be unable to enjoy the goods referred to by Foot. For example, an intellectual disability may prevent a person from acquiring verbal skills. But an inability to attain any of the goods would not preclude them from membership of the human family. Their inability, or disability, merely debar them from participation in some of the goods that are considered necessary by most human beings. It is important to note the qualifier ‘generally’ in the quotation from Foot.

\textsuperscript{118} Other taxonomies are also conceivable. For instance, there is one that may be inferred from an essay by Isaiah Berlin. Berlin uses the image of ‘crucial line’ to divide ‘surface’ from ‘depth’ in relation to ‘what human will and human reason can do.’ Above the line, there is ‘the world of perceptible, describable, analysable data, both physical and psychological, both “external” and “inner”, both public and private, with which the sciences can deal, although they have in some regions—those outside physics—made so little progress.’ Below the line, we have ‘the order which, as it were, “contains” and determines the structure of experience, the framework in which it—that is, we and all that we experience—must be conceived as being set, that which enters into our habits of thought, action, feeling, our emotions, hopes, wishes, our ways of talking, believing,
‘homosapient’ obviously derives from the scientific title given to our species, *Homo sapiens*. It is meant to signify that homosapient order is universally applicable to human beings, and that it is exclusive to us: distant ancestral species are unlikely to have had a need for eudaimonic order, and are therefore excluded; for the same reason, homosapient order is not applicable to non-human organisms.\(^\text{119}\) In the discussion that follows, explanations are offered with regard to what each of the kinds of order is and why it exists (i.e. the purposes it serves). I begin with physical order.

**P-Order**

‘P’ = Physical. P-order refers to arrangements of the elementary parts of which composites exist. The parts range from sub-atomic particles (or whatever else the smallest or most fundamental components of nature happen to be) to composites thereof. The orderliness entailed in genetically controlled propagation and entropy-avoidance is physical in nature. All of the general characteristics of order discussed in Section 3.1 are manifested in P-order.

Various kinds of composites can be P-orderly, non-living as well as living. Within each realm, there are things that may be described as being in a ‘state of nature’ (i.e. things whose basic structure is uninfluenced by human beings), and other things that are not in a state of nature (i.e. things whose basic structure has been influenced by human beings). P-orderly composites in a state of nature include mountains (non-life) and trees (life). P-orderly composites not in a state of nature include machines (non-life) and genetically-modified crops (life). Non-living composites that are not in a state of nature are wholes whose parts are sufficiently integrated for them to be able to fulfill their respective functions; for example, solar-heating installations. Similarly for living composites, for example well-structured anthers and carpels that contribute to the reproduction of flowering plants.

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119 Kitcher sets the age of the ‘ethical project’ (the title of his book) at approximately 50,000 years. In other words, ethics is assumed to have begun 50,000 years ago, although pre-ethical altruistic leanings would almost certainly have existed long before then. On that basis, the ethical project would be confined to the genus *Homo* (Latin for ‘man’) and the species *Homo sapiens* within that genus: the species is believed to have originated some 120,000 years ago.
P-order is necessary to life, including human life, but it is not necessary to non-living entities. P-order is good in the general sense of the term ‘good’: its existence is a mark of orderliness with respect to purpose. Since P-order is needed by all living entities, regardless of whether they are morally good, the need for P-order can be considered pre-moral, i.e. neither morally commendable nor morally condemnable. Enough was said about P-order in the discussion of the orderliness of life to enable us to move on to the next component of homosapient order.

S-Order

‘S’ = Social. S-order is confined to the realm of life. It refers to the collecting of organisms into groups in ways that enable the groups and their members to satisfy some kind of need or serve a particular purpose. S-orderly groups can be found in many branches of life, including insects, birds, chimpanzees and human beings. They can also be found in other life forms besides animals. With regard to the latter, Sandra Mitchell describes how slime mold periodically transforms itself from ‘a collection of individual single cells moving through space in search of food,’ into ‘a multicellular slime mold made up of a stalk and fruiting body.’ The transformation occurs when food becomes scarce.120

Many kinds of insects are what we call ‘social insects’, for example honeybees and ants. Such insects congregate in colonies, which, Mitchell explains, are complex systems. A colony is compositionally complex by virtue of ‘being constituted by a whole made up of many, non-randomly structured parts.’121 Colonies are generally characterised by orderly and complex patterns of division of labour—members take on specific and specialised tasks such as cell-cleaning, brood and queen care, food storage and foraging.122 All of these behaviours also find expression in human societies, and conglomeries of many other kinds of animals as well. We know, for instance, that birds of a feather flock together and that dolphins congregate in pods, presumably because of the safety afforded by numbers. A sense of conviviality may also play a part in flocking and grouping behaviour: formations of birds are often seen circling, swooping and soaring,

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120 Mitchell, p. 155.
121 Mitchell, p. 210. ‘Dynamical’ and ‘evolutionary’ complexities are also recounted.
122 Mitchell, pp. 210-211.
apparently for the sheer fun of it, while dolphins are especially frolicsome. Chimpanzees also form quite distinct social groups that are in many ways similar to human society; chimps, it may be noted, are genetically close to humans. But it is in respect of human beings that social order is especially pertinent to this study, because of its relevance to morality. Its moral relevance will be explained in due course; my immediate objective is to describe human social order more fully.

Most of the dictionary definitions of order are applicable to human S-order, in either of two senses: on the one hand, orderliness of social organisations themselves; or, on the other hand, orderliness of relations between members of social organisations. Under the aspect of organisation we find, inter alia, ‘a rank, grade, or class of persons in a community;’ and ‘a group or body of persons of the same profession, occupation, or pursuits.’ What we have in view here might be termed ‘social differentiation’. Under the aspect of social relations, the main item refers to ‘conformity or obedience to law or established authority; absence of disturbance, riot, revolt, unruliness, etc.’ Peace and S-order are close in connotation though not synonymous (a prison environment may be orderly but not peaceful).

In his Politics, Aristotle famously describes human beings as social animals. When isolated, a person is said to be ‘not self-sufficing,’ and is therefore ‘like a part in relation to the whole.’ Moreover, Aristotle writes, ‘he who is unable to live in society, or who has no need because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a god ….’ In view of what we now know about insects, birds and other animals, one might be inclined to think, not even a beast. To condemn self-sufficiency might seem strange, especially when we find Maslow placing it

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123 Dupré wisely cautions against inferring too much from the genetic proximity. The correct inference, he writes, is ‘that neither we nor chimpanzees are identical to our genomes’ (Dupré, p. 96).
124 But the enmities and violence that may exist would be attributable to the characters of the inmates and prison officials rather than the orderliness of the institution.
125 Aristotle, Politics, translated by Benjamin Jowett (Chicago: The University of Chicago, Great Books of the Western World, 1952), Vol. 9, 1.2, 1253a. Spinoza was of the same view: ‘since fear of isolation is innate in all men inasmuch as in isolation no one has the strength to defend himself and acquire the necessities of life, it follows that men by nature strive for a civil order, and it is impossible that men should ever dissolve this order.’ Spinoza quoted by Hasana Sharp, ‘Eve’s Perfection: Spinoza on Sexual (In) Equality’, Journal of the History of Philosophy Vol. 50, no. 4 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), p. 571, footnote no. 82. The quotation is from Spinoza’s Political Treatise, 2.15.
among the qualities of most value to us.\textsuperscript{126} For Maslow, self-sufficiency is a positive trait and something to which human beings should aspire—apparently in stark contrast to Aristotle. As I read Maslow, the opposite of self-sufficiency leads to over-reliance on others, which would make sense. But Aristotle’s position also appears to be correct: the overwhelming majority of us are certainly not self-sufficient. Maslow and Aristotle are obviously both right, each in his own way. While self-sufficiency for Maslow entails a sense of ‘doing the best one can for oneself’, recognition of one’s self-\textit{insufficient}y from Aristotle’s perspective would conceivably involve appreciation of the fact that doing the best for oneself almost invariably requires interactions with other people—ideally in a non-exploitative manner, whence cooperation and community-mindedness.

To this point I have been talking mainly about what S-order is and why it comes into being. With respect to \textit{what}, all of the general characteristics of order are embodied in it: composition in the form of grouping, together with coherence, integration and wholeness. With respect to \textit{why}, survival is a function of S-order for all life-forms to which it is relevant; but S-order also facilitates diverse behaviours such as play and ritual for some species. \textit{How}, then, might S-order come into being?

Returning for a moment to the social insects, Mitchell notes that the ‘standard account of the ordered complex pattern of division of labour has been an adaptionist one,’\textsuperscript{127} i.e. natural selection has generally been held responsible for forms of social organisation such as the one mentioned. Mitchell conjectures, however, that ‘self-organization models of aggregate emergent traits provide for the possibility that natural selection alone is not the appropriate agent to explain some complex traits.’\textsuperscript{128} What that means is that individuals within a colony become specialists either because of their peculiar genetic make-up, or because of the availability of different kinds of work, or because of information received in the course of its life—or because of various other factors. Regardless of which model is chosen, adaptionist or self-organisation, division of labour arises from a

\textsuperscript{126} The Farther Reaches of Human Nature, p. 309.
\textsuperscript{127} Mitchell, p. 211.
\textsuperscript{128} Mitchell, p. 211. Mitchell explains that self-organisation ‘refers to processes by which global order emerges from the simple interaction of component parts in the absence of a preprogrammed blueprint’ (Mitchell, p. 168). In the absence of any such blueprint, the order that attends self-organisation may be understood to come about by means of bootstrapping.
trait that enhances survival and reproductive opportunities. Division of labour is a means of social organisation across the entire spectrum of S-orderly life, including human life. Communication is another means.

In the same section of the *Politics* quoted from a moment ago, Aristotle maintains that human beings are uniquely furnished with the gift of speech, along with a sense of good and evil, which together enable us to talk about injustice and justice. These help to define our essence; they are characteristics that differentiate our species from other species. The same characteristics, or gifts, also enable us to articulate principles of justice and to encode them in laws that contribute to the formation of states. In simple terms, communication is essential to community. Even the verbal similarity is suggestive of a relation, one in which the complexity of communication might both reflect and be reflected in social complexity—in other words, where complexity in one varies directly with complexity in the other. Language is primarily social in nature: its origin lies in the impulse or need for members of a group to communicate with each other, either orally or in writing or by some other means, for example sign language and body language. Since birds, dolphins and chimpanzees are just some of the other creatures that communicate with each other by means of sonic signals and gestures, Aristotle’s attribution of the ‘gift of speech’ uniquely to human beings must be questioned: indeed, chimpanzees have been shown to be able to learn and use a fairly complex sign language. Nevertheless, it is fair to say that human language has reached a higher degree of complexity than that of any other creatures we know of.

Human society requires S-order; in other words, S-order is necessary to human social life, which is to say human life *per se*, for we are assuredly social beings. S-order is also necessary to the P-orderliness of human life: much if not all of the nourishment and nurture that human beings require would be impossible in the absence of efficient social organisation. S-order serves many purposes, and is therefore a general good. But it need not be morally good. A Machiavellian prince needs S-order as much as his most benevolent subject needs it. Accordingly, the need for S-order must be regarded as pre-moral.

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130 See, for example, the Washoe experiments recounted in Midgley’s *Beast and Man*, p. 206.
E-Order

‘E’ = Eudaimonic. The term ‘eudaimonic’ derives from the Aristotelian notion of human flourishing, i.e. to arrangements of things, ideas and activities that contribute to individual fulfillment through, for example, intellectual achievement and aesthetic experience. Unlike P-order and S-order, E-order is exclusive to human beings. E-order consists in wholeness in the sense alluded to by David Bohm when he asserted that human beings have ‘sensed always that wholeness or integrity is an absolute necessity to make life worth living.’ Flourishing by means of wholeness entails a sense of healthiness of body and soul—as Bohm notes, ‘whole’ in English derives from the old Anglo-Saxon word ‘hale’, which means ‘health’: ‘holy’ has the same etymological origin.

Since the prefix ‘eu’ denotes ‘good’ and ‘daimon’ signifies ‘spirit’, ‘eudaimonic’ can be understood to mean ‘good spiritedness’, although not necessarily in any religious sense (Maslow’s reference to religious states in so far as they are naturalistic might be recalled here; see p. 8). The term is admittedly esoteric, but it conveys the sense of personal excellence I was looking for—excellence in terms of Platonic orderliness of the soul, attainable, perhaps, through the development of ‘imagination, wit, beauty and grace.’ According to John Rawls, the latter are ‘excellences’ that are goods both for the person who possesses them and others as well; they are ‘a condition of human flourishing.’ A description of saintliness from William James is also apposite: ‘[a]ll of the mind’s objects and occupations [are] ordered with reference to the special spiritual excitement which is now its keynote.’ Religious conviction may not be a necessary condition for eudaimonic order, but conviction per se almost certainly would be.

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132 Nozick observes that the development of the soul as envisaged by Plato involves oppression of the lower parts by the intellect, and so should not be described as ‘harmonious’. Nevertheless, he does not dismiss the possibility of ‘harmonious hierarchical ordering,’ and considers this to be ‘the goal of self-development’ (Philosophical Explanations, p. 507).
134 William James, The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature (London: Folio Society, 2008 [first published 1902]), p. 247. An open question at this stage is whether homosapient order in general, and E-order in particular, might provide sufficient ‘spiritual excitement’ to satisfy one’s philosophical need, should one feel such a need. But I am tempted to propose a degree of similarity between it and Einstein’s God, who was Spinoza’s God. In Einstein’s words, ‘I believe in Spinoza’s God who reveals himself in the harmony of all being, not in a God who concerns himself with the fate and actions of men.’ Einstein quoted in Donald
I suggested a moment ago that intellectual achievement and aesthetic experience can contribute to human fulfillment. These will now be discussed, with a view to clarifying the nature of E-order.

One of the definitions of order comes from biology: ‘the usual major subdivision of a class or subclass in the classification of organisms.’ ‘Order’ constitutes one of taxonomic elements of the modernised Linnaean system: it sits between class and family. For my purposes, however, the important thing about this is the ordering process that gives rise to the taxonomy. Biological taxonomies—or any kind of taxonomy for that matter—are human constructions that are fundamental to our cognitive ordering of the world. There are other means of cognitive ordering besides classification; indeed, each of the categories included by Kant in his analysis of the understanding\(^{135}\) serve precisely that purpose. Regardless of how it is achieved, cognitive ordering facilitates understanding of our place in the scheme of things, and contributes to the attainment of E-order.

One of the groups of Kantian categories is called ‘quantitative’, and is therefore concerned with mathematics. As a form of symbolism, and as one of the highest intellectual pursuits that human beings can engage in, mathematics properly belongs in the realm of human accomplishment. One often finds mathematical theories being praised on account of their simplicity and elegance. Indeed, the same qualities will often be significant in decisions between competing theories: so long as it works, the simpler and more elegant the theory the better. Simplicity and elegance are cognate with order; since they are essentially aesthetic qualities, they are also relevant to art.

Aesthetic order in works of art is a function of what Marcia Muelder Eaton refers to as ‘formal unity’. The same expression was encountered a short while ago in the discussion of Aristotle’s explanation of unity, and Eaton’s use of the term is fully consistent with Aristotle. For Eaton, formal unity is concerned with the way in which the various features of a work of art ‘are put together—patterns or the organisation of parts that an object displays such as repetition or symmetry’.\(^{136}\)

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\(^{135}\) The categories are discussed in Section 5.3.

The ‘putting together’ that occurs in a work of art results in a blending of parts, and, in so far as it is the work of a human being, it will almost always be thoughtfully done. Thoughtful blending is one way of describing the process of artistic creation. Thoughtfulness in the blending of parts by an artist culminates in (or aims at) formal unity and aesthetic order. Formal unity and aesthetic order are the purpose that the artist seeks to fulfill in the object that he or she produces. Fitness for purpose as an aesthetically satisfying object is the organising principle of artistic production. Because of the close connection between thoughtful blending and order, wherever unity is brought into being by means of thoughtful blending, order will follow. Physical entities become blended, but it is the thought that counts.

Maslow can also contribute to the discussion of E-order. According to him,

The value-life (spiritual, religious, philosophical, axiological etc.) is an aspect of human biology and is on the same continuum with the “lower” animal life (rather than being in separated, dichotomized, or mutually exclusive realms). It is probably therefore species-wide, supracultural even though it must be actualized by culture in order to exist.¹³⁷

Maslow equated the so-called ‘value-life’ with the spiritual or ‘higher’ life, and he can be understood to have been referring to human flourishing. Value-life corresponds to E-orderly life. When Maslow describes the value-life as ‘an aspect of human biology,’ he is saying that it is ‘part of the human essence:’¹³⁸ i.e., in his terminology, it is ‘instinctoid’ rather than ‘learned’. For Maslow, the value-life ‘is a defining characteristic of human nature, without which human nature is not full human nature.’¹³⁹ Aristotle would have concurred: as well as having ‘vegetative’ and ‘appetitive’ faculties in common with other life-forms, human beings are said by him to be uniquely possessed of the faculty of reason, which may be either practical or theoretical. Practical reason is the source of ethics, while theoretical reason is regarded as ‘the divine element of the soul.’¹⁴⁰ Without going into what ‘divine’ meant for Aristotle, it is clear that it was held by him to be of high value.

It is worth noting how S-order and E-order are connected in the excerpt from Maslow, in the dependence of the value-life on the existence of culture. The likelihood of culture would be severely diminished if society were non-existent; indeed, if culture is understood to consist in ‘the sum total of ways of living built up by a group of human beings, which is transmitted from one generation to another,’141 then the absence of society would render culture impossible. On that basis, if there were no society, neither human S-order nor E-order could eventuate.

Finally, I have claimed that P-order and S-order are necessary to human life: can the same be said for E-order? Well, based on the foregoing, it is obviously necessary to a flourishing life; but it is also necessary in another sense. The kind of society and S-order that we now need, and will continue to need, to meet our requirements for nourishment and nurture would clearly be impossible in the absence of scientific and artistic advances. Such advances are arguably the work of individuals who attain or approach excellence in their respective fields. In other words, we need E-order as much as we need P-order and S-order. However, as was the case with P- and S-order, the need for E-order should be regarded as pre-moral. As I have described it, E-order is clearly something that most of us would find desirable, because of the various excellences that it entails: wholeness, healthiness, soul-balance, flourishing, and so forth. But moral goodness would not seem to be a pre-requisite for many of the excellences. An evil genius who comes across as being witty and elegant is readily imaginable: Voldemort, in J. K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter* books, for example.142

P-order, S-order and E-order are all needed by us, and they share the same general characteristics. The question now is, how do the three kinds of order come together to form homosapient order? Precisely what is homosapient order?

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141 *The Macquarrie Dictionary.*

4.3 Homosapient Order

The answer to last question is that homosapient order is a compound formed from P-order, S-order and E-order, when all three kinds of order are brought into some kind of relationship with one another—in particular, a relationship of dependency. P-order has been seen to be historically prior to the other components of homosapient order: it is the basis of life, non-human as well as human. S- and E-order are properties of various kinds of entities, which depend for their existence on P-order. In that very fundamental sense, S-order and E-order can be said to be dependent on P-order. In contrast, P-order can exist independently of S-order and E-order; therefore, as well as being historically prior, P-order is ontologically prior to the other kinds of order. (The ontological status of homosapient order is examined in Chapter 9.)

As well as a relationship of dependency, the general characteristics shared by the three kinds of order are indicative of a relationship of similarity between them. Since wholeness, coherence, integrity and composition are all concerned with structure (the shape of things and the way their parts are interrelated), P-, S- and E-order are all like one another in terms of basic structure.143

In Figure 2, each of the components is shown as being connected to the other two components.

![Figure 2: Homosapient Order and its Components](image)

The diagram reads in the usual way, from left to right. P-order is shown on the left in recognition of its temporal and biological priority: temporal because P-order existed in the universe long before human beings evolved; biological

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143 Paul Davies writes that biological order ‘is recognized because the diverse component parts of an organism cooperate to perform a coherent unitary function’ (see *The Cosmic Blueprint: New Discoveries in Nature’s Ability to Order the Universe* (Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press, 2004), p. 74. S-order and E-order could be described in very similar terms.
because it existed in life-forms that pre-dated *Homo sapiens*. Nor could human life have begun without P-order. The arrows pointing from P-order to S-order and E-order are indicative of its priority; P-order is the cornerstone of homosapient order. But the arrows also point in the opposite direction. The one from S-order to P-order signifies the cooperative effort required for the production of means to satisfy our material needs (food, shelter, etc.). Similarly for E-order and P-order, where the attainment of a balanced soul may culminate in a temperate and thoughtfully considered life-style; a life-style, perhaps, that conduces towards physiological harmony and environmental awareness. S-order and E-order are also connected by a two-way arrow. They are interrelated by means of the influence of social and cultural products (such as science and art) on eudaimonic fulfillment—and the influence that the latter may have on social order, for example from having found one’s proper place in the world and perhaps peace of mind.

Human beings need homosapient order in its entirety, and satisfaction of the need would bring homosapient order into effect. P-, S-, and E-order have each been shown to be necessary to human life: it follows from their interrelatedness that homosapient order is also necessary. Further, for the same reasons that the need for each of its parts is pre-moral, the need for homosapient order would also be pre-moral—good and bad people alike need it. By being brought into effect, the three kinds of order become conjoined to one another. Since human beings need homosapient order in its entirety, and because of the interconnectedness of its components, homosapient order can reasonably be spoken of as if it were a unity. But there is still a long way to go before it can be connected to morality: a further step towards creating the link will now be taken, by considering whether homosapient order is morally good.

### 4.4 Homosapient Order and Moral Good

I have claimed that homosapient order is necessary to human life. We need it: it is essential that we attain it, at least to the extent of avoiding maximum homosapient disorder. If homosapient order were non-existent, we also would be non-existent. Its possession is coincident with the fulfillment of our purpose. Since the extent to which things fulfill their purposes determines whether they are good or bad in a
general sense, homosapient order may reasonably be claimed to be good in that sense.

Homosapient order is also of the nature of a Footian natural good. For Foot, natural goodness ‘is attributable only to living things themselves and to their parts, characteristics, and operations, [and] is intrinsic or “autonomous” goodness in that it depends directly on the relation of an individual to the ‘life form’ of its species.’ In virtue of being autonomous, natural goodness performs a self-regulatory role with respect to an individual’s conformity to the life-form of the species of which it is a member. The life form of a species consists fundamentally in what is considered to be normal for the species: for an oak tree, there would be norms of sturdiness and life span; for a cat, norms of speed, agility and playfulness would usually be thought to apply. For a human being, norms would seem to be applicable to each of the elements of homosapient order, and therefore to homosapient order in total. For example, a measure of healthiness would be associable with P-order, a measure of cooperativeness with S-order, and a measure of personal fulfillment with E-order. The sum of such norms (there would be many more besides those mentioned) constitutes the human life form. I have argued that the need for homosapient order is pre-moral; whether the norms of the natural goodness that is homosapient order are morally relevant is a far trickier matter. Although the testimony of Malebranche, Rousseau, Hume and James is indicative of the moral normativity of (some kind of) order, that hardly constitutes an argument.

In the terminology of Chapter 2, the question is whether homosapient order is a morally good end, in the form of either intermediate end or final end. It is clearly a Footian natural good, but, based on the argument of Chapter 2, moral goodness depends on the involvement of morally right means (i.e. commendable morally classifiable behaviour). In other words, morally commendable interaction has to occur between moral agents and respondents. Must homosapient order involve such interaction? The discussion in this chapter suggests each of the components of homosapient order may involve some kind of interaction: for example, in obtaining medical treatment in the maintenance of P-order; in interactions with family members and colleagues in upholding S-order; and in dialogue with

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145 Foot, pp. 26-27.
teachers and philosophers in the quest for E-order. But need there be any compulsion for the interactions to be morally commendable? The answer would seem to be no, as indicated by the Machiavellian prince and Voldemort examples. Nevertheless, I believe homosapient order to be morally significant. Two arguments will now be offered in support of that contention. The first examines the proposition that homosapient order is similar in many respects to justice, and may therefore be imbued with the same kind of moral goodness that is characteristic of justice. The second argument is based on some ideas from Foot, the main points being (a) homosapient order and moral goodness are two of the natural goods whose norms help constitute the life form of our species, and (b) natural goods must be compatible with one another.

First argument: homosapient order and its similarity to justice.

The concept of justice will first be explored in order to identify some of its salient characteristics. The same characteristics will be found to be common to homosapient order. The proposition is that the commonality of characteristics brings justice very closely into alignment with homosapient order—that they are, in effect, natural allies.

What, then, is justice? From the standpoint of an individual, justice has both an external dimension and an internal dimension. Externally, interactions between the individual and other people may be described in terms of just or unjust. Internally, the individual may be similarly described: ‘she is a just person’; ‘he is unjust’. The Greek concept of justice (dikaiothyne in their language) encompasses both dimensions. It entails a sense of order, both external and internal—externally, orderly relations between the individual and his or her natural and social environments; internally, harmony between an individual’s reason, feeling and will. Plato considered justice to be inseparable from the virtues of wisdom, courage and temperance: to attain one would be to attain all.148 As such, E-order would be brought into view, together with S-order. Wisdom is the province of the rational aspect of the soul, courage reflects its spirited aspect, and temperance its appetitive aspect. Proper balance between the three aspects in the performance of their functions constitutes Platonic justice, in a similar way to a city, where justice

was held to consist in the perseverance of the various social classes in the performance of their respective functions.149

Contemporary notions of justice often emphasise its external dimension. According to Finnis, the elements of justice are threefold: other-directedness, duty and equality. Other-directedness is concerned with ‘one’s relations and dealings with other persons;’ duty consists in ‘what is owed … or due to another, and correspondingly of what that other person has a right to;’ and equality is aligned with the notions of proportionality, equilibrium and balance.150 The number of terms that Finnis associates with equality is indicative of the difficulty involved in explaining it, but the fact that his commentary refers to what someone ‘needs or with what is fitting for him if he is to remain alive and well’151 is significant. Justice is clearly concerned with the notion of order, and with the need to avoid harm.152 Rawls also focuses on the external dimension of justice. For him, a just society is a ‘rightly ordered’ society,153 and the concept of justice means ‘proper balance between competing claims.’154 Further, proper balance between competing claims is held essentially to be a matter of fairness. Very briefly, justice as fairness in a society requires the enjoyment of equal basic liberties (conscience, speech, etc.) by everyone, that social and economic opportunities are the same for everyone, and that no-one benefits from altered socioeconomic arrangements unless the least advantaged members of the society also benefit.155

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149 Republic IV, 435b-c.
150 Finnis, pp. 161-163.
151 Finnis, p. 163.
152 The idea is very old; Epicurus, for instance, had this to say: ‘[t]he nature of justice is a pledge of reciprocal usefullness, [i.e.,] neither to harm one another nor be harmed.’ Refer Epicurean Principal Doctrine XXXI, as listed by Diogenes Laertius, in The Epicurus Reader, translated and edited by Brad Inwood and L. P. Gerson (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1994), p. 35.
155 See Rawls, A Theory of Justice. Rawls describes his theory as contractarian. When it comes to ethics, primacy in such theories is accorded to rationality relative to the emotions. The same applies to the Platonic and Kantian traditions, but, according to Laurence Thomas, with a difference: ‘[t]he difference between the two is that for [Platonists and Kantians] the rational self discovers morality, whereas for [contractarians] the rational self creates it.’ (See ‘Trust, Affirmation, and Moral Character: A Critique of Kantian Morality’, in Flanagan and Rorty (editors), Identity, Character, and Morality: Essays in Moral Psychology, p. 236.) On this account, the order-based theory will be found to fit comfortably into the Platonist and Kantian mould. I should add, however, that Rawls also classified his theory as deontological (A Theory of Justice, p. 26), which would steer it in the direction of Kantianism. The distinction drawn by Thomas may not be as clear-cut as one would like, but that could be true of the lines that purportedly separate many moral theories.
In contrast to Finnis and Rawls, Maslow turns his psychologist’s gaze inwards and speaks predominantly of the internal dimension of justice. He associates several so-called ‘metapathologies’ (ill-effects) with injustice, including insecurity, anger, cynicism, mistrust, lawlessness and total selfishness.\(^{156}\) These are all personal characteristics: it is perfectly conceivable that we might describe a person as cynical, or mistrustful, or insecure, or ‘metapathological’ in any other way, without having any particular action in mind. For Maslow, the effects of injustice are very similar to those of disorder: the latter include lawlessness, breakdown of authority, insecurity, wariness, loss of safety, necessity for vigilance, alertness and tension.\(^{157}\) Implications for homosapient order are evident in all of the Maslovian metapathologies. Insecurity poses a threat to physical order; mistrust and lawlessness are contrary to social order; while anger and cynicism are inimical to eudaimonic order. Then there is ‘total selfishness’, which would certainly be contrary to both Finnis’s and Rawls’s conceptions of justice—it works against other-directedness, duty, equality and fairness, all of which are morally relevant. Total selfishness may be regarded as a cause of injustice as well as being an effect of it; both cause and effect, or reciprocally reinforcing, where one’s own selfishness precipitates selfishness in another.

Total selfishness on the part of an agent manifests either as indifference towards the needs of respondents, or as deliberate infringement of them. In other words, the need that respondents have for homosapient order is paid little or no heed by the selfish agent. Our species’ pursuit of homosapient order does not preclude the possibility of aberrant individuals, i.e. people whose purposes diverge from the norm, such as the Machiavellian prince and Voldemort (see Section 6.5 for further discussion). In the terminology of this thesis, totally selfish agents could even be said to need to inflict homosapient disorder on those with whom they engage in morally classifiable transactions. The only things that matter for such agents are their own needs. Whence the selfish need? It is a matter of character, of good-will versus ill-will. Those who either ignore or set about thwarting the needs of others in morally classifiable transactions are persons of ill-will: their selfishness culminates in injustice. An unjust person’s character will be characterised by

\(^{156}\) The Farther Reaches of Human Nature, p. 308.
\(^{157}\) The Farther Reaches of Human Nature, p. 308.
Footian natural defectiveness as distinct from natural goodness; her morally classifiable behaviour accordingly tends towards that which is morally condemnable. Conversely for a just person’s morally classifiable behaviour: her behaviour will tend towards moral commendability. I leave the first argument with the observation that homosapien t order and justice share several characteristics, including balance, harmony, proportionality, and avoidance of harm.

Second argument: compatibility of natural goods.

Foot argues for the existence of ‘a logical structure that belongs to the evaluation of all living things “in their own right”, or “autonomously”.’\(^{158}\) The expressions ‘belongs to’ and ‘in their own right’ suggest that the logical structure referred to is natural to the things in question. Foot introduces the term ‘conceptually verdictive’ to describe actions that, from a practical point of view, ‘entail a “final” “should” or “should not”.’\(^{159}\) Verdictives would seem to relate to the norms that constitute the life form of a species: something that is perceived to conform to a norm will elicit a ‘should’; conversely for something that does not conform. The term ‘verdictive’ conjures up the notion of judgement, which in turn evokes the notion of justice—to act justly would be to act well (as one should, i.e. in conformity with a norm), and to act badly would be to act unjustly (as one should not, i.e. contrary to a norm). Now while that might seem to point towards moral evaluation, Foot insists that verdictives have nothing to do with the rights or needs of others, nor with public morality (my emphasis). (The preceding sentence would better reflect the facts if conjunctions were substituted for the disjunctions, since, I will argue, public morality is very much concerned with the rights and needs of others.)

We can certainly agree with Foot that verdictives such as ‘foolish’ and ‘imprudent’ may be attributed to behaviour that has little or no moral relevance; or even when no particular actions are involved, as, for example, when we say ‘he is a foolish person’, or ‘she has little presence of mind’. On Foot’s account, verdictives can be understood to issue from conceptions of whether actions conform to norms that are morally irrelevant from the perspective of public

\(^{158}\) Foot, p. 67.

\(^{159}\) Foot, p. 78.
morality. In which case, the norms that are applicable to the human species, and which constitute the species’ life form, would also be morally irrelevant from the perspective of public morality. Since conformity to one’s life form constitutes one’s natural good, and since homosapien order is an aspect of the human life form, it must be concluded that homosapien order, on Foot’s thesis, is likewise morally irrelevant.

A dead-end appears to have been reached. But all may not be lost. The notion of ‘public morality’ that featured in the foregoing account may hold the key to a way forward. A counterpart notion could find expression as ‘private morality’. For I think one might reasonably maintain that verdictives such as those mentioned are relevant to the issue of virtue, or personal character. Should that be the case, all of the classical virtues (and vices, or ‘defects’ as Foot would call them) would come into view: knowledge, understanding, wisdom, prudence, fortitude, temperateness and justice. Support for the alignment of morally commendable justice with homosapien order can be inferred from Foot’s theory.

In Section 2.2 it was noted that Foot’s concept of ‘practical rationality’ encompasses matters such as promising, neighbourliness and giving help to those who are in trouble, which are all morally charged and would arguably belong just as much to the realm of public morality as they do to that of private morality. Practical rationality is said to be an aspect of the life form of our species, in which case moral goodness would be seen as being consistent with the species’ natural purpose. The life form of the species includes a parcel of natural goods, including, in our case, practical rationality and homosapien order. It is inconceivable to me how any of the natural goods could be incompatible with one another, i.e. work against or frustrate one another. How, for instance, could neighbourliness and physical health be at cross-purposes? Neighbourliness entails concern for our neighbour’s interests, and health would surely be among their interests. Similarly with regard to homosapien order and practical rationality. As has been explained, homosapien order depends on cooperation between people, the same kind of cooperativeness that is involved in practical rationality. No incompatibility between them is evident. Incompatibility would surely lead to contamination of the natural goods involved and vitiation of the species’ life form.
Evil, it may be concluded, is incompatible with our species’ need for homosapient order.

Based on the foregoing, I believe homosapient order may reasonably be regarded as morally relevant. According to the first argument, homosapient order looks something like justice, and the second argument found that evil is incompatible with it. The first argument is admittedly inconclusive, since analogical relationships such as the one proposed have little or nothing definitive to say about whether a real relationship exists. But a reasonably positive conclusion can be drawn from the second argument. If evil is incompatible with homosapient order, then it seems unlikely that evil would be capable of bringing homosapient order into effect. That, in turn, could imply that moral good is capable of bringing homosapient order into effect. On the grounds discussed to this point of the thesis, the implication cannot be regarded as rock-solid (something altogether different from moral good may be responsible for homosapient order), but it reflects the position I will be taking on the matter. Further argument for it will be found in ensuing chapters, along the following lines.

As I see it, an agent’s morally classifiable behaviour will be either commendable or condemnable depending on the relationship between the effects on the homosapient order the parties involved. It will be condemnable if the overall level of homosapient order diminishes, and commendable if no such diminution occurs. In addition to that, I will argue that the relativities of the effects of morally classifiable behaviour on homosapient order depend to a very large extent on the character of the agent. The character of the agent, as reflected in the goodness (or badness) of her will, has a strong bearing on the commendability (or condemnability) of her morally classifiable behaviour. As noted in Section 2.2, goodness of will is of paramount importance to the theories of ethics advanced both by deontologists and by consequentialists; I am simply reinforcing the point. But the order-based theory will have to be further explained before all of this can be confirmed.

4.5 Homosapient Order and the Order-Based Theory of Morality
The connection between homosapient order and morality that I am looking for has begun, but it needs to be strengthened. In the chapters that follow I will attempt to
show that homosapient order constitutes the basis of both of the theory’s ethical facets; i.e. its utilitarian facet and its character-based facet, which, very roughly, may respectively be seen to coincide with public morality and private morality. Here is an outline of the approach that will be taken.

The need for homosapient order will be shown to find expression in various basic needs, such as those described by Maslow. The needs that are expressions of the need for homosapient order are themselves expressed in behaviour. The needs that are expressions of the need for homosapient order will also be seen to be subject to hierarchical ordering. Some of our needs are more pressing than other needs, although precisely which needs take precedence may vary between people. When an agent acts to satisfy a need, his action may or may not impact on the needs of others. If it does, the action will be morally relevant. A negative impact will be described as morally condemnable. An impact that is not negative will be described as morally commendable. The last four sentences have taken us into ethical territory, as distinct (if they can be kept distinct) from metaethics. To repeat, it is probably impossible to prevent the two domains from overlapping—in order to explain why the order-based theory is a metaethical theory, and not, say, a general theory of motivation, its ethical significance must also be established. But all of this lies ahead, beginning with the relationship between homosapient order and human needs.
5: HOMOSAPIENT ORDER AND HUMAN NEEDS

5.1 Basic Needs

Needs are described by David Wiggins as ‘states of dependency (in respect of not being harmed), which have as their proper objects things needed.’ If this were to be understood as a definition, then it would probably be dismissed on account of circularity: ‘state of dependency in respect of not being harmed’ would be sufficient. To avoid being harmed organisms generally depend on objects capable of preventing possible harm; so much would seem clear. It is also clear that some needs are generally the same for all people, at least in broad terms. We all need food and water, and most of us require shelter, security, love and esteem: to be deprived of any of them would entail harm. But there are many different ways in which people go about satisfying their needs, and those ways are deeply influenced by physical, social and cultural factors, including conventions and traditions.

Conventions and traditions often govern the means people employ to satisfy general needs, giving rise to what might be called ‘specific needs’. For example, Hindus of certain sects will specifically need vegetarian food rather than just any kind of food, while orthodox Jews will reject food that is not kosher. Mary Midgley observes that facts about ‘our whole system of needs ... have come to determine what sort of culture, what rational way of life, can suit us.’ That would be especially true of specific needs: needs affect culture, culture affects specific needs. Abraham Maslow refers to general needs as ‘instinctoid’, and differentiates them from learned needs; the latter are what I have termed ‘specific needs’.

Maslow’s theory of needs is a theory of human motivation: it responds to the question, ‘why do we do what we do?’ In the 1943 paper in which he first presented his hierarchy of needs, Maslow acknowledges that there are other determinants of behaviour besides needs, although needs are said to

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161 Midgley, Beast and Man, p. 309.
predominate.\textsuperscript{162} A distinction is drawn between ‘coping behaviour’ and ‘expressive behaviour’. Coping behaviour is need-motivated goal-seeking behaviour, while expressive behaviour is behaviour that is expressive of an agent’s character: ‘a stupid man,’ Maslow writes, ‘behaves stupidly, not because he wants to, or is motivated to, but simply because he is what he is.’\textsuperscript{163} But the two kinds of behaviour are not mutually exclusive: average behaviour, Maslow observes, ‘is usually both.’\textsuperscript{164} A stupid man, like any other kind of person, has needs, and may be motivated by them.

The aim of this chapter is to establish a connection between human needs and homosapient order. Maslow’s hierarchy of needs is introduced in Section 5.2, and Section 5.3 goes on to link each of the Maslovian needs to the need for homosapient order. The linkages are crucial to the formulation of the order-based theory of morality. They provide the connection between the theory’s metaethical roots and its ethical offshoots. The roots consist in the need for homosapient order and its various expressions in the Maslovian needs; these, according the theory, explain why we are moral beings. The offshoots consist in an interpretation of moral commendability and condemnability in terms of the aforementioned needs. Section 5.4 considers whether there are any significant omissions from Maslow’s schema.

Although Maslow’s theory focuses on motivation rather than morality, his ideas feed directly into significant issues confronting ethical theory—at least I hope to be able to show that they do. Besides Maslow, the works of some thinkers whose moral theories have their basis in human needs will also be discussed, including David Wiggins, Gillian Brock and David Braybrooke. But Maslow is my starting point.

\section*{5.2 Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs: an Introduction}

According to Maslow, the needs that motivate human behaviour can be understood in terms of a hierarchy, ranging from (at the bottom) physiological needs such as the need for food and water to (at the top) self-actualisation needs.


\textsuperscript{163} A Theory of Human Motivation, p. 391.

\textsuperscript{164} A Theory of Human Motivation, p. 391.
such as the need to fulfill one’s potential. For Maslow, a need’s position in the hierarchy reflects its motivational force, or ‘prepotency’. Lower-order needs must be satisfied before higher-order can assume full motivational force. For example, a person dying of starvation would be unlikely to be concerned with fulfilling her intellectual potential. George Orwell saw as much a decade before Maslow: writing on the condition of tramps, he remarked, ‘[t]hey have nothing worthy to be called conversation, because emptiness of belly leaves no speculation in their souls.’ Here is Maslow’s hierarchy.

Self-actualisation needs: self-fulfillment, realisation of one’s potential.
Aesthetic needs: appreciation of and creation of beauty.
Cognitive needs: inquiry, knowledge, and understanding.
Esteem needs: achievement, competence, approval, recognition.
Belongingness and love needs: affiliation, acceptance, belongingness.
Safety needs: security, safety.
Physiological needs: elimination of hunger, thirst, etc.

Maslow grouped the needs under two headings: the lower ones were called ‘deficiency needs’, and the higher ones ‘metaneeds’. The line between them was drawn between the need for esteem and the need for cognition. Metaneeds can also be called ‘being needs’, in recognition of the importance that Maslow attributed to the concept of being. According to him, there is a ‘B-realm’ and a ‘D-realm’, where ‘B’ and ‘D’ stand respectively for ‘being’ and ‘deficiency’. Distinct forms of cognition, values and language are said to reside in each of the realms. B-values were of great consequence to Maslow; he equated them with metaneeds. B-cognition is described as ‘veridical, because [it is] detached, desireless, unselfish, “disinterested,” Taoistic, fearless, here-now …, receptive, humble (not arrogant), without thought of selfish profit, etc.,’ and optimal with

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165 The ‘lower’ the need the greater its prepotency; in general, a need does not assume motivational force until those below it in the hierarchy have been satisfied.
169 The Farther Reaches of Human Nature, pp. 294, 301. The relationship between values and needs will be commented upon later.
Beauty, truth and goodness are listed among the B-values, and gratification or fulfillment of such values (and therefore satisfaction of the metaneeds) was regarded by Maslow as a means of human development; it was also seen as being characteristic of self-actualising (i.e. psychologically healthy) people. I will have more to say on these matters later, but for the time being I will refer to metaneeds as ‘being needs’, or ‘B-needs’, because of their strong association (indeed identity) with B-values.

It may be remarked that intellectual achievement (a cognitive need) and aesthetic experience (an aesthetic need) are often instrumental in the attainment of self-actualisation, as well as constituting needs in their own right. In his seminal 1943 paper, Maslow speaks of his then-unconfirmed impression ‘that it is possible to distinguish the artistic and intellectual products of basically satisfied people from those of basically unsatisfied people by inspection alone.’ Basically satisfied people are those who are best prepared for self-actualisation—‘it is from these that we may expect the fullest (and healthiest) creativeness,’ he writes. Maslow came to discover that the force of the various being needs tends to differ among people: for example, while some might rate aesthetic experience above intellectual achievement, others would reverse the sequence. However, while no evidence of a generalised hierarchy of prepotency among the being needs could be found, everyone was found to have a hierarchy of some kind. On the whole, Maslow’s broad ‘D’ and ‘B’ classifications appear to be appropriate. Hunger and danger would commonly be thought of in terms of an absence of something, namely food and safety, while self-fulfillment would justifiably be seen as an elevation, or perhaps unification, of one’s very being; similarly for the intervening categories.

Although Maslow initially grouped motivational needs under two heads, he later came to think that they might also be accommodated within a threefold

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classification—lower basic needs, higher basic needs, and metaneeds. Lower basic needs are the physiological and safety needs at the bottom of his hierarchy, higher basic needs are belongingness and esteem, and the metaneeds at the top encompass aesthetic experience, intellectual achievement and self-actualisation. The lower basic needs are in effect ‘subsistence needs’: food and shelter are needed in order for us to subsist, i.e. they help make physiological survival possible. Maslow’s higher basic needs are ‘social needs’: their satisfaction depends on particular kinds of relationships with other people. Metaneeds correspond to the being needs of the original two-tiered taxonomy.

Maslow’s hierarchy will be further explained in Section 5.3, where the various needs are related to the need for homosapient order. For the present, I wish to note that alternative ways of classifying needs have been proposed by other theorists. For instance, there is a taxonomy from Wiggins, in which ‘unforsakable or vital needs’ are differentiated from ‘instrumental needs;’ and another from Braybrooke, who refers to basic needs as ‘course-of-life needs’ and distinguishes them from ‘adventitious’ needs and preferences. According to Braybrooke, the need for something can be considered basic if it is essential either to living or to normal functioning; such needs are crucial to social policy, which is his chief interest. Braybrooke also speaks of ‘derived needs’, i.e. needs that derive from either ‘conceptual connections’ or ‘scientific laws and empirical generalizations.’ To illustrate, on the one hand, a conceptual connection may be formed between the need to restore the body ‘so far as repairs can restore it’ and ‘the need to preserve the body intact;’ or, on the other hand, empirical science may identify a physical failing ‘as one that can be remedied by a known means.’ In Braybrooke’s opinion, ‘[n]eeds are capable of expanding dramatically in the sense that derived needs may multiply under new social arrangements as technology, growing more complex, becomes capable of producing new sorts of goods, and, growing more efficient, becomes capable of

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178 Braybrooke, Meeting Needs, p. 82.
179 Braybrooke, Meeting Needs, p. 83.
supplying goods both old and new in greater abundance. Example (mine): those infected with HIV in reasonably affluent societies may now be said derivatively to ‘need’ AZT or something similar; in less affluent societies, or in days gone by, the need would simply not have existed, either because of the drug’s unavailability or because of its prohibitive cost.

Braybrooke also argues that derived needs can eventually become course-of-life (i.e. basic) needs which seems right, at least to some extent (the qualification will be explained in a moment), for it is hard to see how we could get along in today’s world without computers and the Internet. Braybrooke’s ‘derived needs’ coincide initially with the specific or learned needs that I have referred to, but they may become installed as quasi-basic needs (and uninstalled as well). I use the qualification ‘quasi’ because the underlying Maslovian instinctoid need would conceivably remain unaffected; consisting, as it were, as a kind of nucleus around which satellite derived-cum-course-of-life needs orbit. In the case just mentioned, the instinctoid need could be any one of a number those specified by Maslow (for example, belongingness, intellectual achievement), and the products of information technology would be the quasi-basic needs (for example, e-mail, Facebook, scientific and design software, and so on). More plausibly, and perhaps more simply, the quasi-basic needs might be better regarded as means of satisfying the core instinctoid needs: again, in the case at hand, the products of information technology could very clearly be viewed as tools that are used in the satisfaction of the various instinctoid needs that have been mentioned.

Braybrooke is critical of attempts such as that made by Maslow to grade needs: all of the basic needs, he says, are of equal rank. In Braybrooke’s opinion, the Maslovian hierarchy is an overly ambitious ‘conceptual innovation,’ and a more conservative approach would be to ascertain ‘how long people can survive unharmed without meeting various needs.’ From a Maslovian perspective, however, such an approach would seem to be implicit in the distinction between deficiency needs and being needs. Survival is more likely to be threatened by the non-satisfaction of deficiency needs than the non-satisfaction of being needs.

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180 Braybrooke, Meeting Needs, pp. 238-239.
181 Braybrooke, Meeting Needs, p. 111.
182 Braybrooke, Meeting Needs, pp. 71-72.
183 Braybrooke, Meeting Needs, p. 71.
although harm of some kind would attend both. In defence of Braybrooke, the equality of basic needs might well be appropriate for social policy, without detracting from the hierarchy’s moral relevance.

The concept of hierarchical ordering of needs has also been questioned by Mahmoud Wahba and Lawrence Bridwell. A statistical study conducted by them in 1976 found only partial support for the concept, and little or no support for other aspects of Maslow’s theory.\textsuperscript{184} Scientific confirmation of a need hierarchy still seems to be wanting, but in 1991 Andrew Neher concluded from an analysis of Maslow’s work that ‘there is probably some sort of need hierarchy, in that our basic needs are ordinarily more urgent in their demands than are higher-level needs.’\textsuperscript{185} Like Wahba and Bridwell, Neher had reservations about other aspects of Maslow’s theory, including the proposition that satisfaction of lower-level needs is necessary to the emergence of higher-level needs, and a perceived inattention on Maslow’s part to the need for cultural input to the attainment of higher-level needs.

Both of Neher’s reservations have force. Higher-level needs may well be motivationally potent notwithstanding deprivation with regard to lower-level needs; for example, a writer who forgoes the temptations of a lucrative career in public relations in order to pursue his dream of a literary masterpiece. But the writer will still need to eat, and obtain shelter: satisfaction of his physiological and safety needs may be seen as necessary to his being capable of even feeling a need for aesthetic accomplishment. This, like the counter-example of Orwell’s hungry tramps, demonstrates that the various needs are connected to one another. With regard to Neher’s other reservation, I am sure that there would be little doubt as to the importance of cultural input, for example in the form of education. However, even if Neher’s criticisms are just, they have no bearing on my thesis. For my purposes, all I need is the concept of a hierarchy of needs, and interconnectivity between the elements of the hierarchy. In spite of Wahba’s and Bridwell’s inconclusive findings, I believe few would question the proposition that some


needs are more fundamental than other needs: and being more fundamental, it may reasonably be said that it is better for us that they be met relative to other needs. ‘Better’ invokes the notion of ‘good’, and, as James Griffin has said, ‘[i]t does not take us much reflection to see that goods differ in degree.’\textsuperscript{186} Needs, like goods, differ in degree. The satisfaction of our basic needs is good, certainly in Philippa Foot’s sense of ‘natural good’, and possibly also in the sense of ‘moral good’. The relationship between needs and morality is the subject of Chapter 6; for now, there is further criticism of Maslow’s theory that I want to consider.

Onora O’Neill has proposed that some of the needs specified by Maslow might not be needs at all. By way of example, O’Neill acknowledges that human beings undoubtedly need adequate food and shelter, but whether we also need ‘companionship, politics, and culture, or food for the spirit’ could, in her view, be controversial. She maintains that ‘at least some people have led long lives that were not evidently stunted’ without such things.\textsuperscript{187} No doubt O’Neill would be right in saying that some people get by without the things she mentions, but the operative word could be ‘some’. ‘Some’ might be very few; so few in fact as to leave Maslow’s principles unscathed. Companionship appears to be an almost universal need, while politics and culture are features of the societies that most people live in: they are inescapable, and, even if we choose to ignore them, we submit to their influence as if in tacit admission of their importance to our survival. The need for ‘food for the spirit’ might not be so evident, especially in people subjected to economic hardship, but it may nevertheless emerge as a motivationally significant need when, say, food for the body becomes more readily available and there is time to think about spiritual nourishment. Maslow’s theory suggests as much, but it also stipulates that ‘higher’ needs such as spiritual ones would remain ever-present, even in times of economic deprivation. For Maslow, all of the needs in his hierarchy are of a general nature and universally applicable; they are instinctoid, and are therefore part of what it means to be human. It would follow that general or instinctoid needs remain unaffected by


socioeconomic change. For them to be affected, something more radical would have to happen, perhaps at the level of biology.

A further objection to Maslow might be inferred from a proposition advanced by John Baker and Charles Jones. According to them, ‘[i]ndividuals and cultures have very different conceptions of human well-being, and these conceptions generate differences in their lists of basic needs.’ Braybrooke’s so-called derived needs are apposite here: basic needs could take on different appearances with the passage of time and under the influence of technological advancement. However, if Baker and Jones are saying that instinctoid needs themselves can vary, then I must disagree. Food and shelter have always been needed by us; and, at the other end of the scale, ancient cave paintings suggest that the need for aesthetic experience (and therefore self-actualisation) has also long been part of the human condition. If Baker and Jones are not talking about instinctoid needs, and their point is merely that rankings of needs are variable, then the proposition would be straightforwardly correct. For instance, some Muslims would rather die than eat pork: for them, food is of less importance than religious observance, which would usually be aligned with belongingness, esteem and self-actualisation. Similarly, a hunger-striker’s need to fulfill a political ideal may become more ‘basic’, i.e. lower than subsistence on his particular scale of needs. Different things are valued differently by different people at different times—whence the possibility of moral relativism.

I will address the issue of moral relativism in Section 10.3 but it can be noted here that Maslow’s rankings are themselves indicative of its pervasiveness. In middle and upper class mid-twentieth century Western civilisation, i.e. Maslow’s milieu, self-actualisation may well have become the supreme goal, but that has not always been the case, and still is not for some people. Honour and esteem, for instance, would probably be ranked ahead of everything else in warrior cultures, including modern criminal societies such as the Mafia. However, to repeat, while hierarchical rankings of needs may vary from one age or culture to another, the basic instinctoid needs themselves remain unaltered. The fact that they are

basic—that they help define what it means to be human—suggests as much.\textsuperscript{189} The possibility of changes in general needs arising from genomic adaptations must be acknowledged, but whether we would then still be human in the present sense of the term might come into question. Would we be ‘human’ if the need for belongingness were to vanish? I do not think so; similarly for the other Maslovian needs. Commonality amongst our basic needs may contribute to an understanding of others, including people from different ages and cultures. An appreciation of the variability of hierarchical rankings could help us understand how and why ultimate values differ.\textsuperscript{190}

As well as redundancy in Maslow’s list of needs, there is the opposite possibility to consider: some motivationally significant needs could be missing from it. Whether that is so is discussed in Section 5.4, but, for the time being, I will proceed on the basis that there are no significant redundancies in Maslow’s list and that it is reasonably comprehensive.

\textbf{5.3 Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs and the Need for Homosapient Order}

In the section just completed three classes of needs were identified: subsistence, social, and being. It should already be apparent that the classifications correspond very closely to the three-tiered taxonomy that was employed to describe homosapient order. Furthermore, the two taxonomies could be similarly integrated within themselves. Let us look first at the correspondence between them.

To say that living entities have a need for subsistence (in the form of food and shelter) is the same as saying that they need P-order. P-order is a product of entropy-avoidance and is reflected in the ways in which composite living things

\textsuperscript{189} The development of a coherent ethics based on the Maslovian needs could serve to confirm the latter’s comprehensiveness. Such an ethics is of course the aim of the present thesis. Nevertheless, even if the ethics were deemed a failure, Maslow’s theory would still stand as a powerful explanation of human motivation.

\textsuperscript{190} In an essay dealing with the ideas of Giambattista Vico, Isaiah Berlin writes: ‘to understand history is to understand what men made of the world in which they found themselves, what they demanded of it, what their felt needs, aims, ideals were …’ (\textit{Against the Current}, p. 105). Needs could be understood to feed into aims and ideals. Berlin also considers Vico to have initiated a schism between, amongst other things, ‘culture-bound’ and ‘timeless’ principles (p. 109 of Berlin’s text). That may well have been the case, but I would argue that the notion of hierarchical ordering of needs could qualify as a timeless principle, one that helps explain culture-bound principles.
are structured, i.e. in the forms they take. P-order arises from the satisfaction of subsistence needs. The social needs for belongingness and esteem and the need for S-order also map onto each other with very little overlap. Social organisation is largely concerned with ranks and roles, including roles involved in cooperative relationships and organisation for care and welfare. It focuses on social structures that provide an environment in which social needs can be addressed. The mapping from E-order onto the realm of being needs is also quite precise. ‘E-order’ is shorthand for beauty, understanding and justice. As such, it encapsulates the values described by Maslow as B-values. B-values correspond exactly to being needs, from which it follows that E-order and being needs also correspond to one another.

The correspondence between the two models is very close; what then of their internal integration? The Maslovian needs are holistically interactive. For example, subsistence and being needs could conceivably be satisfied in the absence of human society, but only rarely, and even then perhaps only temporarily. Imagine a sole survivor of a shipwreck who manages to reach an uninhabited island that is well-stocked with sources of food and building materials. The survivor—call her Ruth—might neither starve nor suffer exposure, but she would probably soon come to miss human company. Without it, her social needs go unsatisfied. Neither belongingness nor esteem would be possible, the latter in the sense of acknowledgement by others of her sense of self-worth. The beauty of the island could engender a sense of wonder in Ruth, and find expression in poems that she scratches into some rocks. Further, the island’s complex ecology might hold sufficient interest for her to exercise her mind in an attempt to understand it. Her aesthetic and cognitive needs could accordingly tend towards satisfaction, but her isolation may nevertheless prevent her from attaining a sense of fulfillment—there would always be something wanting with respect to her being needs.

My argument is this. On the premise that needs are closely connected to one another, and on the further premise that needs as a whole correspond closely to homosapient order as a whole, then a close connection can also be said to exist between the components of homosapient order. If the two premises are valid, as I believe them to be, then the conclusion would be sound. If the conclusion is
sound, then to the extent that we have a need for some kind of order, one would reasonably be able to speak in terms of a need for homosapient order—or as it might otherwise be called, the need to avoid homosapient disorder.¹⁹¹

The primary proposition on which this section rests is that the Maslovian needs are expressions of the need for homosapient order. The proposition derives from the importance of homosapient order to human life, and the secondary proposition that satisfaction of the needs designated by Maslow brings homosapient order into effect. Each of the Maslovian needs will now be examined to test the validity of the two propositions.

**Homeostasis**

Maslow observed that physiological needs are related to the concept of homeostasis, which ‘refers to the body’s automatic efforts to maintain a constant, normal state of the blood stream.’¹⁹² Or, as one dictionary defines it: ‘physiological equilibrium within living creatures involving a balance of functions and chemical composition.’¹⁹³ Physiological needs are homeostatic needs, which, when satisfied, serve to sustain life. Such needs are the most basic and most potent of all the needs: basic and potent in the sense that they must usually be satisfied before other more highly ranked needs can attain motivational force. As Maslow remarked, a hungry person is likely to direct all of his or her capacities to finding food,¹⁹⁴ although exceptions may occur, such as the hunger-striker previously referred to. Procreation by sexual means would belong at this most basic level of needs: unsatisfied desire on the part of anyone who experienced it could disturb personal equilibrium.

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¹⁹¹ Recall that no excluded middle exists with respect to order: if something is not disorderly, then it is orderly, and *vice versa*.


¹⁹³ *The Macquarie Dictionary*. ‘Homeostasis’ is defined more broadly by Antonio Damasio as ‘life regulation’. Damasio distinguishes between ‘basic homeostasis’ and ‘sociocultural homeostasis’, both of which are said to ‘promote the same goal—the survival of living organisms …’ (Antonio Damasio, *Self Comes to Mind: Constructing the Conscious Brain* (London: Vintage Books, 2012), p. 27). The basic Maslovian homeostatic needs correspond to Damasio’s basic homeostasis. Needs further up the Maslovian hierarchy correspond to sociocultural homeostasis; the latter, Damasio writes, are concerned with such things as ‘justice systems, economic and political organization, the arts, medicine, and technology’ (p. 26). Ethics also, as later parts of his book maintains (see especially Chapter 11, ‘Living with Consciousness’). A breakdown in homeostasis in Damasio’s sense of the term would result in homosapient disorder.

¹⁹⁴ A Theory of Human Motivation, p. 373.
The terminology itself—‘stasis’, ‘constant’, ‘normal’—is probably enough to confirm that P-order is deeply implicated in needs of this kind. That being the case, and since P-order is a constituent of homosapient order, homeostatic needs can reasonably be regarded as expressions of the need for homosapient order (primary proposition). Physical and mental disorder would soon arise if food and water were to become unavailable, or if sexual needs went unrequited. With these most basic needs unmet, higher needs may also go unsatisfied. That would certainly be so with mental disorder, which could be expected to impact adversely on E-order. S-order would also come under threat if a hungry person were to use violence against others in the pursuit of food; more so in a famine, when large numbers of people experience starvation. P-disorder, therefore, can detract from homosapient order in its entirety. Conversely, satisfaction of the homeostatic needs, and therefore satisfaction of the need for P-order, opens the way to satisfaction of the need for homosapient order (secondary proposition).

**Safety**

The need for safety is the next most basic need in Maslow’s hierarchy. Since physical survival would be at risk in the absence of shelter and exposure to danger, such needs serve as very powerful motivators. Danger may also take a more subtle form than direct threats of physical harm. According to Maslow, injustice, unfairness and inconsistency on the part of parents are among the things that make children feel unsafe. An indication of a child’s need for safety, Maslow observed, is a ‘preference for some kind of undisrupted routine or rhythm;’ i.e., the child ‘seems to want a predictable, orderly world.’

Similarly for adults, for whom other broader aspects of the attempt to seek safety and stability in the world are seen in the very common preference for familiar rather than unfamiliar things, or for the known rather than the unknown. The tendency to have some religious or world-philosophy that organizes the universe and the men in it into some sort of satisfactorily coherent, meaningful whole is also in part motivated by safety-seeking.

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The latter tendency amounts to the philosophical need that I have posited and it would have a lot to do with higher-order (less basic) needs including esteem, intellectual achievement and self-actualisation. I will come to those shortly, but for the moment we might recall that stability, organisation, coherence and wholeness are all characteristic of homosapient order; justice as well, albeit analogously. In so far as satisfaction of the need for safety contributes to any of these, the need for safety may reasonably be regarded as an expression of the need for homosapient order. It follows that satisfaction of the need for safety helps bring homosapient order into effect.

Before moving on to the next of the needs, Maslow’s mention of ‘stability’ warrants a moment’s reflection. Is stability a reasonable desideratum? If stability were understood to mean something like *always the same*, or *unchanging*, and these are common connotations of the term, then there would immediately be trouble. Ongoing change is a fundamental characteristic of the world, and if homosapient order (or anything else that purports to describe the world) were inconsistent with change then it would have to be rejected as unrealistic. Are the notions of stability and homosapient order inconsistent with that of change? Fairly clearly, they need not be. Parts can be added to or removed from a composite object without disturbing its orderliness—a truism, almost, since any object in the world, including beautiful artefacts, harmonious families and sublime natural settings, would always be undergoing some kind of change, at levels ranging from the sub-atomic to the macroscopic, all the while leaving their orderliness unaffected (or, more accurately, moving from one orderly state-of-being to another orderly state-of-being). Change and homosapient order need not be at odds with one another. Furthermore, homosapient order itself may be inherently dynamic, exemplified by the processes required for homeostasis. Environmental stability can be seen in the same light, i.e. as P-orderliness within a context of inexorable change. A natural environment could hardly be otherwise, because of the influence of evolution and other natural processes. Stability may be understood as signifying maintenance of structure by means of either orderly succession or orderly replacement.
Belongingness

Little difficulty has been encountered in showing how homosapient order depends on the satisfaction of the most basic kinds of needs, but the task becomes more intricate as we move up the hierarchy. As described by Maslow, the need for belongingness involves the need for affection and the need for a place in the groups one belongs to. Most people would participate in many groups, in a structure akin to a series of concentric circles. For example, from innermost to outermost: self; family; friends; social, cultural and sporting societies and clubs; political parties; municipality; state and nation; humanity; and, ultimately, nature at large. Bonding factors include affection and duty—there are others, such as legal ties, trade union membership, political allegiances, and so on; but affection or duty (or both) could be regarded as the emotional and rational glue that enables all of these to maintain their viscosity.

Affective bonds would probably be strongest within the smaller inner circles that I have mentioned, while duty would tend to hold denizens of the outer ones together. We love ourselves, our children, other close family members and close friends, but our obligations to strangers are usually couched in terms of duty. The proposition is based on the cliché that like attracts like, where likeness consists in shared bodily and mental properties: kinship would be an example of the first, while like-mindedness is a common enough phenomenon within alliances. I hasten to add that the suggested orientations towards affection and duty should be regarded as no more than tendencies, since duty would also be relevant to family, and some people appear to be capable of loving humanity in general. Two significant theories of morality are implicit in the conjecture: affective bonds constitute the basis of moral sense theory, while dutiful bonds lie at the heart of deontological ethics.

The difference between affect and duty can be used as a point of entry into the investigation of the relationship between belongingness and homosapient order. I begin with affective bonds, the nature of which can be summed up in a single word—love. Indeed, in the 1943 paper in which Maslow introduced his hierarchy of needs, belongingness went under that title. Love occupied the median position
within the original five-member hierarchy, a fact that may have some significance, for I will be suggesting that the need for love bears on all of the other needs, those notionally below it and those above it.

Although the feelings we have for the various people and things we love might be called love, there are clearly differences between them. Some thinkers claim that all love is sexual (for example Arthur Schopenhauer, who exerted a strong influence on Nietzsche in his younger days), but I believe that to be wrong. Many kinds of love, including parental love for offspring, friendship and patriotism, have little or nothing to do with sex (notwithstanding Schopenhauer, and Sigmund Freud after him). However, to the extent that it is sexual, the need for love would tend to bear on the ‘lower’ need for homeostasis, and therefore play a part in the attainment of P-order.

Affective bonding is the subject of one of the great works of philosophical literature, Plato’s *Symposium*. It is the story of a drinking party at which the meaning of love is discussed. Socrates is one of the participants, and he relates how love was explained to him in his youth by the prophetess Diotima. According to Diotima’s teaching, love comes in different forms, each of which is represented by a rung on a ladder. The bottom rung is occupied by love of a particular person, which is said to begin with the perception by the lover of the beloved’s beauty. The top of the ladder is reached when love of a particular person is transformed into love of the universal Platonic Forms, as represented by truth and beauty. The transformation occurs when the beauty of the particular is seen to be identical to universal beauty, not simply a manifestation thereof. For Plato, beauty consists in good measure and proportion, while soberness is extolled as ‘a kind of beautiful order.’ Beautiful order can be understood to consist in harmony of the soul: as Socrates remarks in the *Republic*, ‘the man who has the spirit of harmony will be the most in love with the loveliest’—so understood, harmony of the soul would amount to E-order.

197 The same as the seven-member table shown earlier, minus cognitive needs and aesthetic needs, both of which were subsumed under self-actualisation.


199 *Republic* IV, 430e. Soberness is the mark of the practitioner of the ancient virtue of *sophrosyne*.

200 *Republic* III, 402d (Jowett translation).
In classical terms, love is usually regarded as being one of three kinds. It can be either sexual love, or friendship, or charity (in the original Greek, *eros*, *philia*, *agape*; and in Latin, *amor*, *amicitia* or *dilectio*, *caritas*). According to Plato, all love is essentially erotic, in a particular sense of the term ‘erotic’. In his *Cratylus*, eros is found to have derived from the word *esron*, which means ‘flowing in’. The ‘stream’ is said to be ‘an influence introduced through the eyes.’ Inflowing’ is clearly metaphorical, but I suspect that all descriptions of love are bound to be of that nature: Diotima’s ladder is a prime example. Plato claims that inflowing is characteristic of love in general; indeed, one can find *caritas* being spoken of in similar terms. As the equivalent of the Greek *agape*, *caritas* is the highest form of unconditional, self-sacrificing love. In love of this kind, the lover effectively assimilates the needs and interests of the beloved, and acts in such a way as to satisfy the beloved’s needs and promote the beloved’s interests; or, more generally, the lover acts for the beloved’s sake.

The notion of ‘sake’ is highly significant, and can be understood in this context in either of two ways. First, in the sense of loving the beloved simply because the beloved is who (or what) he or she (or it) is—the parenthetical ‘what’ and ‘it’ are meant to cover non-human beloveds. The latter include abstractions like the patriot’s flag and the bibliophile’s books: what would generally be regarded as perversions such as ‘the miser’s money’ might also be included—perversions they may be, but they can still be loved. This first sense of the term sake is captured in the idiom ‘art for art’s sake’, and in Kant’s invocation to act ‘for the sake of duty’. The second sense of ‘sake’ involves the notion of purpose, or end; for example, again idiomatically, doing something ‘for the sake of her well-being’. The second sense of sake is Aristotelian in tenor; and, unlike the first, necessarily involves action, with the agent acting solely out of concern for the being in whose interest action is undertaken.

As well as being a feature of *caritas*, which encompasses friendship, mutual inflowing would conceivably be involved in loving sexual relationships; for, as

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202 For Aquinas, *caritas* is characterised by mutual indwelling; he quotes scripture, ‘he who dwells in love is dwelling in God, and God in him’ (*1John* 5.16-17). Indwelling, it may be presumed, would result from inflowing.

many know, the people concerned are constantly in each other’s thoughts. Since mutual inflowing is accompanied by the notion of ‘for the sake of’, sake (in both of its senses) enables us to grasp what it is that inflows in various kinds of loving relationships. It is the delight taken by the lover in the beloved’s being, and the interests of the beloved that are joyfully served by the lover. The first—the delight—could be understood to be an influence taken in by the ‘eyes’, as Plato said (again metaphorically). The lover would be interested in bringing about the beloved’s flourishing, and facilitation of the beloved’s flourishing would be gratifying for the lover. In other words, flourishing would be reciprocal. As Spinoza said, ‘he who has done something which he imagines affects others with joy will be affected by joy, together with a consciousness of himself as the cause …’

Flourishing, it may be assumed, would be accompanied by joy. This could be the case even where the lover’s love is not reciprocated. One-sided love is common enough: ungrateful children, for example, are usually still loved by their parents. A lover whose love is unrequited may still strive to do whatever is believed to be best for the beloved, and obtain a sense of accomplishment from the beloved’s joy.

Reciprocation would be impossible in the case of non-human beloveds (flags, books and money have no passion to return), but a feeling of accomplishment could nevertheless eventuate in a lover who advances the beloved’s cause in a significant manner. All of this might be expected of anyone who associates, as Spinoza did, the idea of external cause with the elation that attends love.

According to Amelie Rorty, true love in Spinoza’s view ‘is the elation that comes of true knowledge, an intuitive grasp of the world, seen as a whole, immanent within one’s ideas. Because such love is the expression of an individual’s most vital activity, it carries the greatest possible self-realisation.’

‘Greatest possible self-realisation’ sums up the notion of personal flourishing very well.

Because of its connection to harmony of the soul and personal flourishing, as well as its relevance to the satisfaction of lower-order (for example, sexual) needs, I leave the discussion of affective bonding with the conclusion that the need for

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204 The Ethics, 3p30d.
205 The Ethics, 3p13s, 3def6.
belongingness in the form of love is itself a form of the need for homosapient order, which was the primary proposition mentioned at the beginning of the section. Satisfaction of the need for love may therefore be expected to bring homosapient order into effect (secondary proposition). What, then, of dutiful bonding?

One of the tenets of Kantian ethics is that ‘the highest good possible through our agency should be realised.’\textsuperscript{207} Such is our duty, and actions that are performed for the sake of duty are the mark of what is called ‘a good will,’\textsuperscript{208} even to the extent of holiness.\textsuperscript{209} In the \textit{Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic of Morals} the moral law is held by Kant to be entirely rational in nature.\textsuperscript{210} It is entirely rational because it can only be known \textit{a priori}: it cannot be derived from experience.\textsuperscript{211} Nor can it be derived from the attributes of human nature, because, Kant says, that would be to confine its application to human beings, to the exclusion of other rational beings.\textsuperscript{212} In the discussion of intellectual achievement later this chapter, rationality will be seen fundamentally to be an ordering function, one that answers to our need for homosapient order. Rationally-inspired dutiful bonding is explainable in terms of the same need.

Kant distinguished duty from inclination, defining it as ‘the necessity of acting from respect for the law,’\textsuperscript{213} where ‘law’ refers to the moral law in the form of the Categorical Imperative. The moral law is a law of one’s own making, and is internalised as a set of maxims, which Kant described as subjective principles of volition.\textsuperscript{214} The law and its associated maxims issue in autonomous action, as distinct from heteronymous action. Heteronymous actions are actions that are motivated by external influences rather than duty; they include actions performed from inclination. While actions performed from inclination may be honourable and praiseworthy, they are not, Kant maintained, deserving of esteem—esteem

\begin{footnotes}
\item[207] Kant, \textit{Religion}, p. 5.
\item[210] Kant, \textit{Morals}, p. 271.
\item[211] See Kant, \textit{Religion}, p. liv.
\item[212] Kant, \textit{Morals}, p. 270.
\item[213] Kant, \textit{Morals}, p. 259.
\item[214] Kant, \textit{Morals}, p. 259.
\end{footnotes}
was reserved for dutiful action originating in goodness of will. Further, ‘the firmly grounded disposition strictly to fulfill our duty’ was regarded by him as the essence of virtue.\textsuperscript{215} Esteem that is consequent upon dutiful action and bonding would be conducive to social order, and therefore homosapient order.

Dutiful bonding based on reason alone could be more egalitarian than affective bonding. ‘To be beneficent when we can,’ Kant asserted, ‘is a duty,’\textsuperscript{216} and beneficent behaviour devoid of inclination would have nothing other than the moral law in view.\textsuperscript{217} Superficially at least, there is nothing in the various formulations of the moral law, i.e. the Categorical Imperative, to say why one human being should be preferred to another; for example, why family members should be preferred to total strangers. But even a die-hard Kantian would surely have to regard absolute impartiality such as this as an unattainable ideal: the overwhelming majority of human beings would be guided, to some extent, by affection as well as by duty, and affection would arguably decide such cases. Besides, there might even be rational reasons for giving preference to one’s family, thereby giving rise to a duty to prefer them.\textsuperscript{218} For example, if we were caught in a burning hospital where our child is a patient, it would be reasonable to try to rescue the child in preference, say, to the stranger in the next bed, whoever it happened to be. Why reasonable? Our love for our child would suffice, even if the other person were a magnate capable of lavishing riches on his rescuer. Why would that suffice? Because that is the way most people are made. Universalisation of preference for one’s children as a maxim of moral law is more consistent with our nature, and therefore makes more sense to us than universalisation of preference for strangers.

In sum, the need for belongingness is equivalent to a need for bonding of either an affective or dutiful nature, or a mixture of the two. Both kinds of bonding

\textsuperscript{215} Kant, \textit{Religion}, note to p. 19.
\textsuperscript{216} Kant, \textit{Morals}, p. 258.
\textsuperscript{217} A distinction between beneficence and benevolence may be noted here. As explained by Sarah Clark Miller, ‘[w]hereas the duty of benevolence, which commands the abstract wishing for the well-being of all humans, “costs us nothing”, beneficence requires that individuals with the means to do so take action by responding to the true needs present in others.’ Sarah Clark Miller, ‘Need, Care and Obligation’, in Reader (editor): \textit{The Philosophy of Need}, p. 147. Clark Miller observes that Kantian ethics centre on beneficence.
\textsuperscript{218} Thanks are due to my supervisor Professor Stan van Hooft for raising the possibility. This is just one example of Professor van Hooft’s assistance, which saved me from many omissions and mistakes. The mistakes that remain are of course all my own doing.
evidently result in homosapien order—in other words, satisfaction of the need for belongingness brings homosapien order into effect, either in the form of personal fulfillment, or by finding our place in the world, within family and society. In either form, a feeling of personal worthiness, or self-esteem, could accompany satisfaction of the need for belongingness. This brings me to the next of Maslow’s needs.

**Esteem**

According to Maslow, people generally ‘have a need or desire for a stable, firmly based, (usually) high evaluation of themselves, for self-respect, or self-esteem, and for the esteem of others.’\(^{219}\) Spinoza can help deepen our understanding of what is involved here. All of the emotions (including esteem) are said by Spinoza to originate in three primary emotions: joy, sadness and desire. With respect to esteem, Spinoza refers to the ‘love of esteem,’ which he defines as ‘joy accompanied by the idea of an internal cause’—this is also given as the definition of self-esteem. The joy concerned is that which arises from the belief that one is praised.\(^{220}\) Conversely, should sadness accompany the idea of internal cause then repentance comes to pass, and shame is felt when sadness arises from the blame of others.\(^{221}\) Spinoza’s definitions are obviously concerned with the need for respect, but there is another aspect of esteem that should also be considered, namely the need to respect. Most of the ensuing discussion is concerned with the former, but I will have something to say about the latter towards the end.

Spinoza’s definition of self-esteem is succinct, but there is a deep truth embedded in it, or something that would generally be recognised as a deep truth. For what Spinoza is in effect saying is that self-esteem is a product of freedom, or autonomy. How one gets from freedom to self-esteem is derivable from the terms used in the definition. Joy, for Spinoza, is the product of a person’s ‘passage from a lesser to a greater perfection,’\(^{222}\) where the passage consists in an increase in one’s power of acting.\(^{223}\) Now the power of acting resides in one’s ability to

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\(^{219}\) A Theory of Human Motivation, p. 381. Self-respect and self-esteem are synonymous.

\(^{220}\) *The Ethics*, 3p30s.

\(^{221}\) *The Ethics*, 3p30s.

\(^{222}\) *The Ethics*, 3def2.

\(^{223}\) *The Ethics*, 4pref.
cause things, which is held to be the hallmark of freedom; from which it follows that the joy experienced in self-esteem derives from freedom. The other part of the definition—‘accompanied by the idea of an internal cause’—tells us that self-esteem requires that we be aware of our ability to cause things to happen. The ‘cause’ spoken of here can be understood to be of an internal nature; if it were external, it would be contrary to the self-causing nature implicit in the joy obtained from the power of acting. All of this makes perfectly good sense: most of us tend to feel better about ourselves when we feel that we are in control of things.

Also with regard to the need for respect, Owen Flanagan and Amélie Rorty conjecture that the key to self-respect consists in consonance and consistency between a person’s ideals, character and mode of life. Similarly Rawls, for whom self-respect has two aspects: positive self-evaluation (cf. Maslow, Spinoza), and ‘confidence in one’s ability, so far as it is within one’s powers, to fulfill one’s intentions.’ The confidence of which Rawls speaks would conceivably contribute to one’s positive self-evaluation.

With these remarks in mind, the issues attending the need for esteem can usefully be structured in terms of a chiasmus, which is shown on the next page. One axis represents the individual’s self-evaluation, its poles consisting of self-esteem and self-disesteem; the other axis represents the public’s evaluation of the individual, its poles being esteem and disesteem. Consideration of the four quadrants of the chiasmus will help clarify the relationship between the need for esteem and homosapient order.

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224 Michael Della Rocca, *Spinoza* (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 188. This is an application of what is known as the principle of sufficient reason. For Spinoza, explanation consists in identifying the complete chain of causes that brings an explanandum into existence. Della Rocca maintains that virtually all of Spinoza’s philosophy can be understood as an application of the principle.


First quadrant: individual self-esteem, public esteem. Here the individual is pleased to have achieved consistency between his or her actions and ideals and the actions of the individual are in reasonable accord with the public’s ideals, thereby eliciting the approval of others. S-order would be facilitated by the latter, E-order by the former. With regard to S-order, this is where the Kantian ‘dutiful bonding’ that was discussed in the previous subsection might be expected to occur; according to Kant, actions performed for the sake of duty (as distinct from those performed from inclination) are deserving of esteem. Dutiful bonding as a form of belongingness conduces towards esteem. Since belongingness and homosapient order have been found to be positively related, esteem would be similarly related to homosapient order. With regard to E-order, constancy and consistency between one’s ideals, action and character would seem to be part of human flourishing. Rawls speaks of self-respect as ‘perhaps the most important primary good,’ vis-à-vis other primary goods such as rights, liberties, opportunities, income and wealth. On that basis, one’s sense of self-worth would depend on one’s assessment (and the assessment of others) of the justness of one’s characteristic actions.

Second quadrant: individual self-esteem, public disesteem. This is where the individual’s plans, ideals and character are all in harmony, but actions consequent upon them are inconsistent with the plans and ideals of the public. S-order would be inhibited while E-order on the part of the self-respecting individual remains a possibility: he or she is joyful, but without the support of an admiring public.

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rebel with a cause would be an example; especially if the cause subsequently turned out to be generally commendable—by which time the admiration of others might have been secured.

Third quadrant: individual self-disesteem, public disesteem. Here the individual is afflicted with shame, in the knowledge of his or her culpability for what may be presumed to have been serious misdeeds, compounded by an awareness of others’ knowledge of them. Sadness and disapproval prevail. From the perspective of the individual, S- and E-order would both be out of the question.

Fourth quadrant: individual self-disesteem, public esteem. This is the domain of the guilty secret, where Spinoza’s ‘repentance’ becomes manifest. Other people are largely unaware of the individual’s lapses, and still consider his or her actions to be consistent with their own plans and ideals; their respect remains undiminished. Now the mere fact of respecting another may contribute to S-order, possibly by reinforcing social stability. It is a question of whether the need to respect can contribute to homosapient order, and I will come to that in a moment. However, E-order on the part of the respected individual would be highly unlikely: pervading repentance is not conducive to flourishing.

The analysis suggests that satisfaction of the need for respect results in homosapient order, in which case the need for esteem may reasonably be viewed as an expression of the need for homosapient order. I turn now to the need to respect. The relevant issues are (1) whether such a need exists; (2) if it does exist, how it might be characterised; and (3) whether satisfaction of the need culminates in homosapient order.

With regard to the existence of a need to respect, respect on the part of the person who respects in the manner described would clearly tend to enhance S-order. Against that, it might be argued that the importance of respect (for one’s elders, one’s leaders, and so forth) is less today than it once might have been. Bonding today may arise more from constraints imposed by economic cooperation and a sense of equal basic rights, especially in liberal democracies. Do we, then, still need to respect? I think we do: a sense of equal basic rights is fairly widespread, as evidenced by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (see Section 6.3)—to respect the rights of a person is tantamount to respecting the person.
If we do indeed need to respect, what can be said about its nature? Spinoza’s definition of esteem is inappropriate, because of its orientation towards the one who is respected rather than those doing the respecting. But his definition of love fits the bill, i.e. joy accompanied by the belief of an external cause. The joy felt by one who respects (or loves) derives from having witnessed the joy felt by the respected person upon fulfillment of his or her proper purposes. Such fulfillment would constitute an external cause. But the notion of internal cause should not be totally dismissed. The joy experienced upon witnessing fulfillment of the respected person’s purposes would be augmented if the one who respects were to believe herself to be in some degree responsible for their fulfillment. Should that occur, Spinoza would have a ready explanation for any joy that is felt by the person who respects. As we have seen, joy for Spinoza consists in being the cause of things—in making things happen, thereby achieving autonomy. Now there are two broad ways in which the one who respects might bring something into effect: either by virtue of the respect itself, or by taking a more direct hand in the achievement of the object’s purposes. With regard to the first, the one doing the respecting would certainly be doing something, simply by virtue of respecting. Can the act of respecting bring something into effect? I think it can. The actions of anyone who respects could contribute directly to the fulfillment of the respected object’s purposes. Such would be the case with regard to the environment, where a contribution is made to ecological balance (a form of P-order) by means of respectful action—S-order as well, through the cooperativeness that is implicit in the notion.228 In either case, the act of respecting another would open a pathway to Spinozistic self-respect and with it the possibility of E-order.

In sum, both the need for respect and the need to respect may reasonably be regarded as expressions of the need for homosapient order. Accordingly, satisfaction of either kind of need would contribute to the realisation of

228 Aldo Leopold, a co-founder of the Wilderness Society, maintained that ‘a land ethic changes the role of Homo sapiens from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it. It implies respect for his fellow-members, and also respect for the community as such.’ See Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac: with Essays on Conservation from Round River* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1970 [*A Sand County Almanac* first published 1949, *Round River* first published 1953]), p. 240. The community referred to by Leopold is the biotic community; i.e., the interdependent collection of flora and fauna that populates a region at a particular time. Leopold had a very clear idea of what the world should be like, and the ethics required for the realisation of the ideal, as he envisaged it, centred on the principle of respect.
homosapient order. The discussion of this highly complex subject has been all too brief, but I must continue the ascent of Maslow’s hierarchy.

**Intellectual Achievement**

Most if not all human beings need to apply their minds to problems and issues that confront them. The need arises from other needs—from, say, ‘where is my next meal going to come from?’ and ‘what would be the best way to deal with global warming?’ Playfulness would also often be involved: crosswords, cribbage, chess, and so forth. Besides having to use our wits sometimes merely to survive, we generally like to use them. Satisfaction from having solved a difficult puzzle is a sufficiently common feeling to warrant believing that the need for intellectual achievement is universal. The need would be related to the philosophical need that I have posited, i.e. our need to explain and justify things. My aim here is to show that satisfaction of the need for intellectual achievement results in homosapient order.

Solving problems and coming to terms with issues involves the use of reason, judgement, understanding and imagination, all of which are forms of cognition. Cognition involves thinking, which I take to be necessary to intellectual achievement, but not sufficient for it. I also presume that intellectual achievement is continuous with cognition, and that it consists in a heightened level of thinking. I will endeavour to explain what it is that takes cognition to the required heights in a moment. First, though, a few words on the ordering nature of cognition *per se* may help explain how homosapient order and intellectual achievement are related. The proposition is this: if cognition is essentially an ordering process, then, on the assumption that intellectual achievement results from cognition, intellectual achievement would also involve ordering. A further contention is that intellectual achievement involves a heightened form of ordering (specifically E-ordering), a heightening that follows the path from basic cognition to intellectual achievement.

I begin with the ordering nature of basic cognition. Kant can help point the way. Ideas were regarded by Kant as being dependent on what he called ‘categories of cognition’, which can be thought of as principles of thinking. The categories are employed in the faculty of understanding of a perceiving and knowing subject to produce objective judgements from sense-perceptions. The faculty of reason, in
which the power of inference resides, is used to relate judgements to one another. The categories that bring order to our intuitions fall under four main headings: relation, quantity, quality and mode. Relational concepts and judgements are concerned with substance-accident, cause-effect and reciprocity; quantitative ones with unity, plurality and totality; qualitative ones with reality, negation and limitation; while modal concepts apply to possibility-impossibility, existence-nonexistence and necessity-contingency. Although Kant’s theory is by no means the only theory of cognition, it seems clear that something like what he was talking about does indeed happen: the moulding of raw sense data into usable, orderly information. Kant’s categories cover a very broad spectrum—he would have said the complete spectrum—of our means of cognition, but their order-creating function is of especial relevance here.

Some ideas from W. V. Quine are also worth mentioning. According to Quine, we and other animals share a capacity for detecting similarities and contrasts between things—a capacity that appears to be innate. The capacity is said to be prior to language, and necessary to learning language: it works by identifying uniformities in things, and consequently involves categorisation, i.e. putting like with like (or what are perceived as such—perhaps wrongly). It is a matter of sorting, of situating things in space and time, in the manner of Aristotelian prioritisation and Kantian categorisation; it is therefore concerned with ordering.

That will suffice for the ordering nature of basic cognition. My task now is to explain how intellectual achievement differs from basic cognition, and, in so doing, link it to homosapient order. Spinoza, Maslow and Midgley will be the main contributors to the discussion.

Spinoza described cognition in terms of three faculties: imagination, reason and intuition. Knowledge acquired through the imagination was deemed by him to be inferior to the products of reason, which in turn stood below those of intuition. Inferiority arose from a comparative lack of clarity and distinctiveness, in accordance with criteria proposed by Descartes. Intuition led the way, because, in Spinoza’s estimation, it is the only means of accessing the limited stock of things

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230 *The Ethics*, 2p40s2.
that might be known of God. ‘Knowledge of God,’ he declared, ‘is the mind’s greatest good; its greatest virtue is to know God.’ (Spinoza’s God, we recall, is equivalent to substance which is equivalent to nature.) Where reason comes into its own is in the development of adequate ideas of the properties of things; truth was said to consist in such ideas. While an adequate idea of the properties of God (i.e. substance, or nature) would be impossible, reason was considered by Spinoza to be capable of construing order between things. Spinoza’s low opinion of the imagination can be seen in the derisory terms in which he couched his rejection of the belief that order exists independently of human cognition. Such beliefs were held to have their origin in the mistaken impression that the imagination is the intellect, thereby giving rise to false apprehensions with regard to the nature of things. The proposition that intellectual achievement is a heightened form of cognition can obviously be accommodated within Spinoza’s theory. Intuition on his account is higher than the other forms of cognition, and it is higher precisely because of the understanding it affords of the infinite being, ‘without which … nothing can either be or be conceived.’ Intuitive knowledge, Spinoza says, ‘proceeds from an adequate idea of the formal essence of certain attributes of God to the knowledge of the … essence of things.’ In a Spinozistic world, such understanding would constitute the highest degree of human flourishing, and therefore contribute to E-order.

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231 *The Ethics*, 4p28.

232 Although Spinoza’s denigration of the imagination is consistent with his rationalist principles, some who came after him realised that imagination provides a key to the understanding of history, and indeed of morality. As far as history is concerned, Isaiah Berlin has shown Vico to have been a progenitor of the *Verstehen* theory and practice of Wilhelm Dilthey and others; theories that involve putting oneself in the place of others and their circumstances by means of ‘imaginative insight.’ (See Berlin’s essay, ‘Vico’s Concept of Knowledge’, in *Against the Current*, pp. 111-119.)

233 *The Ethics*, 4p28.

234 *The Ethics*, 2p40s2. Adequate ideas for Spinoza are true ideas (*The Ethics*, 2d4), and true ideas are those that agree with their objects (*The Ethics*, 1a6).

235 Intuition was also lauded by Kurt Gödel, the twentieth century thinker who revolutionised mathematical and logical theory with his incompleteness theorems. ‘I don’t see any reason,’ Gödel wrote, ‘why we should have less confidence in this kind of perception, i.e., in mathematical intuition, than in sense perception, which induces us to build up physical theories’ (cited by Palle Yourgrau in *A World Without Time: The Forgotten Legacy of Gödel and Einstein* (New York: Basic Books, 2005), p. 101). Whether ‘intuition’ meant the same thing for Gödel as it did for Spinoza is probably open to question, not to be settled here; but both seem to have referred to it as some kind of immediate grasping of an object by the ‘mind’s eye’. Also, whether Spinoza would have endorsed Gödel’s mathematical Platonism is doubtful, although Spinoza’s proposition ‘[s]ingular thoughts, or this or that thought, are modes which express God’s nature in a certain and determinate way’ (*The Ethics*, 2p1d) could be understood as a move towards the objectification of ideas, including mathematical concepts. As expressions of God’s nature, ideas should perhaps be
Maslow’s conception of maximal cognition is very similar to Spinoza’s. Maslow distinguished D-Cognition from B-Cognition, where, to repeat, ‘D’ stands for deficiency and ‘B’ for being. The denotations obviously place B-Cognition above D-Cognition. As Maslow explains it, D-Cognition consists fundamentally of basic cognition, as I have described it; alternatively, it could be seen as a combination of Spinozistic imagination and reason. D-cognition is cognition that we use in our everyday interactions with the world; it actively shapes percepts, organises and selects them; it compares, judges and evaluates; it is concerned with need-gratification; it dissects, differentiates, and it employs a form of reason that Maslow refers to as ‘Aristotelian logic.’ By contrast, B-Cognition is said to be non-instrumental; its object is ‘permitted to be itself,’ i.e. minimal distortion from attempts to assimilate objects to existing beliefs (my gloss); it is seen ‘as unneeded, as purposeless, as not desired, as unmotivated perceiving;’ it looks for ‘a higher unity or integration, … under a superordinate whole.’\(^\text{236}\) I do not think it would be going too far to suggest that Maslow’s B-Cognition and Spinoza’s intuition are very similar in nature. Their ultimate objects are the same: intuition for Spinoza affords a measure of knowledge of God (= nature, substance), while B-Cognition for Maslow is fundamentally concerned with ‘Cosmic Consciousness.’\(^\text{237}\) B-Cognition might appear somewhat other-worldly, and perhaps even discontinuous with D-Cognition, but this was not Maslow’s view. In his words, there is ‘only one world, and the business of fusing “B” and “D” is really a matter of being able to retain both the “D” and “B” attitudes toward the world.’\(^\text{238}\) For a Maslovian, to achieve B-Cognition would be of the highest intellectual order, and assist in bringing E-order into effect.

Cognition as concept-formation and judgement is essential to rationality, which stems etymologically from ‘ratio’. The concept of ratio in turn involves the notions of reason, reckoning and relation, all of which feature in rationality, and it is rationality that provides a further link between cognition and homosapient order. The link derives from an observation made by Midgley, to the effect that

accorded independent status. Then again, since the ideas are ours (though caused by God—The Ethics, 2pp6-8), they presumably reside in us. I will not try to resolve the problem (if it is indeed a problem): the point of the note is to highlight the importance attributed to intuition by two of history’s foremost theorists.


\(^\text{237}\) The Farther Reaches of Human Nature, p. 249.

rationality means more than cleverness. Rationality, she maintains, ‘includes a
definite structure of preferences, a priority system based on feeling.’ When
Midgley says ‘based on feeling,’ she is referring to desires, wants and needs that
may come into conflict with one another: rationality arbitrates on conflicts, and
chooses the proper course of action according to the individual’s system of
preferences. The germ of an order-based theory of morality is discernible in
Midgley’s statement, for we again have before us the Aristotelian relationship
between order and prioritisation, supplemented by conflict resolution. We see,
therefore, that rationality can be of very broad application: rather than merely
solving puzzles, through the exercise of ‘cleverness’, it is now involved in the
realisation of our deepest wishes and desires, which would surely include
satisfaction of the need for homosapient order, in all of its facets.

In sum, cognition in the form of rationality involves preferences and priorities that
are based on our deepest desires. Preferences are cognate with needs, and
satisfaction of our need for homosapient order may reasonably be said to be
deply desired by us: our survival and well-being depend on it. Cognition has a
part to play in the attainment of homosapient order.

By applying our minds to the things that concern us, a measure of orderliness is
imposed on the world—and on us as part of the world. Through cognitive order,
other forms of order may also arise, including P-, S- and E-order—and, as part of
the latter, aesthetic order as well. Again, therefore, it can be concluded that
cognition conduces towards homosapient order, and that the cognitive needs
(including the need for intellectual achievement) are consequently expressions of
the need for homosapient order. The mention of aesthetic order brings me to the
need for aesthetic experience, which occupies the penultimate rung of Maslow’s
hierarchy.

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239 Midgley, Beast and Man, p. 246.
240 Preferences and needs are not synonymous. As explained by Len Doyal, needs are objective
only to the extent that their ‘theoretical and empirical specification is independent of individual
Our Responsibilities to Meet Others’ Needs, p. 157. The relationship between needs and
preferences is discussed in Section 6.2.
Aesthetic Experience

The aim of this subsection is to ascertain whether satisfaction of the need for aesthetic experience brings homosapient order into effect. If it does, then one would be entitled to regard the need for aesthetic experience as a form of the need for homosapient order. The approach will be the same as before: I will start with a discussion of the nature of the need in question, and then endeavour to explain how the satisfaction of the need gives rise to homosapient order.

What is meant by ‘aesthetic experience’? It would be a truism to say that aesthetic experience consists in experiencing something in terms of either beauty or the sublime. Beyond that, however, there might not be any universally acceptable answers. Kant’s ideas on the matter have been widely canvassed, and I begin with some of them.

According to Kant, aesthetic experience is entirely disinterested at the same time as involving an evaluation of its object, whereupon tension is immediately evident, perhaps to the point of paradox. On the one hand, ‘disinterested’ implies that aesthetic experience is valued for its own sake rather than as a means to an end. On the other hand, ‘involving an evaluation’ suggests that the experience does indeed have an end in view, namely the ‘value’ that might be derived from appreciation of the object. Furthermore, the definition seems to exclude artistic activity from aesthetic experience, for such activity would rarely be disinterested. Perhaps, though, artistic activity would be better viewed in terms of self-actualisation, which is the topic of the next subsection: self-actualisation encompasses the attainment of excellence, presumably a common aim of artists. Nevertheless, creative activity such as that engaged in by artists arguably involves aesthetic experience of some kind, and should not be lightly dismissed from consideration. I will have something to say on the matter later.

Kant considered beauty to be one of three possible sources of pleasure, the others being the agreeable and the good. The agreeable gives rise to gratification, the good evokes esteem, while the beautiful is that which simply pleases. Furthermore, the beautiful is associable with a particular kind of pleasure, namely

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243 Kant, Judgement, s. 5.
disinterested pleasure arising from contemplation of an object’s form. Pleasure, Kant says, may be one of three kinds: the agreeable, the beautiful and the good. The agreeable gives rise to gratification, the beautiful is that which simply pleases, while the good evokes esteem.\textsuperscript{244} The pleasure associated with beauty derives from a faculty of judgement he calls ‘taste’. Disinterested pleasure therefore derives from the exercise of ‘taste’, and judgements of taste are aesthetic judgements; they are disinterested because of their independence from concepts concerning the nature or purpose of the thing being judged.\textsuperscript{245}

Further light might be shed on the nature of beauty by revisiting territory that was traversed a short while ago in the discussion of belongingness. Beauty and love were there seen on Plato’s authority to be related; similarly Aristotle, who maintained that the ‘pleasure of the eye is the beginning of love,’ and ‘no one loves if he has not first been delighted by the form of the beloved.’\textsuperscript{246} Delight in the form of the beloved would presumably contribute to the erotic inflow that is characteristic of love; and by virtue of the inflow, the lover may be said to partake of the being of the beloved—in Plato’s \textit{Phaedrus} it is said that ‘he who loves the beautiful is called a lover because he partakes of it.’\textsuperscript{247} Either or both of the general connotations of ‘partake’ would make sense in this context: ‘participate in’ and ‘consume’ would both fit. Edmund Burke also considered beauty and love to be inseparable, as indicated by his rather circular definitions of them. According to Burke, beauty is ‘that quality or those qualities in bodies by which they cause love, or some passion similar to it,’ while love is ‘that satisfaction which arises to the mind upon contemplating the beautiful, of whatsoever nature it may be.’\textsuperscript{248} If there had been any doubts about the universality of the need for aesthetic experience, then its connection with love should have dispelled them: the need for love is assuredly universal.

The relationship between love and beauty provides a means of linking aesthetic experience to homosapient order, for we have seen how love contributes to E-

\textsuperscript{244} Kant, \textit{Judgement}, s. 5.
\textsuperscript{245} Kant, \textit{Judgement}, s. 11.
\textsuperscript{246} Aristotle, \textit{Nicomachean Ethics}, IX.5, 1167a.
\textsuperscript{247} \textit{Phaedrus}, Jowett translation, 249d-e.
\textsuperscript{248} See David Wolmersley (editor), \textit{Edmund Burke: A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful and Other pre-Revolutionary Writings} (London: Penguin Books, 2004), III.i.
order, S-order, and P-order. But the search for a link need not end there. A more
direct connection might be possible, based on an argument of the following form.
(1) Human beings have a need to experience aesthetic beauty; (2) experience of
aesthetic beauty gives rise to E-order in people who experience it; (3) to
experience E-order is to experience homosapient order; (4) the experience of
homosapient order implies that people who experience it have a need for
homosapient order; (5) therefore the need for aesthetic experience is a form of the
need for homosapient order. The steps in the argument will now be discussed.

The first premise has already been dealt with. The need to experience beauty is a
universal human trait, especially in view of its connection with love.

The second premise—that aesthetic experience culminates in E-order—could be
contentious. Two sets of ideas are offered in support of it. First, an experience of
aesthetic beauty clearly involves P-order, in the sense that the beautiful object is
P-orderly: on Aristotle’s criteria, if it were not P-orderly it would not be adjudged
beautiful. Order was considered by Aristotle to be one of the three constituents of
beauty; another was symmetry, which was found earlier to be a close relative of
physical order. In a strong sense, therefore, beauty for Aristotle is derivative of
some kind of order. Additional characteristics have been postulated by other
thinkers. Aquinas, we have seen (on p. 31), associated wholeness with perfection,
and he identified the latter as one of three conditions of beauty—the others being
due proportion and clarity. Wholeness and due proportion are integral to P-
orderliness, in which case P-orderliness could again be considered necessary to
beauty.

A question may be asked at this point: how might the P-orderliness of a beautiful
object contribute to E-orderliness in the person who experiences it? Aristotle’s
third characteristic of beauty is ‘definiteness’, and that in conjunction with
Aquinas’s ‘clarity’ holds the answer. P-orderliness in a beautiful object will be
accompanied by a sense of definiteness, and definiteness is conducive to clarity.
Clarity, in turn, entails enlightenment, and enlightenment would usually be
attended by flourishing. The following case study demonstrates how that might
happen.

249 See *Metaphysics*, XIII.3.
250 Reminiscent of Descartes’ clear and distinct ideas.
Nicholas recently came across an account of the labels that are commonly attached to cloud-formations, the basic types being stratus, cirrus, nimbus and cumulus. He had previously encountered the terms, but for some reason particular note of them was taken this time and he committed them to memory. Subsequently, whenever he looked at sky and its clouds there was a new and heightened appreciation of their beauty (or sublimity in the case of the dark, rain-precipitating nimbus). This new appreciation seems to have been associated with his ability to define more clearly what he was seeing; as if the greater conceptual definition augmented the aesthetic (Aristotelian) definiteness of his observations. Nicholas then became interested in applying his new knowledge, and paid more attention to the celestial shapes, patterns and colours that evoked fresh wonderment. Wonderment, yes, but also respect, since taking the trouble to learn and remember the names of things is surely a mark of respect. Nicholas’s aesthetic experience of the beauty or sublimity of the heavens was therefore commingled with measures of intellectual achievement and respect, both of which, we have seen, induce E-order. The improved clarity of his observations was accompanied by a sense of joy, or flourishing. In that way, Nicholas’s experience of beauty may be said to have given rise to E-order.

The other set of ideas in support of the second premise revolves around Ernst Cassirer’s assertion that forms of art ‘are not empty forms.’ According to Cassirer, such forms ‘perform a definite task in the constitution and organisation of human experience;’ and he continues, ‘[t]o live in the realm of forms does not signify an evasion of the issue of life; it represents, on the contrary, the realization of one of the highest energies of life itself.’ The notion ‘highest energies of life’ is consistent with that of human flourishing, and the involvement of energy points to the fact that aesthetic experience entails activity. Etymologically, energy and activity imply one another: the root idea derives from the Greek and Latin terms *énérgei* and *energia*, both of which signify ‘activity’. As Cassirer says, one of the fundamental features of art is ‘its constructive power in the framing of our human universe.’ Activity, or energy, would be involved in the framing process.

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252 Cassirer, p. 185.
References to ‘energy’ are common in critiques of stage-plays, art exhibitions, musical performances and films. For example: a performance by John Bell in Hamlet is described as ‘an unforgettably etched study, dripping with frenetic energy;’ some paintings by the German Brucke group are said to have displayed ‘vibrant, pulsating colours and deliberately crude forms,’ which ‘unleashed a new and spontaneous energy in art;’ a concert given by the jazz musician Don Burrows is lauded for its ‘extraordinary energy and authority;’ and Meryl Streep is said to have had ‘all the energy’ in her performance in Julie and Julia.

It seems that an appropriate level of energy is needed in a work of art before it can communicate with us; and communication, should it occur, brings into being a community consisting of the artwork and its audience. Too little energy, and a failure of communication occurs; too much energy, and garishness, or simply noise, results—again with a failure to communicate. Subtlety is needed. Energy in an artwork contributes to its vitality, which in turn enlivens the imagination of its audience. With its imagination enlivened, then, on Kant’s view of the imagination as a ‘power of representation’, the audience may come to see the world or some aspects of the world in a different light. Should that happen, insight into the Aristotelian interconnectedness of ostensibly disparate things may become clearer. In short, heightened imagination through aesthetic experience is conducive to enlightenment and therefore contributes to human flourishing. In the words of the second premise, aesthetic experience culminates in E-order.

The remaining premises can be dealt with briefly. The third premise maintained that the experience of E-order is tantamount to the experience homosapient order: this follows straightforwardly from the interrelatedness of the components of homosapient order, as discussed in Section 4.3. The fourth and final premise was that the experience of homosapient order implies that people who experience it have a need for homosapient order. Now it must be acknowledged that there are things we experience that we have no need of experiencing, for example disease.

253 Peter Craven, The Age, 22 May 2010.
257 Communication is critical to art. Kant speaks of three modes of communication, and associates each of them with various kinds of art. Communication can be by word, which is linked with rhetoric and poetry; communication can be by gesture, which is reflected in formalistic arts, for example painting and sculpture; and we may communicate by tone, or modulation, which find expression in music and the art of colour. (See Kant, Judgement, s. 51.)
and war; or, more generally, everything that runs counter to the Maslovian needs. But there are also things that we experience that we need to experience, and my argument all along has been that homosapient order belongs in that category—we need it in order to survive and flourish.

This completes the argument. If the premises are deemed valid, as I believe them to be, then the need for aesthetic experience may reasonably be claimed to be an expression of the need for homosapient order. There is a connection between what human beings regard as beautiful and the kinds of creatures human beings are. The Golden Ratio, for example, is regarded as aesthetic, and this is pleasing to the eye (as mentioned earlier, in respect of the shells of snails). Art that makes use of the Golden Ratio will be regarded as good art.

The question of whether an artist’s creative activity entails aesthetic experience and homosapient order will now be addressed.

If one were to follow Dewey, activity would be deemed creative ‘in so far as it moves to its own enrichment’ by bringing with it a release of further activities. In Dewey’s opinion, scientific inquiry, artistic production, and social companionship all possess this trait to a marked degree, and some amount of it is ‘a normal accompaniment of all successfully coordinated action.⁴²⁵⁸ Coordinated action, as spoken of by Dewey, can be understood to mean something like ‘orderly activity’. Applying these terms, orderly activity by an artist would consist in the energy that he or she expends in bringing structure to an object, thereby giving rise to a sense of enrichment. Enrichment would conceivably involve personal flourishing: E-order would therefore be consequent upon creative activity.

Creative activity may itself be informed (or in-formed) by a sense of natural order. In an essay dealing with the sculpture of Henry Moore, the art historian and critic Bernard Smith writes ‘if the basis of our aesthetic pleasure derives from the apprehension in works of art of a formal order which springs ultimately from the order of the natural world, then a knowledge of the methods of nature’s sculpture [for example wind and water erosion] may be a key to the practice of good art.’⁴²⁵⁹ Smith’s conditional (‘if the basis … natural world’) is especially pertinent. On

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⁴²⁵⁸ Dewey, p. 143 (my italics).
that basis, artistic creation can be understood to involve knowledge of the regularities of nature.\textsuperscript{260} As was the case with Nicholas and his clouds, such knowledge is indicative of some kind of relationship between intellectual achievement and aesthetic experience. Elucidation of the relationship would require a full-length study in its own right; I will only add here that the earlier discussion of the role of ‘thoughtful blending’ in the creation of aesthetic order (see p. 52) points in the same direction, as does the application of aesthetic criteria in mathematical theory (see p. 51). The meshing of intellectual achievement and aesthetic experience suggests that creative activity by an artist—or anyone else for that matter—might also be viewed in terms of self-actualisation.

**Self-Actualisation**

We have reached the top of the hierarchy. According to Maslow, even if all of the other needs are satisfied, ‘we may still often (if not always) expect that a new discontent and restlessness will develop, unless the individual is doing what he is fitted for.’\textsuperscript{261} By doing what one is fitted for, one attains self-actualisation. Self-actualisation amounts to self-fulfillment, and bears a strong resemblance to the ideal of self-realisation propounded by eighteenth-century Romantic philosophers. As Frederick Beiser describes it, self-realisation for the Romantics was to be achieved first through the development of all of one’s human powers, second by forming those powers into a unity, and third by securing one’s individuality, or uniqueness.\textsuperscript{262} Flourishing, and therefore homosapient order, would clearly be involved in the process.

Self-actualisation for Maslow is Janus-faced. Unlike all of the other needs, which he describes solely in terms of \textit{what is}, self-actualisation is also compassed in terms of \textit{what ought to be}: as well as its factual aspect it has a normative one. In Maslow’s opinion, ‘[t]he description of what one ought to be is almost the same as the description of what one deeply is.’\textsuperscript{263} ‘Almost’ could be the operative word here, because it allows for a divergence of ought from is. And, as we will see,

\textsuperscript{260} Smith seems to have believed that a connection between aesthetic order and natural order exists. There is nothing in his essay to suggest otherwise. Might an analogous connection exist between moral order and natural order? It is, of course, my contention that there is such a connection.

\textsuperscript{261} A Theory of Human Motivation, p. 382.


\textsuperscript{263} \textit{The Farther Reaches of Human Nature}, p. 108.
Maslow had strong views on what ‘ought to be’ consists in. The attainment by an individual of the mode of life best suited to his or her character can be regarded as the primary focus or objective of self-actualisation. Its secondary focus would then be its normative aspect, and this, I will argue, gives rise to two alternative ways of understanding self-actualisation: Maslow’s way, and an alternative way. The first will be dealt with in this chapter under the rubric ‘Maslovian self-actualisation’; the second will be explained in Section 6.5, where it will be referred to as ‘malignant self-actualisation’. Some comments on the notion of ‘self’ will help set the stage for a discussion of these issues.

Maslow was of the view that the ‘real self’ is ‘partly constructed and invented.’\(^{264}\) perhaps one might also say partly learned, with the other part consisting in that which is deep, or instinctoid, and possibly unalterable.\(^{265}\) Construction of the self would involve assimilation of inputs received from others, a subject that is touched on in a line from Tennyson’s poem *Ulysses*. The line reads, ‘I am part of all that I have met.’ The idea points to the possibility of give-and-take between individuals in the formation of selfhood—I am part of you and you are part of me. A community of selves is implied, and the community may be viewed as a whole. Connections are formed from encounters, fleeting or otherwise, between people and other entities.\(^{266}\) Self-realisation involves openness to experience, and assimilation thereof, perhaps in a way that is consonant with one’s existing self-conception—a process that culminates in self-understanding. The self is essentially a dynamic, evolving entity; for most of us, it would continue to evolve as long as encounters last, until death renders them impossible.

Self-construction, or self-invention, can also be understood in terms of self-creation. Self-creation, Richard Rorty explains, follows upon a person’s need ‘to come to terms with the blind impress which chance has given him, to make a self for himself by redescribing that impress in terms which are, if only marginally, his own.’\(^{267}\) Rorty claims that the need is universal. ‘Blind impress’ is from a poem

\(^{264}\) *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*, p. 108.

\(^{265}\) The ‘partly constructed …’ comment is made by Maslow in a footnote without elaboration, but I believe my interpretation is consistent with his general approach.

\(^{266}\) Support for the idea can be found in Georg Simmel, who maintained ‘that self-development proceeds by incorporating experiences of various objects into the developing self.’ See Braybrooke, *Meeting Needs*, p. 247.

by Philip Larkin, and presumably refers to the impressions made on a person by his or her unique set of experiences. Externalities are a factor, but the experience is made one’s own—this is what I meant in the previous paragraph with regard to the possibility of experience being assimilated in a way that is consonant with one’s self-conception. Rorty’s views on self-creation are reminiscent of Nietzsche; not surprisingly, perhaps, in view of his (Rorty’s) belief that Nietzsche was one of the very few ‘edifying’ philosophers ever to have lived.\textsuperscript{268} Nietzsche considered creativity and art to be so important that the artist-philosopher became, for him, the nearest thing on Earth to a deity; a creator who forms human beings—\textit{the true Übermenschen}, one might say. Beauty issues from art and art emanates from the strength of the artist’s will to power. Beauty is held to be life-affirming, and art is said to be the highest expression of freedom—‘how liberating is Dostoevsky,’ Nietzsche exclaims.\textsuperscript{270}

It is probably fair to say that most of us would be incapable of becoming a Nietzschean artist-philosopher, but Rorty may nevertheless have been correct in his assertion that the need for self-creativity is universal. The vast majority of people can both create and think to some extent: in line with Dewey’s view on the compounding nature of creative activity (see p. 99), perhaps the more we create and think the greater the need becomes for us to do so. The similarity between Rorty’s notion of self-creativity and Maslow’s self-actualisation is especially evident in the latter’s view that self-actualisation has a great deal to do with realising one’s potentialities, with making choices conducive to growth rather than regression, with taking responsibility, and with listening to and being one’s own self.\textsuperscript{271}

Self-actualisers are described by Maslow as ‘psychologically healthy, psychologically “superior” people [who are] better cognizers and perceivers.\textsuperscript{272} Cognition and intellectual achievement have already been paid considerable attention in this thesis, but an idea from Rawls could reinforce their connection

\textsuperscript{268} In Rorty’s view, most philosophy down through the ages has been of an inferior ‘systematising’ kind.
\textsuperscript{270} The Will to Power, s. 821.
\textsuperscript{271} The Farther Reaches of Human Nature, pp. 43-47.
\textsuperscript{272} The Farther Reaches of Human Nature, p. 5.
with self-actualisation. The idea is referred to as the ‘Aristotelian principle’, which, Rawls says, stipulates that other things being equal, ‘human beings enjoy the exercise of their realised capacities (their innate and trained capacities), and their enjoyment increases the more the capacity is realised, or the greater its complexity.’ Excellence through (or of) intellectual achievement occupies a prominent place in Aristotle’s doctrine of virtue. For Rawls, the Aristotelian principle constitutes ‘a basic principle of motivation.’\footnote{Rawls, \textit{A Theory of Justice}, p. 374.} It ties in with ‘the primary good of self-respect,’ it contributes to judgements of value; it resembles ‘the idealist notion’ of self-realisation; and it ‘turns out to have a central position in the moral psychology underlying justice as fairness.’\footnote{See Rawls, \textit{A Theory of Justice}, s. 65. As noted earlier, justice as fairness requires the enjoyment of equal basic liberties by everyone; that social and economic opportunities are the same for everyone; and that no-one benefits from altered socioeconomic arrangements unless the least advantaged members of the society also benefit.} Self-actualisation would seem to be indisputably good, and good in a morally relevant way. This is how Maslovian self-actualisation should be understood. Satisfaction of the need for it would contribute to homosapient order, and the need for it may therefore be understood as an expression of the need for homosapient order.

Maslow was in no doubt about the moral goodness of self-actualisation. For him, it is an altogether salutary and compassionate state-of-being—so much so that the ‘B’ in his formulations could reasonably be understood to signify ‘beneficence’ instead of ‘being’. According to him, ‘delight in bringing about justice,’ and ‘delight in stopping cruelty and exploitation’ are among the motivations and gratifications that attend self-actualisation.\footnote{The Farther Reaches of Human Nature, p. 298. I believe ‘compassionate’ aptly describes the Maslovian self-actualiser, especially if ‘compassion’ is understood in the sense ascribed to it by Confucius: according to the Chinese sage, compassion is akin to ‘strenuous attention to conduct;’ (see Lin Yutang (translator and editor), \textit{The Wisdom of Confucius} (New York: The Modern Library, 1966 [edition first published 1938]), p. 118). Strenuous attention to conduct is a feature of humaneness; see Section 8.3.} Recalling that the B-needs were regarded by Maslow as instinctoid (i.e. natural or innate rather than learned), moral goodness as a result of self-actualisation would be an outcome of entirely natural processes.

The beneficent nature of the natural is not without empirical support. The ethologist Frans De Waal recounts some experiments designed to determine whether contact between different species of primates can affect the way in which
conflict is resolved. Relatively bellicose animals were exposed for a while to more peaceable ones, and it was found that peacemaking skills were transmitted from the latter to the former.²⁷⁶ If ‘good’ practice can rub off, might we not conclude that ‘bad’ practice can also be learned? But such was not the case. The transmission of methods of conflict-resolution was strictly one-way—from peaceable to bellicose. The more harmonious animals remained unaffected by the erstwhile belligerence of their guests. Although ‘bad’ can be undone, ‘good’ would seem to be more resilient. Might we then infer that ‘good’ is instinctive and ‘bad’ learned? Not really. The naturalness of the good might be confined to the primates that were studied. Nevertheless, Maslow was generally optimistic, as indicated by his belief in the instinctoid nature of the B-values.

I suspect that one’s individual experience will determine whether there will be agreement with Maslow’s optimism. It is hard to think of how one might argue for it, or against it for that matter. Nevertheless, I believe it would be fair to say that the world would be quite a different place to the way most people find it if evil did in fact outweigh goodness. Instead of the everyday kindnesses, helpfulness and sympathy that characterise civil society, there would be cruelty, obstructiveness and indifference. Certainly the latter three are all too common, but it seems to me that civil society as we know it would never have evolved if they were predominant. Support for Maslow’s optimism can also be drawn from philosophy. Kant, for example, considered human nature to be fundamentally inclined towards moral goodness: I will expand on this in Chapter 8, where the relationship between personal character and morality is examined. Many others besides Kant have believed goodness to be the norm (i.e., ‘norm’ in the sense of ‘normal’ or ‘natural’). Plato, for instance, attributed bad behaviour to disorders of the soul, which, in turn, were attributable to ‘want of intelligence’ and consisted either in madness or in ignorance. Such pathologies were regarded by Plato as bodily malfunctions rather than willed wrong-doing: ‘no man is voluntarily bad,’ he says in the *Timaeus*, ‘but the bad become bad by reason of an ill disposition of the body and bad education.’²⁷⁷ For Plato, then, good education is necessary to orderliness of soul. Hume might also be cited: for him, moral sense is natural, and

²⁷⁷ *Timaeus*, 86e.
a nature inconsistent with moral sense is a perverted nature.\textsuperscript{278} I will be following Maslow’s lead (and Plato’s, and Kant’s, and Hume’s) in this regard when, in Chapter 8, I propose that human beings have, as an aspect of the need for self-actualisation, a need for humaneness—a need to be humane and a need to be treated humanely. Maslow’s optimism with regard to human nature appears to have been warranted: if the views that have been outlined truly reflect the facts, we would be entitled to think that most of us are inclined towards beneficence most of the time.

Maslovian self-actualisation is indicative of a relationship between needs (fundamentally, the need for homosapient order) and morality. The relationship will be discussed more fully in the next chapter, but before moving on, it would be as well to consider whether there are any significant omissions from Maslow’s list of needs. If there are, the connection that I am trying to forge between homosapient order and morality would come under serious threat.

\textbf{5.4 Other Needs}

The hierarchy of needs shown on p. 66 makes no mention of some needs that would commonly be regarded as fundamental to the human condition, namely the need for freedom, the need for play, and the need for power. In what follows I argue that places for all three can in fact be found in the Maslovian schema.

Freedom is a need that is felt by most of us, and it would certainly be a serious matter if it were missing from Maslow’s schema. As Wiggins says, ‘freedom, choice and autonomy are themselves vital human needs, and are candidates for precisely the kind of protection that is accorded qua needs to other real needs.’\textsuperscript{279}

There is little direct reference to the need for freedom in Maslow’s writings, although ‘aliveness’ can be found listed among his B-values, where it is

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\textsuperscript{278} Modern neuroscience offers tentative support for Plato’s and Hume’s positions. For instance, so-called social emotions such as compassion and empathy have been found to be associative with particular parts of the nervous system. Impairment of those parts would conceivably affect an individual’s capacity to respond compassionately or empathically towards the predicaments of others. If confirming evidence were available, one would be able to say, with Plato, that such a person would be suffering from a bodily ill disposition; or, with Hume, that her capacity for moral sense would have been damaged. As well as that, studies have shown that emotional responses may be influenced by learning, which was Plato’s other point. See Damasio, especially Chapter 5, ‘Emotions and Feelings’.

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contrasted with ‘feeling oneself to be totally determined.’ On the basis of the contrast, self-determination can be understood to be a B-value, and therefore a B-need. Values are needs by another name: if something is valued highly enough then its attainment would be felt as a need. Self-determination consists in autonomy (i.e. self-legislation), and while not the same as freedom, the two concepts are closely related. For instance, in a comment on Kant, Rawls remarks that ‘a person is acting autonomously when the principles of his action are chosen by him as the most adequate expression of his nature as a free and equal rational being.’ In other words, autonomous action is made possible by our nature as free and rational beings, which enables us to choose between alternative courses of action. Conversely, if we were not free and rational, we would be unable to choose, and our actions would be fully determined by external forces.

Play would also appear to be a universal need. Martha Nussbaum includes it in her list of ‘constitutive circumstances of the human being,’ a list that otherwise bears a strong resemblance to the constituents of Maslow’s hierarchy. Finnis also regards play as a basic human good, i.e. as something on which human fulfillment depends and therefore something we need. If play were indeed missing then Maslow’s schema would be gravely deficient. But Maslow does in fact allow a place for it, not as a specific need but again as a B-value. The absence of play is said by Maslow to lead to the loss of zest in life and an inability to enjoy, outcomes that would presumably prevent one from attaining self-actualisation. Maslow would have agreed with Kant’s assessment that play brings various benefits in its train, such as recovery of energy spent in work, sociability via party games, and physical health through athletic games. That leaves the need for power.

The need for power will here be understood to refer to the need one has for control over oneself, and over other things and people. It becomes manifest in either of

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281 Rawls, A Theory of Justice, p. 222.
283 In addition to play, the goods identified by Finnis are life, sociability or friendship, practical reasonableness, knowledge, aesthetic experience and religion (Finnis, p. 86 ff).
two ways, malignantly or benignly. The malign and benign expressions of power are portrayed by the psychologist David C. McClelland in terms of ‘two faces’. Its malign aspect comes into view as an unsocialised ‘concern for personal dominance;’ its benign face is more socialised, for example through the empowerment of followers. Exploitative sex and aggression are identified as expressions of malignant power; running for public office is a more benign—and socialised—manifestation.

Looking more closely at benign power, we find McClelland deeming the empowerment of followers to be the ultimate paradox of social leadership and social power: ‘to be an effective leader, you have to turn all your so-called followers into leaders.’ Education is a means of empowerment, and leadership and education are linked etymologically, through the Latin educare, which means ‘to lead out.’ Socialised leadership, McClelland maintains, takes its educational function seriously. Socialised or benign power is concerned with learning and teaching, which ties in with the Maslovian need for intellectual achievement, and therefore self-actualisation. It can also be linked to Spinoza’s theory of conatus, according to which everything strives for self-preservation and joy. Joy consists in an increase in the power of acting autonomously, which in turn arises from the possession of adequate ideas. Self-preservation and joy are the aims of the striving, but they can also be regarded as needs. Seen as such, they permeate Maslow’s entire hierarchy: the first is especially concerned with physical needs and the second with social and being needs.

The need for power issues in commands (i.e. orders) either to oneself or to others to fall into line with one’s conception of what counts as proper order. But power can go beyond the issuance of means of attaining it; it can also become an end in itself. Should that happen, the dominance-submission aspect of power delineated by McClelland becomes active, whereupon followers tend to be treated as ‘pawns rather than origins.’ Instead of ‘origins’ McClelland might have said ‘ends’;

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287 McClelland, p. 167.
288 McClelland, p. 171.
289 McClelland, p. 175.
290 See The Ethics, 3p6-p12.
291 McClelland, p. 172.
however, in either case, an obvious breach of morality will have occurred, especially in the form of Kant’s Categorical Imperative.

Power can be perverted in various ways, at each of the levels of the Maslovian hierarchy. At the physiological level, it may find expression as lechery or greed; at the social level, it would be marked by covetousness, envy and sloth; and at the level of being, by spiritual pride. What have been known since biblical times as the seven deadly sins can all be understood as perversions of the will to power, and therefore of the need for power. If one is lecherous or greedy, then one aims at the satisfaction of inordinate appetites for sex or material goods. If one is covetous or envious, then one lusts after something that properly belongs to another. If slothful, then one may fail to fulfill one’s social functions. In these ways, covetousness, envy and sloth are all disruptive of social order. Finally, if one is spiritually proud, then one’s sense of self-importance tends to reach gargantuan proportions. Theologically, spiritual pride consists in the denial of God; secularly, it consists in the denial of the worth of other people and the world in general. Both theologically and secularly, spiritual pride is characterised by extreme self-centredness and selfishness.

The need for power need not result in evil: think, for example, of compassionate leaders like Martin Luther King, Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela, all of whom certainly attained power and arguably therefore needed it. But the need for power can reach pathological degrees in some individuals. Milton’s Satan is an archetype, summed up in the proposition ‘Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heaven.’ Regardless of whether good or evil, the attainment of power would assuredly contribute to the satisfaction of the need for self-actualisation in those who are motivated by some form of power, which is probably to say nearly everyone.

The needs that seemed to be missing from Maslow’s hierarchy have in fact been found to be firmly embedded in it. His list of needs would appear to be comprehensive, with the exception of the need for malignant self-actualisation. The latter will later be found to be significant in the formulation of the order-based theory of morality.

5.5 Conclusion

In keeping with many others, Daniel Dennett maintains that moral agency depends on freedom, but he finds also that it is anchored in the stability of ‘social conditions, individual practices, and attitudes.’ He writes:

The complexities of social life in a species with language and culture generate a series of evolutionary arms races from which agents emerge who exhibit key components of human morality: an interest in discovering conditions in which cooperation will flourish, sensitivity to punishments and threats, concern for reputation, high-level dispositions of self-manipulation that are designed to improve self-control in the face of temptation, and an ability to make commitments that are appreciable by others.

The three classes of needs, and the three components of homosapient order, are all implicated in Dennett’s explanation of the origin of cooperation and morality. Physiological needs and P-order would be implicit in the punishments and threats he refers to, social needs and S-order have a great deal to do with concern for reputation, and being needs and E-order would be vitally involved in the ‘high level dispositions’ he speaks of. Flexibility of mind and social comprehension are other factors mentioned by Dennett. Mental flexibility entails imagination, which has been variously associated with morality, while social comprehension would contribute to the formation of cohesive societies.

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293 Dennett, *Freedom Evolves*, p. 190.
296 According to Darwin, moral sensitivity is dependent upon the effectiveness of the imagination; in his words, ‘whatever renders the imagination more vivid and strengthens the habit of recalling and comparing past impressions, will make the conscience more sensitive ….’ (The Descent of Man in Darwin (Chicago: The University of Chicago, Great Books of the Western World, 1952), Vol. 49, p. 593). Dewey similarly, in his declaration that the imagination is ‘the chief instrument of the good,’ (quoted by Rorty in *Contingency, irony, and solidarity*, p. 69); and Rorty speaks of ‘imaginative identification’ with the suffering of other human beings (Contingency, irony, and solidarity, p. 93). We also see from Rawls that imagination may have been crucial to Sidgwick’s utilitarian conception of ‘future good’, which served as a criterion for the evaluation of possible courses of action. In Rawls’s gloss, Sidgwick described ‘a person’s future good on the whole as what he would now desire and seek if the consequences of all the various courses of conduct open to him were, at the present point of time, adequately foreseen by him and adequately realized in imagination’ (A Theory of Justice, p. 366). Martha Nussbaum’s concept ‘compassionate imagination’ is also relevant to the issue (see Liberal Education and Global Responsibility: A talk for a Symposium at Carleton College, in honor of the Inauguration of Robert A. Oden Jr. as President, October 25, 2002: file://E:\carleton.html).
Although all of the human needs are readily recognisable in the terms formulated by Maslow, the need for homosapient order itself might not be an altogether alien idea. It would readily become evident, I suggest, to anyone confronted by a breakdown of order, in any of the senses of order discussed here. Illness, for example, could evoke ideas of physical disorder, as might riot of social disorder. The need for homosapient order is only one remove from its Maslovian expressions. The chapter that follows completes the metaethical part of the thesis by demonstrating that needs are morally relevant.
6: HUMAN NEEDS AND MORALITY

6.1 The Moral Relevance of Needs

According to John Dupré, the assumption that attention to a thing’s origins provides the key to understanding its nature may be a ‘hangover from theological cosmology.’ Theological cosmology, of course, is very much concerned with the role of God in the origin of things; but theological cosmology was not the target of Dupré’s remark. Rather, his aim was directed at the quest by evolutionary psychologists for explanations of human traits in terms of conditions that were prevalent in the Stone Age. Dupré is critical of the quest because of its alleged failure to take subsequent contextual developments into account. Contextual developments include cultural change and environmental conditions: in conjunction with biological factors, they are responsible for the way in which humans have evolved.

It is certainly not my wish to ignore the importance of contextual developments, but I nevertheless believe that our basic needs provide a good starting point for explanations of behaviour, including morally classifiable behaviour. Our early Stone Age ancestors would at the very least have experienced the need for subsistence and safety. Subsequently, at some stage of human development, it presumably occurred to people that such needs might be better satisfied if work were to be performed cooperatively. In other words, the basic needs preceded the advent of cooperativeness. If the needs had not been satisfied in some way before the formation of cooperative groups, there would have been no-one alive to form the groups. S-order would have become another need once socialisation got started. Since the Stone Age ended less than seven thousand years ago, long after the emergence of Homo sapiens, some kind of embryonic need for E-order might also have been emerging: Homer’s poetry, for example, may have been a product of those ancient times.

Cooperative groups are groups whose members work and play together. People who do these things together stick together: their groups are cohesive. According to Philip Kitcher, cohesiveness within the earliest congregations of human beings

297 Dupré, p. 88.
depended on altruism. It is altruism that first enabled people of different ages and sex to live together cohesively. Human beings have long had a capacity for altruism; indeed, Kitcher maintains, ever since the ethical project began fifty thousand years ago. Three kinds of altruism are identified by Kitcher: biological, behavioural and psychological. Biological altruism occurs at an unconscious genetic level, when the reproductive success of an organism diminishes in such a way as to increase the reproductive success of another organism. Biological altruism is of no relevance to ethics, because of the absence of a cognitive dimension. Behavioural altruism occurs when an organism acts in ways ‘that detract from the fulfillment of its own current desires and promote the perceived wishes’ of another organism. Perception of another’s wishes requires cognitive ability, so behavioural altruism occurs only within the animal kingdom. Behavioural altruism, Kitcher notes, may be practised ‘by Machiavellian egoists; although the wishes of another are recognised, acts are undertaken to serve them only in so far as the interests of the individual performing the acts are also served.

In Kitcher’s view neither biological altruism nor behavioural altruism is of much help in understanding the origins of the ethical project. For him, it is psychological altruism that is of most interest. A psychological altruist is a person who intentionally acts towards others in ways that promote their perceived wishes and interests, after having aligned their wishes with his or her own wishes (my gloss; Kitcher’s definition is far more complicated). That others should benefit from their acts is desired by psychological altruists. Psychological altruism and behavioural altruism find expression in a person’s character.

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298 Kitcher, p. 17 ff.
299 According to my thesis, ethics is partly based on biological order, which is a form of physical order. But ethics needs much more than that; what it needs is homosapient order in its entirety. If biological order were the only kind of order, ethics as we understand it and as it is being portrayed here would not exist.
300 Kitcher, p. 19.
301 Kitcher, p. 19.
302 Kitcher, p. 19.
303 See Kitcher, p. 22. Based on studies by Jane Goodall and Frans de Waal, Kitcher believes that psychological altruism may not be limited to human beings. My thesis is concerned with human morality, but the importance attributed to non-human altruism by Kitcher is worth noting. He maintains that ‘there are preethical forms of altruism and that these are realized in animals who have not yet acquired ethical practice (p. 44).’ The ethical project begins with the transition from preethical altruism to ethical altruism.
On Kitcher’s thesis, altruism alone cannot ensure that members of a population reach the level of cooperation necessary to social stability. Exploitation of altruistic individuals by others not so inclined may be one impediment. Normative guidance is also required,\textsuperscript{304} and this is made possible by the ability ‘to apprehend and obey commands,’\textsuperscript{305} including self-commands. The emotions and reason would both play a part, perhaps in conjunction with one another.\textsuperscript{306} In Kitcher’s words, ‘[t]he simplest—and original—form of normative guidance consists in an ability to transform a situation that would otherwise have been an altruism failure, by means of commitment to following a rule: you obey the command to give weight to the wishes of the other.’\textsuperscript{307} Whence the rule, and why should anyone obey it? The questions, of course, are of fundamental importance to theories of normative guidance. The origin of the rule for behavioural altruists would conceivably lie in the perception of personal benefit that might be obtained by giving weight to the wishes of others; obedience to the rule would follow from the desirability of such benefit. For psychological altruists, the rule would originate in the desirability of giving weight to the wishes of others, and the same desirability would encourage observance of the rule.

I mentioned in Chapter 1 that Kitcher conjectures that the ‘first ethicists were probably concerned with the altruism failures that arose with respect to basic needs, but their efforts led to an evolved conception of the good life, one in which our interactions and relationships with others are fundamental.’\textsuperscript{308} In other words, physiological needs gave rise to social needs, and perhaps also to being needs (the latter via conceptions of the ‘good life’). The reference to ‘basic needs’ is especially noteworthy. While the needs at issue for Kitcher appear to be those at the nether end of Maslow’s hierarchy, we have seen that Maslow insisted on the basic (‘instinctoid’) nature of the complete range of needs, including those involving human relationships, all the way up the ladder to self-actualisation. An order-based ethicist today would on that principle still be concerned with altruism failures with respect to basic needs. Higher-order needs might not have been basic when the ethical project first got started, but they are now.

\textsuperscript{304} Kitcher, Section 10.
\textsuperscript{305} Kitcher, p. 74.
\textsuperscript{306} Kitcher, p. 78 ff.
\textsuperscript{307} Kitcher, p. 74.
\textsuperscript{308} Kitcher, p. 327.
The question is, what have needs got to do with goodness and right? A great deal, the philosophers H. L. A. Hart and John Finnis appear to have believed. Finnis approvingly quotes Hart to the effect that ‘the core of the notion of right is neither individual choice nor individual benefit but basic or fundamental individual needs.’\footnote{Hart quoted by Finnis, p. 205.} In other words, the needs of respondents must be taken into account in determining whether the actions of an agent can be considered right, and therefore morally commendable; moreover, the needs of respondents carry more weight in such determinations than an agent’s choice or benefit.

There are several other contemporary philosophers who look upon needs as basic to morality, including David Braybrooke, David Wiggins, Soran Reader and Gillian Brock. Braybrooke, for instance, considers needs to ‘imply conditions indispensable to having important freedoms,’ such as ‘the freedom to survive.’\footnote{David Braybrooke, ‘Where does the Moral Force of the Concept of Needs Reside and When?’ in Reader (editor): \textit{The Philosophy of Need}, p. 215.} Wiggins similarly, when he speaks of ‘entrenched’ needs, i.e. needs that are relatively (to needs that are not entrenched) unsusceptible to change.\footnote{David Wiggins, ‘What is the Force of the Claim that One Needs Something?’ in Brock (editor): \textit{Necessary Goods: Our Responsibilities to Meet Others’ Needs}, pp. 38-39.} Entrenched needs must be satisfied in order to avoid harm of some kind, ranging from illness and physical hurt to psychological damage in the form of diminished self-respect; they correspond to the complete range of Maslovian needs. Wiggins also aligns needs with interests: ‘[i]f a person needs x, then he has an interest in x’s being or becoming available to him.’\footnote{Wiggins, p. 40.} In addressing the question of the moral relevance of needs, I will be discussing the relationship between needs and interests, and between needs, preferences, values, rights and desires.

Kitcher notes that desires are connected with intentions and actions,\footnote{Kitcher, p. 20.} and speaks of the values one attributes to various outcomes.\footnote{Kitcher, p. 24.} Since we are likely to desire what we need, needs would seem to precede desires in any chain of events that culminates in action. Desire may be understood as a psychological state induced by needs, and perhaps other things besides needs (for example, wants). Kitcher at least allows room for needs, in his proposition that, with regard to altruism, an organism’s desires and emotions ‘will adjust to reflect that organism’s perceptions...
of the wants, needs, and feelings of … others." Kitcher also refers to ‘ethical agents as those sympathetic individuals who respond to the needs of others.’ More strongly still, ‘[b]y identifying permanent human needs, analysts can conclude that some elements in ethical progress will probably figure in any progressive development of what we now have.” Permanent human needs are basic human needs.

Many references to needs in their various guises can be found in the literature — desires as we have just seen, but also values, preferences, and, as already mentioned, interests. With respect to values, Philip Pettit notes that consequentialism has appeared in several forms, one of which is ‘restrictive consequentialism’, which he describes as ‘a form of extreme or act-consequentialism.” Restrictive consequentialism holds simply that an agent may best promote his or her values in behavioural choices. Values are the end; behaviour is the means to the end—a truism, perhaps, but it appears that ‘needs’ could be substituted for ‘values’, without any obvious impairment to the formulation of restrictive consequentialism.

On the subject of preferences, Robert Goodin observes that modern utilitarians generally replace Benthamite hedonistic psychology with ‘preference satisfaction’. Instead of a surplus of pleasures over pains, what is now understood to count is the satisfaction of preferences. One may ask: whose preferences, and preferences for what? As far as whose preferences are concerned, agents and respondents would be taken into account, the aim being maximisation of the satisfaction of preferences across all parties. With regard to what preferences, needs would seem to be the key: we desire that our needs be satisfied, and where alternative means of satisfying them exist, we will choose one of them in preference to the others. But Goodin detects a deficiency in preference utilitarianism on this point: he maintains that there are ‘some things—truth, beauty, love, friendship—that are good, whether or not people happen to desire them.” Such was G. E. Moore’s version of ‘ideal utilitarianism’, which is

315 Kitcher, p. 67.
316 Kitcher, p. 83.
317 Kitcher, p. 262.
318 Pettit, pp. 236-237.
pluralistic in so far as right action is held to be that which maximises the good. As Jonathan Dancy notes, Moore also held that there are various things that are good, such as knowledge and aesthetic experience.\textsuperscript{321} The two goods mentioned by Dancy correspond to two of Maslow’s so-called ‘being needs’; and, as well, to the notion of eudaimonic order.

Interests are the chief concern of welfare utilitarians. Instead of preferences, emphasis is placed on the satisfaction of interests.\textsuperscript{322} Goodin observes that welfare interests ‘need not be all that far removed from preferences,’\textsuperscript{323} which suggests that assimilation is conceivable. In this chapter, however, I argue that while interests are close in connotation to needs, preferences are less so. Goodin continues, ‘[w]elfare utilitarians, by abstracting from people’s actual wants to their more generalized welfare interests, has given that intuitively appealing broader notion of utility some practical content.’\textsuperscript{324} Getting down to basics, it would seem. Among the welfare interests listed by Goodin are health, money, shelter and sustenance—all of which arguably stem from needs, and, ultimately (such is my contention), also by an act of abstraction, our need for homosapient order.

\section*{6.2 Needs, Preferences, Wishes, Wants, Interests, Values}

As we have just seen, needs, preferences, wishes, wants, interests and values are variously spoken of in terms of moral relevance. Validly so, I believe, because any of them may lead to behaviour by an agent that impacts on others in ways that invite moral judgement. My contention, however, is that the basic needs delineated by Maslow are either prior to or equivalent to each of the others. By ‘prior to’, I mean ‘a determinant of’.

Preferences express some kind of ranking of wants, interests, values and needs. Faced with a choice, unless we are Buridan’s ass, we will prefer to have one or some of our wants etc. met rather than others. Preferences are posterior to needs, wants, interests and values. Alternatively, one might say ‘I need (or want) X more

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\textsuperscript{321} Dancy, ‘An Ethic of Prima Facie Duties’, p. 220.
\textsuperscript{322} Goodin, ‘Utility and the Good’, p. 244.
\textsuperscript{323} Goodin, ‘Utility and the Good’, p. 244.
\textsuperscript{324} Goodin, ‘Utility and the Good’, p. 244.
\end{flushright}
than I need (or want) Y, therefore I prefer to have X rather than Y'. Preferences reflect our underlying needs.

Wishes are close in connotation to desires. Something that is desired will be something that is wished for. Casebeer differentiates between the desired and the desirable. He writes, ‘[i]n the short term, regulating my experience by giving in merely to what is desired rather than to what is desirable would be disastrous and would lead to non-consummatory experience in the long run. I should regulate my desires and resolve conflicting wants and needs, or I should triangulate a reasonable course of action when faced with conflicting values.' In other words, that which is desirable is that which ought to be desired, where ‘ought’ is determined by our beliefs with regard to the good and right. Wants are close in meaning to needs, although the term ‘want’ is ambiguous. On the one hand, when I say ‘I want Y’, Y may be of no consequence to my well-being; it may even be deleterious towards it. ‘I want a cigarette’, for example. In this case, my wanting Y has little or nothing to do with my basic needs. (Although wanting Y may be an expression of my character, or physiology. If I am a nicotine addict, I may indeed feel in need of a smoke. Then, if a steal a pack because of my perceived need, my want will become morally relevant. In such instances, wants are equivalent to needs.) On the other hand, ‘to be in want of X’ would generally be understood to be in need of X, and that our well-being depends on obtaining it. To put it another way, the want is equivalent to a basic need. James Griffin distinguishes between ‘mere wanting’ and ‘the sort of wanting that connects with values. One way to see something as worth wanting is to see it under the heading of some general human interest.’

The sort of wanting that connects with values and interests would be that which also connects with basic needs. Mary Midgley connects wants with our deepest concerns. She writes, ‘[w]e are not free to create or annihilate wants, either by private invention or by culture …. Wants are not random impulses. They are articulated, recognizable aspects of life; they are the deepest structural constituents of our characters.’

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325 Casebeer, p. 28. Triangulation: conflicting values (assuming they are two in number) occupy two of the nodes, and some kind of decision-making process (which is likely to combine reason and emotion) would be at the third node (my interpretation).
326 Griffin, p. 115.
327 Quoted by Pope, p. 36.
influential with regard to our characters. The depth attributed by Midgley to wants makes them sound very much like Maslovian needs.

Interests and values can be taken together. If we have an interest in something it is because we value it. It is hard to imagine how we could be interested in anything that was of no value to us. If something is valued, then its interests are likely to be promoted. If we disvalue something, then we may act (or wish others would act) against its interests. The relationship between interests and values seems to be very strong indeed. Where, then, do they stand in relation to needs? I will follow Midgley on this: according to her, ‘values register needs.’ In other words, if something is needed then it will be valued. We will have an interest in seeing that the need is satisfied—which is to say, needs are prior to values and interests. However, that is not to say that we will need everything that is of interest to us: a new book from a favourite author would be of interest and we would value having it, but would we really need it? Often we would not. In the event of a clash, interests and values stemming from needs would likely take precedence over those that do not: again, therefore, it can be concluded that needs are prior to values and interests.

The relationship between needs and preferences, wishes and the rest is a causal one. The fact that we have a need for something—for example a drink (and therefore P-order)—causes us to do something to satisfy the need. Need precipitates purposeful action, mediated by feelings and beliefs about what kind of action might (or should) be undertaken. Given the opportunity, we might quench our thirst with beer rather than wine, a choice that expresses our preference. Viewed from the perspective of the preference, our choice of beer expresses a want, which in turn expresses our need for homeostasis. If asked why we want the beer, we will say: because I am thirsty. This is the reason for our taking a drink. Homeostatic disorder (felt as thirst) causes us to find a means of quenching the thirst. Preference kicks in when we are given a choice as to how to quench it; the need is prior to the preference. Our preference for beer will likely be due to contextual (for example, cultural) factors, although biology may also play a part (for example, we may be allergic to wine). Another example: we see someone collapse in the street and rush to help them. Why? Because, I would say, of our

basic need for humaneness, which, I argue (in Section 8.3), can be classed as a Maslovian B-need. If asked for a reason for our helping behaviour, we might refer to our belief that matters should be so. At bottom, however, or from the other direction, the putative need provides a causal explanation for our action.

Needs, then, are either prior to or equivalent to preferences, wishes, wants, interests and values. And all of the latter would seem to be morally relevant. To the extent that they are, needs would also be morally relevant. They become morally relevant when we engage in morally classifiable behaviour in endeavours to satisfy our needs (or preferences, desires, wants etc.). In Section 4.4 homosapient order was tentatively found to be good in a morally relevant way, when conjoined to morally commendable behaviour. Then, in Chapter 5, the various needs identified by Maslow were all traced to the fundamental need for homosapient order, thus pointing to the moral relevance of needs. The foregoing argument relating to preferences etc. strengthens the case for their moral relevance. To confirm it, I will now attempt to demonstrate that needs are closely related to rights, on the understanding that rights are indisputably morally relevant. The argument is based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

6.3 Needs and Rights
The UDHR provides insight into what a consensus on the notion of right (and, by implication, the notion of wrong) consists in.\(^\text{329}\) Since its proclamation in 1948, the UDHR has served as the basis of the International Bill of Human Rights,\(^\text{330}\) and as a model for bills of rights in the constitutions of many countries that have subsequently gained independence, especially within the British Commonwealth.\(^\text{331}\)

\(^{329}\) The concepts ‘right’ and ‘rights’ are closely related, but not identical. Both involve possible mismatches between rights and obligations, and, according to Onora O’Neill, it is only at an abstract level that the two converge: i.e., where whatever an agent is obliged to do because it is right is the same as that which a respondent has a right to expect—such is the vocabulary of right. However, a gap opens up in the vocabulary of rights where obligations to respondents remain unallocated to an agent. See O’Neill, ‘Rights, Obligations, and Needs’, in Brock (editor), Necessary Goods: Our Responsibilities to Meet Others’ Needs, Chapter 5. That may well be true, but there is at least justification on an abstract level for treating ‘rights’ as a surrogate of ‘right’.

\(^{330}\) Formulated in 1966 in the form of two covenants, and supplemented by two voluntary protocols, the first also in 1966 and the second in 1989.

\(^{331}\) See Finnis, p. 211.
Pronouncements like the UDHR may reasonably be said to be concerned more with political right than moral right, but the two kinds of right could also be seen as being continuous with one another, especially if we choose to follow Aristotle. The UDHR consists of thirty articles, and addresses such matters as life and liberty, freedom from slavery, equality in person and before the law, and education. The UDHR is a remarkable achievement, because it transcends profound cultural, religious and political differences. The nations that voted for it did so for various reasons: as David Tracy observes, ‘there proved to be no way for any philosopher to win agreement on anything like a common ethical, political, metaphysical, or religious answer to the question of why the most basic human rights were just that: basic human rights.’ Christians and Jews, Liberal Democrats and Marxists, and others of different religious and political persuasions, all had recourse to a multitude of sources for their views. In the circumstances, it would be too much to expect unanimous agreement to the UDHR in its entirety. Griffin, for example, is critical of Article no. 24, with its ‘right’ to paid holidays; but he nevertheless believes most of the UDHR rights to be acceptable.

A sample of the articles of the UDHR will suffice to demonstrate how they address the Maslovian needs. Article no. 2 states that ‘[n]obody should be discriminated against on the basis of race, religion, gender, politics, or on any other grounds.’ Discrimination manifests as prejudice, unfairness and intolerance. In condemning it on the basis of qualities like race and gender, which lie beyond the control of the individual, the second article aims at the advancement of justice, and accordingly serves the need for esteem and possibly self-actualisation. Religion and politics may also be beyond the control of the individual in some circumstances, for example in theocracies and dictatorships, where contrary views could prevail.

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334 I should note that a similar exercise to the one I am engaged in has been conducted by Gillian Brock. She writes, a ‘knowledge of what our human needs are must be had before we can sensibly have a go at defining the entitlements that will be protected as human rights’ (see Reader (editor): The Philosophy of Need, p. 65 ff.). Brock’s concern was to establish that a needs-based account is more fundamental to global justice than a human rights account. I think she is correct, but I wish to establish that there is something even more fundamental than the various needs that she, like Maslow, identifies, namely the need for homosapien order. Philosophers have a penchant for fundamentals—the more fundamental the better.
sometimes attract severe punishment; otherwise, choice would generally be exercisable, at least to some extent. Nevertheless, regardless of whether religion and politics are matters of individual choice, the article insists that one should keep an open mind towards them. A difficulty arising from this is whether one would be entitled to be intolerant of credos that are themselves discriminatory, for example Nazism and various kinds of fundamentalist religion. The article’s position is that one would not be so entitled; it does not follow, however, that rational disapproval would also be out of line.

Article no. 3 stipulates that ‘[e]veryone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.’ Again, there could hardly be rights more fundamental than these. The article addresses very basic needs, such as survival and safety. The inclusion of liberty with the right to life and security suggests that it too is basic. And so it is, for without it, opportunities for self-respect would be severely curtailed. Liberty, or freedom, is a Maslovian B-need, and therefore answers to the need for self-actualisation in the form of human flourishing. Observance of these rights would help satisfy needs from one end of Maslow’s hierarchy to the other.

Another set of fundamental needs is the subject of Article no. 5, which states that ‘[n]o one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment.’ More than mere wrong, this article speaks against evil. The pertinent needs are homeostasis and safety, belongingness and esteem; in other words, all of the so-called Maslovian deficiency needs. Maslow was of the view that the lack of gratification of such needs can cause a ‘diminution of humanness, i.e., loss of some of the characteristics that define humanness.’ The ‘diminution’ could also be an effect of cruelty, through vitiation of self-respect (i.e., denial of the need for esteem). Note that we are talking here about diminution, not total loss. A person who is subjected to torture would still be a person, i.e. a human being, regardless of the severity of his or her suffering.

Finally, Article no. 14 is pertinent to the vexed issue of asylum-seeking. The article specifies that ‘[e]veryone has the right to seek and enjoy in other countries asylum from unjust persecution.’ Safety and belongingness are clearly at issue here, and a straightforward case of right and wrong would appear to be involved.

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But the politics surrounding asylum-seeking complicates matters. While it would seem to be unequivocally wrong to refuse to accommodate someone attempting to escape persecution, the conventions of the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) oblige refugees to fit in with the laws and customs of the host nation. So much is reinforced in the right of the prospective host to refuse entry to criminals and the like. In other words, the social stability of the host nation is assumed to be paramount, and that could conflict with the aims of Article no.14, from which the UNHCR takes its lead. Whence real politick.\textsuperscript{336}

In 2010 there were about thirty-one million asylum-seekers (refugees and displaced persons) in the world, and an unqualified reading of Article 14 would presumably require a nation to permit entry to anyone who made it their destination. What if all of the refugees were to select just one country? Well, to accommodate such a large number would obviously give rise to the kind of social disorder legislated against in the refugee convention. That of course would be an unrealistic scenario, but a principle is involved: it is a matter of where to draw the line—what would be the right number? Order-based theory would say that the number would be such as not to encroach on satisfaction of the needs of the host’s citizens, especially their needs for homeostasis and safety. How many refugees, then, would be too many? That would be a question for social scientists to answer, but some sort of rational estimate should be possible.

The foregoing samples demonstrate how the rights prescribed in the UDHR can be associated with Maslovian needs, and therefore with the need for homosapient order. Indeed, all of the UDHR articles can be read in a similar fashion. Physical needs are at issue in the rights to life, security, work, an adequate standard of living and freedom from torture. Social needs are relevant to the rights to a family life, participation in public affairs, freedom of movement, a fair hearing in legal affairs, privacy, and freedom from discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, gender and politics. The various freedoms are vitally concerned with self-esteem. Being needs are concerned with the rights to work, self-determination, gender

\textsuperscript{336} Contravention of the Christian principle of sacrifice could also arise, leading to moral dilemmas for avowedly Christian rulers of host nations. Sacrifice under the teaching of Jesus requires deeds of a supererogatory nature, as in the call to give one’s cloak in addition to the coat that may have been forfeited under law (Matt. 5: 10).
equality, education and participation in the aesthetic and intellectual achievements of the community.

The connection between needs and human rights appears to be very strong, in which case everyone would have to be seen as having the same basic needs. This follows from the assumption that rights are equal across the human race: a justifiable assumption, in my view, by virtue of the very existence of the UDHR, especially its injunctions against discriminatory practice. Equality of rights and needs means that each person is entitled to have their need for food satisfied as much as any other person is entitled to have the same need satisfied; likewise the need for love, the need for esteem, and all of the other needs in the Maslovian schema. I am speaking here in general terms, and the qualifier ‘other things being equal’ would have to be applied to particular cases. For example, a person who has been without food for several days would probably be in greater need than someone who has been fasting for a single day; their levels of satiety, prior to receiving sustenance, would not be equal. Nevertheless, based on the general point at issue, it follows that an ethics based on needs is essentially egalitarian.

An observation made by Finnis is also worth mentioning. The UDHR (and derivative documents) generally employ two principal canonical forms: first, that everyone ‘has the right to …,’ and, second, ‘no one shall be ….’\textsuperscript{337} The two forms Finnis says, are due to the notion that the ‘exercise of rights and freedoms … is subject to limitation.’\textsuperscript{338} In the UDHR the limitations with regard to both forms stem from Article no. 29, which stipulates that the various rights must be exercised within the ambit of laws that protect the rights of others. In other words, limitation is necessary in order ‘(i) to secure due recognition for the rights and freedoms of others; (ii) to meet the just requirements of morality in a democratic society; (iii) to meet the just requirements of public order in a democratic society; (iv) to meet the just requirements of the general welfare in a democratic society.’\textsuperscript{339} The underlying idea that public freedom involves limitation corresponds to the notion that personal freedom in the form of autonomy entails self-restraint.

\textsuperscript{337} Finnis, p. 211.
\textsuperscript{338} Finnis, p. 211.
\textsuperscript{339} Finnis, p. 213.
The correlation between human needs and human rights is so strong that one may wonder whether rights instead of needs should be given priority in metaethical and ethical theory. The question is the subject of the next section, where some ideas from James Griffin are considered.

6.4 Needs or Rights?

Griffin proposes that ‘human rights have to do with a certain minimum—the minimum proximately necessary for normative agency.’ Griffin, p. 187. Normative agency consists in ‘deliberating, assessing, choosing, and acting to make what we see as a good life for ourselves.’ Griffin, p. 32. It is important to note the qualifier ‘normative’ in Griffin’s formula: some people such as young children and those suffering from mental disablement would be agents in so far as they do things, but their actions would often be excluded from moral judgement for the reasons given in the discussion of moral classifiability in Section 2.3. Expanding on normative agency, Griffin explains:

To be an agent, in the fullest sense of which we are capable, one must (first) choose one’s own path through life—that is, not be dominated or controlled by someone or something else (call it “autonomy”). And (second) one’s choice must be real; one must have at least a certain minimum education and information. And having chosen, one must then be able to act; that is, one must have at least the minimum provision of resources and capabilities that it takes (call all of this “minimum provision”). And none of this is any good if someone then blocks one; so (third) others must not forcibly stop one from pursuing what one sees as a worthwhile life (call this “liberty”). Griffin, p. 33.

The conditions of agency—autonomy, minimum provision and liberty—define what Griffin refers to as ‘personhood’. Personhood, he says, provides grounds (but not the only grounds—‘practicalities’ is another Griffin, p. 37.) in which human rights can be anchored. Griffin maintains that the notion of personhood, which coincides with that of normative agency, is capable of generating ‘most of the

340 Griffin, p. 187.
341 Griffin, p. 32.
342 Griffin, p. 33.
343 Griffin, p. 37. With regard to practicalities, Griffin writes, ‘[w]e need also to consult human nature, the nature of society, and so on ….’ Rights need to be ‘socially manageable’ (p. 38).
conventional list of human rights.'  

The objects of rights include life, security, autonomy, basic education and worship, all of which correspond to basic Maslovian needs. Life and security are the homeostatic and safety needs that have been discussed; autonomy is concerned with the need for self-respect; basic education is a stepping-stone towards intellectual achievement; and worship is associable with spiritual fulfillment and self-actualisation. But Griffin would not go as far as treating satisfaction of all of the Maslovian needs as conditions of personhood. He writes, ‘[g]rounding human rights in personhood imposes an obvious constraint on their content: they are rights not to anything that promotes human good or flourishing, but merely to what is needed for human status. They are protections of that somewhat austere state, a characteristically human life, not of a good or happy or perfected or flourishing human life.’ On that account, self-actualisation would not be necessary to personhood: and by excluding it, aesthetic experience and intellectual achievement would also be excluded; either that, or present only to a very limited extent.

I think it may be granted that Griffin’s three conditions of personhood are sufficient for normative agency. In the absence of autonomy, minimum provision and liberty, either severally or collectively, normative agency would conceivably be impossible. But normative agency does not require satisfaction of the complete range of Maslovian needs. A person who has not been fortunate enough to attain self-actualisation through, say, maximisation of her musical potential, would not for that reason be disqualified from moral agency. The question is whether the conditions of personhood, as well as being sufficient grounds for normative agency, also provide sufficient grounds for a comprehensive metaethical/ethical theory such as the one I am proposing—and if they are sufficient, whether they are also better (in the sense of ‘prior’) grounds than those provided by the need for homosapient order and all of its Maslovian expressions.

First, then, do Griffin’s conditions of normative agency provide sufficient grounds for a comprehensive metaethical/ethical theory? If moral significance were to be restricted to the rights pertaining to personhood, then I would say that the rights involved would not be up to the task. All of the Maslovian needs, from

344 Griffin, p. 33.
345 Griffin, p. 34.
homeostasis through to self-actualisation, can be violated in morally classifiable ways; in which case, all of them require recognition in any theory that claims to be comprehensive (see especially Chapters 7 and 8). Since the rights associated with normative agency effectively corresponds only to a subset of the Maslovian needs, those rights fail to provide sufficient grounds on which to base a comprehensive moral theory. But that is not the end of the story: we must also bear in mind Griffin’s contention that the conditions of personhood and normative agency are capable of generating the ‘most of the conventional list of rights.’ Assuming that to be the case, and on the basis of the strong correlation previously found to exist between the UDHR and the Maslovian needs, then Griffin’s account of personhood and its associated rights may indeed be understood to provide sufficient grounds for a comprehensive moral theory. The question of priority of rights relative to needs must therefore be addressed.

The last question can be resolved fairly quickly. Griffin himself acknowledges that right derives from ‘the moral structure,’ and that both right and the moral structure derive from good.346 Similarly Brenda Almond, who regards rights as part of the public or general good: in her view, the ultimate justification of rights ‘is not that they are in fact universally accepted, but rather that, on the basis of the contribution they can make to the realization of human hopes and aspiration (human ‘flourishing’), they have the potential for securing widespread agreement and acceptance.’347 I have already argued for a correlation between homosapient order and justice, and that homosapient order is a Footian natural good. On that basis, and on the further proviso that the moral structure can be satisfactorily explained in terms of needs and homosapient order (this being the task of the thesis as a whole), the question of whether needs or rights should be given priority in metaethical and ethical theory would appear to have been settled: the answer would be needs.

Because of their connection to normative agency, Griffin’s conditions of personhood are morally relevant. In which case, the related subset of Maslovian needs may also be understood to be morally relevant. The concept of malignant

346 ‘Respecting goods, as well as promoting them, can be a teleological position; both positions can hold that the good is basic in the moral structure and the right derived from it’ (Griffin, p.80).
347 Almond, p. 267. Almond notes that a distinctive feature of rights-oriented morality is ‘that it is based on what human beings have in common, their common needs and capacities, and on a belief that what they have in common is more important than their differences’ (p. 266).
self-actualisation affords another means of demonstrating the moral relevance of needs. Malignant self-actualisation derives from Maslow’s theory of needs, and seeks to explain moral condemnability in terms that are consistent with our fundamental need for homosapient order.

6.5 Moral Condemnability: Malignant Self-Actualisation

I think it must be allowed that some people are decidedly maleficent, for it seems that utterly evil people—the likes of Adolf Hitler and Pol Pot—might also be regarded as self-actualisers, at least in the primary sense of the notion, i.e. attainment of what one is best fitted for. Many thinkers have grappled with the problem of evil. Philippa Foot, for instance, maintains that, as well as there being natural good, there are natural defects that we describe in terms of moral evil.\textsuperscript{348} She believes the goodness of human actions or dispositions ‘to be simply a fact about a given feature of a certain kind of living thing.’\textsuperscript{349} It follows, on her thesis, that moral evil is also a fact about a given feature of human beings.

In this section the problem of moral condemnability is explored from a Maslovian perspective: moral evil will be shown to be a feature of a kind of self-actualisation, specifically malignant self-actualisation. Malignancy is to be understood here in its usual sense of maliciousness, of being disposed towards harming others and making them suffer. People motivated by a need for malignant self-actualisation are disposed to act in morally reprehensible ways—a notion that dovetails neatly with other theories of vice, such as those of Hume and Kant, as well as Foot’s. Might we all be afflicted by a need for malignant self-actualisation, at least some of the time? Perhaps we are, to varying extents. What matters is the degree to which we are. How that comes about is too big a question to be pursued at any length here, but I will nevertheless touch on the matter.

Contrary to Maslovian self-actualisation, malignant self-actualisation is destructive rather than constructive, maleficent rather than beneficent. Neither Hitler nor Pol Pot could be said to have had much concern for justice (especially in the Rawlsian sense of ‘fairness’), nor with avoidance of cruelty and exploitation. Rather, in them, traits such as cynicism, vulgarity, and selfishness reached the highest levels of expression. Both men were responsible for mass

\textsuperscript{348} Foot, pp. 5, 7.
\textsuperscript{349} Foot, p. 5.
murder, the displacement of populations and untold misery. Their remorselessness suggests that they were expressing their ‘true’ selves through their deeds. Adolf Eichmann similarly: ‘[t]he death of five million Jews on my conscience gives me extraordinary satisfaction,’ he is said to have exclaimed.\textsuperscript{350} Since his conscience was clear, Eichmann was acting in full accord with his true self when he arranged the executions—a clear case of malignant self-actualisation, when ‘cold’ reason utterly swamped any emotional warmth that might have given rise to a sense of fellow-feeling towards the persecuted race.\textsuperscript{351}

The Tennyson principle (see p. 101) has application to malignant self-actualisation. I might have had the misfortune to meet predominantly with evil people and iniquitous circumstances throughout the course of my life. Evil may have become part of me, i.e. constitutive of my self—in which case, I might have proceeded to actualise that self by committing evil deeds, and the deeds themselves would also contribute to my selfhood. Such a scenario is contrary to the association of self-actualisation with health, beauty, justice and goodness—if self-actualisation were only that, then the evil person I have become would have to be regarded as ‘not the real me’. But the ‘real me’ is the person I now am; to say otherwise would surely be fallacious. In general, the actions of evil people such as those mentioned would be in pursuit of goals consistent with their characters, and serve as steps towards their own kind of self-fulfillment. Evil characters would no doubt be regarded by many as ill-formed, due wholly or partly to circumstances beyond their control, for example poor parenting, lack of education, and so on; they might also be described as sociopaths, or psychopaths, or otherwise impaired, but the harm they inflict would generally be considered morally wrong.

The notion that malignantly inclined individuals can be self-actualisers would seem to diverge significantly from the Maslovian schema, but support for the divergence might be drawn from William James, a psychologist like Maslow but perhaps more of a philosopher. James describes the healthy soul as ‘harmonious and well balanced,’ which gives rise to a consistency of impulse, a will that follows without trouble the guidance of intellect, passions that are not excessive,\textsuperscript{350} Quoted in \url{http://sprott.physics.wisc.edu/pickover/good.html} (accessed 1 April 2011).
\textsuperscript{351} Hitler could be regarded as having occupied the opposite extreme of Eichmann’s technocratic disciple: he seems to have been driven by a violent (emotional) hatred of the Jews.
and few continuing regrets.\textsuperscript{352} But the description could also apply to malignant self-actualisers. James observes that the transition from dividedness of self to unity ‘may be from moral scrupulosity into freedom and licence; or it may be produced by the irruption into the individual’s life of some new stimulus or passion, such as love, ambition, cupidity, revenge, or patriotic devotion. In all these instances,’ James concludes, ‘we have precisely the same psychological form of event—a firmness, stability, and equilibrium succeeding a storm and stress and inconsistency.’\textsuperscript{353} Now if the self were to become unified under the aegis, say, of cupidity or revenge, then harmful (as opposed to salutary) outcomes might be expected. Single-mindedness in the pursuit of either wealth or enemies may end up hurting the pursuer as well as those who stand in his way. Patriotism likewise, should it find expression in xenophobia, while ambition might also become unhealthy, at least for others. Unification of the self on such a basis would be characterised by malignancy, and actualisation of such a self would be malignant self-actualisation. The point was well summed up by the comedian Bill Cosby, when someone was extolling the virtues of cocaine to him. The drug enhances the personality, it was claimed, to which Cosby responded: Yes, but what if you’re an asshole?\textsuperscript{354}

Support for the concept of malignant self-actualisation can even be found in Maslow’s writings. In a footnote to one of his essays he observes:

\begin{quote}

The achievement of identity, authenticity, self-realization, etc., definitely does not solve all ethical problems …. Honesty with oneself and clear knowledge of one’s nature is an inevitable prerequisite to authentic moral decisions. But I do not wish to imply that it is enough to be authentic and self-knowing. Authentic self-knowledge is definitely not enough for many decisions; it is absolutely necessary, but not sufficient.\textsuperscript{355}
\end{quote}

Maslow believed self-honesty and self-knowledge to be necessary to ‘authentic moral decisions,’ by which he probably meant morally good decisions, since it is unlikely that he would have felt that ‘ethical problems’ could be solved by morally bad decisions. But the quotation shows that Maslow also believed that

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\textsuperscript{352} James, \textit{The Varieties of Religious Experience}, p. 142.
\textsuperscript{353} James, \textit{The Varieties of Religious Experience}, p. 149.
\textsuperscript{354} Paraphrased from a radio broadcast, \textit{The Book Show}, ABC Radio National, 6 April 2010.
\textsuperscript{355} \textit{The Farther Reaches of Human Nature}, p. 107, note 4; emphasis in original.
\end{flushright}
authenticity alone is not sufficient for moral goodness. By inference, therefore, authenticity is also associable with morally bad decisions. This is consistent with what I have been saying about malignant self-actualisation. Wrong-doers need not be precluded from authenticity, in which case some character traits that Maslow says are necessary to morally good decisions may also contribute to morally bad decisions. Either way, authenticity would conduce towards the expression of one’s self, and therefore help satisfy the need for self-actualisation.

But now the question arises, is it possible for homosapient order to result from malignant self-actualisation? It seems strange to think that homosapient order could result from patently evil deeds. Someone would have been adversely affected by the malignantly self-actualising behaviour, since, by definition, satisfaction of the need results in harm. Those harmed would suffer a diminution of homosapient order. However, to the extent that they are like other human beings, evil-doers also feel the need to survive and to flourish; i.e. they need P-order, S-order and E-order, and self-actualisation would likely encompass satisfaction of those needs. Malignant self-actualising behaviour would also satisfy the agent’s need to fulfill his evil self, i.e. to do what he is best equipped to do. From the perspective of the malignant self-actualiser, self-actualisation would be fulfilling, regardless of its effects on other people. As shocking as it may be, Hitler by his own lights would probably have felt as though he had achieved his goal in life, especially following implementation of the Final Solution. Similarly with malignantly self-actualising intellectual and artistic high-achievers, such as the Nazi doctor Josef Mengele and the Marquis de Sade, and my earlier examples of the Machiavellian prince and J. K. Rowling’s Voldemort.

Now, since homosapient order has been said to be attainable by an agent by means of self-actualisation, regardless of the kind of self-actualisation that happens to be involved, a paradox would seem to have arisen. We are confronted by the issuance of evil from the satisfaction of the need for homosapient order, which was aligned in Section 4.4 with justice and moral goodness. But the paradox is easily resolved, first by recalling from Section 5.3 that self-actualisation is two-dimensional, that it can be seen both in terms of consistency-with-agent’s-character, and in terms of moral force. Second, we recall that totally selfish actions by evil-doers either neglect or actively work against the legitimate needs
of others. As mentioned in Section 4.4, alongside their need to attain homosapient order for themselves, evil-doers may also act as if they needed to inflict homosapient disorder on their respondents. Any homosapient order attained by a malignant self-actualiser through his morally classifiable self-actualising behaviour is more than counteracted by the diminution of homosapient order suffered by those affected. It follows that our species’ need for homosapient order cannot be satisfied by means of malignant self-actualisation.

Malignantly self-actualising behaviour may even undermine attempts by evil-doers to attain homosapient order for themselves. Instead of being characterised by the Maslovian B-values, malignant self-actualisation manifests as an amalgam of metapathologies. Justice would be missing, or, perhaps I should say, justice as non-malignant self-actualisers would understand it; i.e. as it would normally be understood by most people (those not inordinately afflicted by the Maslovian metapathologies). Malignant self-actualisers may have some idea of what justice consists in, and perhaps even associate it with fairness—but their idea would be quite at odds with what most people believe justice stands for. It can be safely said that the need for malignant self-actualisation is morally relevant.

### 6.6 The Needs of Social Entities

To complete the discussion of the moral relevance of needs, I wish to comment briefly on the needs of social entities. The needs upon which morality is based are needs that reside first and foremost in individuals; the fact that the individual is the focus of both the textual evidence cited above and the UDHR would tend to confirm the point. Nevertheless, social entities need at least some kinds of order for their survival (stability would be one kind), and such needs may appear to be morally relevant. For example, extreme civil disturbance in the absence of a just cause would generally be regarded as morally reprehensible. We also find social entities being spoken of as if they were morally culpable; for example, Nazi Germany as a whole being blamed for atrocities initiated by its leaders and their minions. The examples suggest that social entities are capable of both moral respondency and moral agency.

Against that, however, I would maintain that it is the ‘deeper’ needs of the individual human constituents of social entities that are morally relevant, rather
than the needs of the social entities themselves. It is the individual who stands ultimately to lose, or to gain, from actions undertaken in the name of a social entity or against a social entity. Furthermore, the needs of human beings range over the full extent of Maslow’s hierarchy, unlike those of social entities: the need, say, for E-order resides exclusively in individual human beings. The greater the number of kinds of needs, the more the number of ways of non-satisfaction and therefore harm. On that basis, any moral culpability that might be attributed to a social entity would in fact rest with the individuals who kill and torture in its name, and with those who incite (for example through legislation or propaganda) such behaviour. Excuses along the lines of ‘I was only following orders’ would always be met with suspicion, although actions performed under duress may warrant leniency. To repeat, it is the individual member who stands ultimately to benefit from satisfaction of the needs of society, or suffer from their non-satisfaction.

6.7 Conclusion

In her book Necessary Goods: Our Responsibilities to Meet Others’ Needs, Gillian Brock observes that the contributors to the anthology emphasise that ‘the needs that matter morally are bounded by the idea of the necessary, the essential, the indispensible, or the inescapable.’ And, as the subtitle of the book suggests, needs-theorists are generally concerned with the question of whether and to what extent one is responsible for meeting the needs of others. The answers from the contributors often centre on the identification of needs that must be addressed, i.e. vital or basic needs, as they are usually called. The order-based theory of morality takes a slightly different view, although one that converges with that of most needs-theorists. According to the order-based theory, all of the needs specified by Maslow—not just some of them—are morally significant. Furthermore, the order-based theory will soon be found to have something to offer with respect to the needs of others.


This completes Part II of the thesis, which was motivated by the metaethical question of how human beings came to be the moral beings that we are. The answer has been couched in terms of needs and order. Like other organisms, human beings are needful beings, and what we need most of all is homosapient order. The need for homosapient order finds expression in various basic needs, such as those described by Maslow. Needs are morally relevant because of their connection to preferences, wants, interests, values and rights; all of which influence our behaviour, including morally classifiable behaviour. In Part III of the thesis we will see that the metaethics of the order-based theory of morality gives rise to a dual-faceted ethics. One of the facets is utilitarian and the other is character-based.
Part III: ORDER-BASED ETHICS

7: HOMOSAPIENT ORDER AND MORALITY

7.1 Intimations of Order-Based Ethics

In the first chapter of the thesis I said that I believed the order-based theory of morality to be novel. But I also believe that clues to the theory are detectable in the literature. Some ideas that either touch indirectly on the subject, or deal with a particular aspect of the proposed theory, are discussed in this section. Of course, virtually all of the general characteristics of morality described in Chapter 2 are pertinent, at least to some degree. Nevertheless, there are some specific issues that can also be mentioned. One issue concerns the hierarchical ordering of basic needs. Such ordering implies that some needs are more important than others, with the further implication that satisfaction of the more important ones is better than satisfaction of those that are less important. And this implies that ‘more good’ attaches to the satisfaction of the more important needs—that goods can themselves be hierarchically organised. That this can or should occur has been denied by some ethicists: W. D. Ross, for example.

Ross’s theory of prima facie duties opposes the notion of hierarchical ordering of rights or goods. According to Ross, theory is of no assistance in the prioritisation of such duties as keeping one’s promises and telling the truth. In some circumstances one of the duties will take precedence over the other, and in other circumstances the order will be reversed. It is a matter of judgement. Can a consequentialist theory like mine meet Ross’s challenge? I think it can: see, for example, the discussion of lying (in the form of perjury) at p. 153. There I maintain that, in some circumstances, telling a lie is justifiable: circumstances vary depending on the needs of the parties involved, and the hierarchical position of the various needs. Ross himself also provides a clue to how the objection

358 See Dancy, ‘An Ethic of Prima Facie Duties’, p. 221. The idea can be traced back at least as far as Pascal, who distinguished between morality of the intellect and morality of the judgement; the latter knows no rules and is said to be the true morality (see Blaise Pascal, Pensées, translated by W. F. Trotter (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1940), section 4.
might be met, with his notion of ‘duty proper’. As Jonathan Dancy explains it, an
action for Ross ‘is a duty proper if it is one which we ought overall to do—if all
things considered we should do it. In deciding whether this is so we try to balance
against each other the various prima facie duties we have in the case, deciding
which matter more here, which side the balance comes down on.’\(^{359}\) In other
words, some duties are adjudged by an agent to be more important than others,
depending on the circumstances.

Dancy’s words conjure up an implicit (albeit situational) hierarchy of prima facie
duties; and the image of the falling balance raises a related issue, that of
weighting. For a proponent of prima facie duties, it is a matter of which duty
carries the greatest weight. For consequentialists in general and utilitarians in
particular, it is a question of which outcome provides the maximum good,
according to whatever criterion of goodness is believed appropriate. For all of
them, there is a problem of measurement. Or perhaps it is a question of moral
judgement: the scales metaphor would apply here as well. I suspect prima facie
duty proponents would choose the judgement option. Matters could be different
for utilitarians.

The order-based theory of morality’s ethical aspect will be presented in two parts.
The proposition at the heart of the first part is that behaviour is morally wrong
where the overall level of homosapient orderliness diminishes as a result of an
agent’s morally classifiable behaviour,\(^ {360}\) and that this occurs when the needs
denied to a respondent outweigh the needs that the agent is intent on satisfying.
The second part of the theory’s ethics focuses on personal character, and will be
presented in the next chapter.

### 7.2 The Order-Based Theory’s Utilitarian Facet

Morally classifiable behaviour has been defined as behaviour that is open to
judgement in terms of commendability or condemnability. Morally commendable
behaviour is that which is deemed to have involved right means that are directed
towards a good end; conversely for morally condemnable behaviour. On what

\(^{359}\) Dancy, ‘An Ethic of Prima Facie Duties’, p. 223.

\(^{360}\) Cf. Nozick, for whom ‘[w]rong puts things out of joint in that acts and persons are unlinked
with correct values; this is the disharmony introduced by wrongdoing’ (p. 379). The similarity is
close: Nozick regards value as a matter of organic unity, which encompasses the notion of order.
basis are assessments of moral commendability and condemnability made? A sense of justness, Plato might have said. In Section 4.4 justice and homosapient order were shown to be analogous concepts; homosapient order was found in the same section to be compatible with the morally significant Footian practical rationality. Then, in Section 6.5, it was argued that homosapient order cannot be brought into effect by malignant self-actualisation, i.e. by evil. On these grounds, homosapient order may be said to be consistent with moral goodness, and inconsistent with evil; in which case, assessments of commendability and condemnability would arguably be explicable in terms of the effect of an agent’s action on the homosapient order of all of those affected by his or her action. Since our need for homosapient order is expressed through the hierarchically-arranged Maslovian needs, some kind of ranking or weighting of the needs of all of those affected by an agent’s action would be implicit in assessments of moral right/good and wrong/evil. Exposition of the order-based theory’s utilitarian facet begins with a discussion of the weighting of needs. The theory will then be specified, followed by some case studies demonstrating its application.

**Weighting of Needs**

The concept of weighting of needs is consistent with what Wiggins refers to as the *principle of limitation*. Wiggins’ principle prohibits the sacrifice of a person’s vital needs in the name of ‘lesser needs of however many others’.

361 The concept is also reminiscent of the utilitarian standard of commendable conduct; the standard, John Stuart Mill explains, ‘is not the agent’s own happiness, but that of all concerned.’

362 If happiness can be said to result from the satisfaction of needs, then the needs (and happiness) of agents and respondents would be relevant to the determination of commendability and condemnability. But any morally classifiable action by an agent could well give rise to different levels of happiness (or satisfaction), and perhaps happiness on one person’s part and sadness on another’s. Commendability and condemnability by these standards are relational matters; as Nozick puts it, ‘an act is right when its right-making characteristics

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outweigh its wrong-making ones.\textsuperscript{363} In Nozick’s view, there ‘is no fixed correct set of weights,’ but weightings with respect to values are nevertheless anchored and tied to ‘a formed self-conception’ of the person applying them.\textsuperscript{364} Weightings may be variable and imprecise, but they reliably express the moral convictions (or lack of them) of an agent.

One’s convictions and ‘formed self-conception’ are matters of personal character, which, I have said, is the subject of the next chapter. But their mention here is indicative of the interrelatedness of the order-based theory’s two ethical facets. As ‘facets’, they are nothing more than different faces of the same substantial body of hierarchically arranged human needs. They also show that the weighting of needs is a complex business. Its complexity arises partly from the fact that homosapient orderliness is not something that can be rigorously quantified. Quantification of P-order might conceivably be possible, in view of Schrödinger’s formulations of entropy and negative entropy, but anything of that kind would be out of the question with regard to S- and E-order. Our ‘measurements’ of them would always be imprecise, and the imprecision would likely be greater prospectively than retrospectively, because of the uncertainty of future outcomes.\textsuperscript{365} But imprecision need not prevent us from estimating the relative weights of needs that were or will be satisfied and infringed—it would be a matter of judgement.

Relativity between needs gives rise to the metaphor of weighting, which, of course, is of similar physical origin to that of force: if something has moral force then it also has moral weight. The idea of weighting is not new. Aquinas can be found speaking of it in relation to adjudications of moral conflict: prudence, he says, carefully weighs ‘degrees of need and connection.’\textsuperscript{366} In our own time, Midgley observes that when we decide what to do, we look either to the way in which ‘something is good,’ or to the more important of the alternatives that might be available to choose from. She explains,

\textsuperscript{363} Nozick, p. 50.
\textsuperscript{364} Nozick, pp. 448, 307.
\textsuperscript{365} In a similar vein, Owen Flanagan informs us that no algorithm exists ‘that can tell us exactly how to balance competing goods’ (\textit{The Problem of the Soul}, p. 318).
\textsuperscript{366} Quoted by Pope, p. 64. The quotation is from \textit{Summa Theologica}, II.II.31.3ad1.
Calling something important means that it concerns us deeply, that it means or imports something essential to us, is linked with a central part of our nature. So to decide which thing is more important, we have to weigh the facts about that nature and look for its central needs.367

It seems that as soon as one starts talking about needs in connection with morality, the notion of weighting inevitably crops up. This from Midgley is also worth noting: ‘[s]ince wants are bound to conflict, right from the start we need a system, a scheme of priorities to help us think about them.’368 Prioritisation, we have seen, is fundamental to the notion of order; it is also analogous to that of weighting.

**Statement of the Theory**

The notion of weighting is implicit in the hierarchical ordering of needs. It is also consistent with the principle that action deemed to be morally commendable tends to increase the amount of homosapient order in the world; conversely for morally condemnable action. Very simply, condemnability would arise when the satisfaction of an agent’s need occurs at the expense of the satisfaction of a respondent’s more basic (and weightier) need.369 A well-to-do thief’s misappropriation of someone’s life-savings would tend to trigger the victim’s most basic needs, while a brain-washed prisoner of war could permanently be stripped of his or her self-esteem. More realistically, multiple needs of both agent and respondent may be at issue: the theft of a computer that contained a mother’s only photographs of her deceased child would probably impinge on her belongingness and esteem needs, over and above any economic and safety considerations. Multiple needs would often be bound up with proprietorship, depending on the degree and kind of attachments that are associated with items of property. But the general point nevertheless obtains: condemnability occurs when the disorder arising from the non-satisfaction of lower-ranked needs outweighs any order generated by the satisfaction of the agent’s higher-ranked needs.

368 Midgley, *Beast and Man*, p. 175.
369 The idea is similar to that promoted by preference utilitarians. Kitcher writes, ‘[o]ne social situation is said to be superior to another just in case there is no individual whose preference satisfaction is diminished and at least one whose preference satisfaction is enhanced’ (p. 312). Kitcher doesn’t use the term ‘preference utilitarianism’, but that is clearly what he is referring to.
If condemnability consists in the diminution of homosapient order consequent upon the denial of a respondent’s needs, then morally classifiable behaviour that is commendable may be understood to involve no such diminution. Behaviour that satisfies the needs of both agent and respondent would always be commendable. In effect, behaviour that is not condemnable is behaviour that is commendable. This is consistent with Philippa Foot’s (and Aquinas’s) view that, for goodness to prevail, it is sufficient for an action not to be bad. Perhaps people have always found the bad easier to define than the good: we recall, for instance, that most of the biblical Ten Commandments are couched in terms of ‘thou shalt not’. If good is that which is not bad, then morally classifiable behaviour could never be neutral: it must always be either commendable or condemnable. Against that, it would seem to be at least logically possible for neutrality to apply, i.e. for the needs denied to be equal in weight to the needs satisfied. In practice, however, it would be highly unlikely that the needs of the affected parties would ever balance out precisely. I will have more to say on this subject after introducing Table 1 (see next page).

The table is based on the simplifying premise that only one kind of need is affected in the case of both agent and respondent, although this assumption will have to be relaxed in the case of the diagonal ‘commendable or condemnable’. Further, the table assumes that the hierarchies of needs of agent and respondent are ordered in the same way. While that will not always be the case, it often will be, especially where social and cultural variation is relatively small. Nevertheless, the assumption poses a problem for this aspect of the order-based theory: how the theory deals with it will be discussed in Section 10.3, under the heading ‘Moral Relativism’. Finally, the table also presupposes equality of needs between people. As remarked a short while ago, equality means that everyone’s needs for any one of the Maslovian categories are equal in weight.

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Foot, p. 76.
Where behaviour aimed at the satisfaction of an agent’s need for
Occurs at the expense of a respondent’s need for

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Table 1: The Relationship between Moral Commendability/Condemnability and Need-Satisfaction on the Part of Agents and Respondents

Perhaps the first observation to be made with regard to the table is that the number of cells marked condemnable is the same as those marked commendable, but we must remember that morally classifiable behaviour that infringes no-one’s needs will always be commendable. Fortunately for everyone, there are more ways of acting commendably than acting condemnable, which may be another way of saying that human nature is generally oriented towards good more than it is towards evil—in accordance with the views of Plato, Hume, Kant and Maslow (see p. 105).

Next we see that condemnable and commendable in the table are separated by the diagonal ‘commendable or condemnable’, which can be explained by way of
example. Whereas the theft of food by a starving person from someone in the same straits would certainly be regarded as condemnable by the victim, the perpetrator might consider the action to be justifiable, i.e. commendable. It would seem inappropriate to condemn the perpetrator (might we not do the same in the circumstances?), but that need not prevent us from feeling sorry that either party suffered deprivation. However, as I have said, it would be highly improbable for the needs of agent and respondent to match precisely. Either party could have multiple needs that tip the decision towards either commendable or condemnable. Consider the following case study, for instance.

Two men find themselves stranded in a desert. From their GPS, they learn that the nearest place of human habitation is sixteen days away on foot. They have no food or water, and know that they will not survive unless some is found. Within two days they come across a tree with berries on it. Their knowledge of bush tucker tells them that the berries are edible and life-sustaining. But there are only enough berries to keep both of them going for half of the required time, or one of them for the entire fourteen days. What should they do? One possibility would be to share the berries equally, and hope either that someone finds them within seven days or that they find more food. Another possibility would be for one of them to take the entire crop, based, say, on the toss of a coin. Other possibilities are conceivable; the men decide to sleep on the problem. During the night, one of them gets up and strips the tree of its fruit, then sets off in the direction of the town. Should he be condemned for doing so? Most of us would assuredly want to say that he should be, but the order-based theory appears to be without an answer. The homeostatic needs of the two men are identical: the need infringed is the same as the one satisfied, in which case the act would seem to be neither commendable nor condemnable. I believe the order-based theory in its entirety does in fact have an answer, but it will have to wait until Chapter 8, where the second part of the ethics entailed by the order-based is explained. Very briefly, the putative offender’s action will be shown to be contrary to humaneness, which is derivative of homosapient order and therefore a kind of natural good.

Looking either side of the diagonal, we find morally classifiable behaviour switching from condemnable to commendable when the need satisfied is of a more basic kind than the need that is infringed. That would explain the approval
with which the actions of Robin Hood characters are generally met. The cell at the intersection of the row ‘safety’ and the column ‘homeostasis’ is the relevant one: despite any threats against the victims’ safety, and any loss of esteem they might have suffered, the fact that the spoils finish up with those more needy render Robin’s robberies morally commendable, irrespective of the law. Morality and lawfulness can obviously diverge. Against Robin, however, if everyone were to behave like him there could be problems. In the article ‘Equality’ in Concepts and Categories, Isaiah Berlin discusses the morality of a fare-evading passenger on a bus: instead of paying the fare, the money is given to a needy beggar. Berlin doesn’t say it, but the fare-evader could be likened to Robin Hood; the bus-company being equivalent to the wealthy victim. As an isolated instance, the fare-evasion and subsequent (and consequent) donation of the money involved could hardly be condemned. It might even be applauded, since the beggar’s need was arguably greater than that of the bus-company. However, Berlin notes that matters would be different if the practice were to become widespread. The company could be bankrupted, and its erstwhile employees impoverished. If it were adopted by enough people as a Kantian maxim, stealing from the well-to-do in order to give to the poor could conceivably result in a reduction in homosapient order. Stealing is not something that can be willed universally without contradiction.

Another character from fiction—E. W. Hornung’s Raffles—confirms that some robberies from the well-to-do are not morally benign. Raffles was a gentleman thief, who stole from the wealthy in order to support his own luxurious life-style. From the victim’s point of view, the relevant row in the table would again be ‘safety’, but Raffles’ motives would probably best be described by the columns ‘self-actualisation’ or ‘esteem’. In other words, Raffles’ aim was to satisfy needs of a less weighty kind than those infringed, and his actions therefore deserve to be condemned. Dostoevsky’s anti-hero Raskolnikov (in Crime and Punishment) is a more extreme case: a thief like Robin Hood, he intended to give the property he stole to the poor; but he murdered his victim, and there is no more basic need than the need to survive.

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Staying with literary fiction, let us look at a more difficult case. In Alex Miller’s novel *Conditions of Faith* Emily is exploring the vaults beneath a cathedral when she encounters a priest. She and the priest are unknown to each other, but in a sudden fit of passion they embrace and make love. Emily lets her husband believe that the child resulting from the union is his. Was her behaviour condemnable? Was the priest’s? Each was equally responsible for the act, which presumably stemmed from a fierce desire for love, and perhaps personal fulfillment, on both of their parts. Each of them, therefore, could be regarded as both agent and respondent, on the proviso that others who might have been affected by the adultery remain unaware of it, for example Emily’s husband and the priest’s superiors. Taking the priest to be agent and Emily respondent, Emily’s subsequent guilt could conceivably have jeopardised the ongoing security of her marriage, in which case the priest’s behaviour could be considered condemnable, since the need for security is more basic than either the need for belongingness or the need for self-actualisation. However, the thing most under threat from Emily’s point of view would probably be esteem, since, if what happened were to become known to others, she would almost certainly lose face. Esteem lies between belongingness (which includes love) and self-actualisation on Maslow’s hierarchy, which could explain the conundrum as to whether the priest’s behaviour warrants condemnation. As well as that, were her husband to become aware of her betrayal, the effect on his own needs, especially self-esteem, would have to be taken into account. The deception would also be likely to impact negatively on the child. As has been suggested, the roles could be reversed, with Emily as agent and the priest respondent. But we know little about how the priest reacted to the event, except that he continued in office, and remained a favourite of the husband’s family. Was Emily’s coupling with him condemnable? On the evidence in the novel it is hard to say. Most likely, a similar kind of ambiguity that characterised the converse case would apply: he would presumably suffer a loss of esteem in the event of exposure, and that would sit somewhere between the satisfaction of Emily’s need for self-actualisation and love. Because of the thorough-going ambiguity from each of the perspectives, the behaviour of the two protagonists might best be described as morally dubious—provided always that others remain unaffected. The order-based theory helps to elucidate the dilemma.
Now a case based on facts. Early in 2010 there was news of an incident at sea, off the Australian coast, where naval personnel allegedly rescued colleagues from their ship in preference to some similarly stricken asylum-seekers, some of whom subsequently drowned. By all reports a party from the navy ship had boarded the asylum-seekers’ boat, when the boat sank, casting everyone into the sea. The rescue operation that followed gave rise to accusations of bias. Assuming that events did transpire the way I have described them, was the action of the rescuers condemnable? Those in the water, asylum-seekers and navy personnel alike, had identical needs—to be saved from drowning. Besides following orders and protocol, the rescuers could be regarded as having operated from a need for belongingness with their comrades, and perhaps the esteem that would attend a well executed rescue. From the conjunction of the two sets of agent/respondent needs, it could be concluded that the rescuers’ actions were condemnable from the point of view of the asylum-seekers and commendable from the perspective of the rescued comrades. Both commendable and condemnable could be a fair conclusion, with the makings of tragedy.

Summing up to this point, behaviour that satisfies a need increases homosapient order, at least from the agent’s perspective. When the respondent’s needs are also taken into account, an action that enhances the overall level of homosapient order is commendable; conversely for condemnable. The connection between needs and good is reflected in contemporary needs-theory: as Jonathon Lowe has said, ‘a good action is one which corresponds to need.’ That would be true, I believe, provided the ‘need’ one is talking about encompasses the needs of agent and respondent, and that any needs denied are of less weight than those satisfied.

There is another sense of ‘good’ that might briefly be considered, namely supererogation. A difference between right and good in this latest sense (and therefore also between wrong and evil) might be extractable from the order-based theory. The difference is not one of kind, but rather of degree; i.e. where supererogatory good is an extreme form of commendability, and evil an extreme form of condemnability. Bravery under fire would be an example of supererogatory good: the supreme sacrifice is either made or risked for the sake of

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others, i.e. for their well-being. Conversely, evil would arise where the need of
the agent that is satisfied and the need of the respondent that is infringed lie at or
near opposite ends of Maslow’s hierarchy. Franz Kafka’s *In the Penal Settlement*
provides an illustration. In the story, a prisoner is condemned to death for
insulting and disobeying an officer. The means of execution is a bizarre
harrowing machine, which neatly inscribes the command ‘be just’ on the victim’s
body. The victim is thereby tortured to death in order to satisfy someone’s
aesthetic needs, regardless of whatever perverse kind of justice might be at work.
There is little doubt that ‘evil’ would suitably describe the situation, more than
merely wrong. Sade’s writings, in which debauchery and cruelty are openly
celebrated, and which unequivocally portray wickedness as desirable, constitute
another instance of evil: where power and aesthetic gratification are sought at the
expense of physical and psychological harm.373 Still another case would be that of
arson, where, for example, a bushfire is deliberately started in an area where
houses and lives are likely to be lost. In his quest for self-actualisation through
the satisfaction of his private and peculiar innermost needs, the arsonist endangers
those in the path of the fire. The order-based theory of morality would seem
capable of handling cases of supererogatory good and evil.

It appears that the proposed theory might be on the right track. The additional
case studies that follow provide examples of condemnability for each of the
combinations of agent-respondent needs permissible under the theory. For the
purposes of exposition, I will adhere to the simplifying assumption that single
rather than multiple needs are involved. The assumption is not altogether
satisfactory, because multiple-need cases would be very common, perhaps the
norm. Furthermore, they could also explain otherwise anomalous situations where
condemnability is perceived in spite of the agent’s need appearing to be of a lower

373 In Sade’s most famous work, *Justine*, there is a cavalcade of libertines, all of whom
demonstrate high degrees of articulateness and philosophical literacy when defending their actions
against the eponymous heroine’s Christianity-based arguments. (In Sade’s world, Justine would
be better described as an anti-heroine.) For instance, Sade’s mouthpiece Bressac portrays nature
as utterly indifferent to human affairs, and justifies murdering his aunt and benefactor on that
account. While similar in some respects to the atheistic position of the present thesis, Bressac’s
conception of nature mistakenly (in my view) excludes the possibility of consideration by an agent
of the needs of others. Maurice Blanchot characterises Sade’s philosophical position as one of
absolute egoism, which denies relevance to others on any grounds apart from service as means to
pleasure and power. See The Marquis de Sade, *Justine, Philosophy in the Bedroom, and Other
Writings*, compiled and translated by Richard Seaver & Austryn Wainhouse, with introductions by
ranking that that of the respondent; for example, where a slave-owner seeks to boost his status among his confreres by adding to his stock of slaves. The slave-owner’s quest for esteem occurs at the expense of self-actualisation on the part of those enslaved (slavery being inimical to flourishing); but the self-esteem of the slaves could also be at stake, and their personal safety may be jeopardised as well. On balance, homosapient order would diminish as a result of the slave-owner’s action.

**Case Studies**

Since it is at the top of the hierarchy, the need for self-actualisation figures in more kinds of condemnability than any of the other needs; I will therefore start with it. In each instance, the self-actualisation in question is of a malignant nature, as defined on p. 127. By definition, Maslovian self-actualisation could never motivate behaviour that is morally condemnable. Malignant self-actualisation helps explain cases of immorality where no ‘someone else’ is apparent; for example gluttony, from which disorder increases without any apparent or immediate effects on other parties. The epicurean *bon vivant* is also both agent and respondent in her gastronomic behaviour, but, in contrast to the glutton, she takes her food with loving respect for its origins and the skills of those involved in its cultivation and preparation. The epicure dines expansively, whereas the glutton simply eats to expand.

Martyrdom might also be considered from the perspective of single-party morality, on the proviso that no-one else is harmed by the act. The martyr is typically willing to die for the sake of some kind of ideal, for example a deity, or the spiritual salvation of others. Such ideals are constitutive of the self, and the motive for an act of martyrdom would conceivably be self-actualisation. Martyrdom for the sake of spiritual salvation of others would seem to breach Wiggins’ ‘principle of limitation’: the martyr’s vital need to survive is forsaken in order to promote fulfillment of what appear to be less basic needs. The martyr is sole instigator of his sacrifice, but whether that would be enough to justify it is doubtful. Justification under Wiggins’ principle, and under the order-based theory, would depend on whether similarly vital needs of others were deemed to be at stake. Believers in life-after-death through spiritual salvation would conceivably think there are, and therefore commend the martyr’s action. Non-
believers would probably think otherwise. However, if the martyrdom happens to have been forced, as in some (if not all) cases of propitiatory sacrifice, then the act would unreservedly be condemnable. The martyr is in effect agent and respondent in the act, which is morally classifiable because it occurs at the choice of the individual and the consequences are certainly not trivial. On the theory presented here, the bare facts surrounding the act suggest that it should be adjudged condemnable, because of the relativities of self-actualisation and physical survival. However, that may not be the whole story. Martyrdom shows that satisfaction of one’s homeostatic and safety needs is not the be-all-and-end-all of humanness. As I have indicated, hierarchical ordering of needs may vary between people (the discussion of moral relativism in Section 10.3 is pertinent to this issue).

Self-actualisation by an agent may come at the expense of a respondent’s need for aesthetic experience—a ‘gentleman burglar’ who steals works of art simply for the thrill of it would be a case in point. Like a brother-in-arms of Alfred Hitchcock’s protagonist in To Catch a Thief, the burglar’s fulfillment of his need for adventure deprives others of the opportunity to enjoy the purloined artefacts. More seriously, a pyromaniac who targets libraries or schools would work to the detriment of a respondent’s need for intellectual achievement. The fires that satisfy the culprit’s inner urges, either straightforwardly self-actualising or because of some kind of aesthetic appeal, come at the cost of the intellectual development that might otherwise have been afforded by the libraries or schools. Wrongs committed with self-actualisation in view often stem from some kind of mental pathology: kleptomania and pyromania respectively in the two cases that have been mentioned, and paedophilia in the next one. Indeed, the comment could apply to all wrongs committed in the satisfaction of any of the relatively higher order needs.

Apart from any physical harm, paedophilia often impinges on a respondent’s need for esteem, by undermining the victim’s self-respect—‘philia’ in the term denotes a perverted kind of love at best. Victimhood is not conducive to love, and perhaps the point could be generalised to cover all relationships involving a lover intent on exploiting or otherwise harming his or her ‘beloved’. As Spinoza says, ‘[w]hen

375 Cf. Plato’s attribution of wrong to ‘disorders of the soul.’
we love a thing similar to ourselves, we endeavour, as far as we can, to bring it about that it should love us in return.\footnote{The Ethics, 3p33.} Spinoza’s argument relies on the proposition that our love is intended to affect the beloved pleasantly. Should that happen, the beloved will associate the pleasure he or she feels with the lover (an external cause), whereupon love will likely be returned.

Sophocles’ tragedy \textit{Antigone} provides another illustration of how self-actualisation can occur at the expense of another party’s esteem, this time showing that even the dead can be wronged. In the play, the tyrant Creon is opposed in battle by Polyneices. Polyneices is slain, but retrieval of his body is forbidden by Creon. Polyneices cannot be buried and is therefore dishonoured: his sister Antigone loses her life in an attempt to obtain justice for her brother’s memory. The need for esteem that a deceased person may have felt when alive can also be felt after death by his or her loved ones.

The next case involves satisfaction of the agent’s need for self-actualisation at the expense of a respondent’s need for belongingness. The kidnapping and enslavement by someone driven by a lust for power obviously impinges on the victim’s need for love, and could also put his or her personal safety at risk. The pathology in such an instance could be egomania, or perhaps megalomania. If not completely evil, acts of this kind would be very close to it. But there can be no doubt about the evil of self-actualising acts that prejudice the safety and homeostasis of others. An arsonist who lights bushfires on a code-red day would be an example. Many dictators have also been complicit in wrongs of this kind. Rafael Trujillo is an instance. Ruler of the Dominican Republic from 1930 to 1961, Trujillo’s murderous methods and sexual predations are graphically described by Mario Vargas Llosa in his novel \textit{The Feast of the Goat}. Stalin’s destruction of Soviet agriculture for the sake of a political theory might also be mentioned, and enough has already been said about Hitler.

The library fire-bug mentioned above was given as an example of the need for aesthetic experience being satisfied at the cost of a respondent’s intellectual achievement. An agent’s need for aesthetic experience may also be involved in the denial of a respondent’s need for esteem, for example pornographers, who see
beauty where others see exploitation: those who are exploited are at risk of losing their self-respect. Another example from literature illustrates the impact of an agent’s need for aesthetic experience on a respondent’s need for belongingness. Oscar Wilde’s eponymous anti-hero in *Dorian Gray* is presented as a supreme aesthete, someone primarily concerned with preserving his youthfully handsome appearance whilst engaging in self-indulgent orgies. During Dorian’s lifetime, debauchery has only a latent (though cumulative) effect on him, as reflected in a portrait that he keeps hidden. Others suffer more immediately and more grievously, including Lady Gwendolen, whose children are removed from her care because of her involvement with him.

Moving further down Maslow’s hierarchy, aesthetic experience may come at the cost of someone else’s safety. Ancient Roman gladiatorial contests, in which lives were endangered for the sake of the spectacle, would be one instance. Bullfighting in the present day would be of the same kind, to the extent that morality is relevant to non-human entities. The construction of elaborate monuments by slave-labour would be another example. With them, we would again be entering the realm of evil, where Kafka’s infernal death-machine constitutes a paradigm case.

Agents striving for intellectual achievement may impinge on a respondent’s need for esteem. Holocaust-denial belongs in this category: for the sake of propagating a ridiculous theory, respect for Jewish survivors and descendents thereof is jeopardised, let alone the harm done to the memory of those who were murdered. Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* was also driven by the need for intellectual achievement: the eponymous hero’s creation of the ‘monster’ from inert matter comes at the expense of the created being’s need for belongingness; much sought-after human sympathy was denied him. Luke Rhinehart’s (a pseudonym) ‘autobiographical’ novel *The Dice Man* provides an example of how intellectual achievement might impinge on safety and homeostasis. The title refers to Rhinehart’s decision to use the results of dice-throws to determine how he should respond when faced with alternative courses of action. Although boredom and world-weariness are given as reasons for using the dice, his initial decision resulted from an intellectual stance, the upshot of which ironically dispensed with reason—a bit like Wittgenstein’s proposition that the philosophy in his *Tractatus*
should be used as a ladder and then discarded after having scaled the heights of
the work. The determinations of the dice lead Rhinehart to commit various
atrocities, including rape.

I turn now to an examination of how an agent’s need for esteem can bear
adversely on a respondent’s need for belongingness. In Leo Tolstoy’s *Anna
Karenina*, Anna falls in love with Vronsky and has a child by him. Her husband
initially insists that she remain with him, because of the social embarrassment that
separation would entail. Anna’s need for belongingness is consequently thwarted,
and she ultimately commits suicide. To cast Anna as the victim, or respondent, in
this case may come as a surprise, since she is the one who engaged in adultery.
But the calculating coldness of Karenin (the husband) inclines us towards
sympathy for his wife. Even when Karenin temporarily relents and expresses
willingness to accept the role of guilty party in divorce proceedings (to protect
Anna from disgrace), he undoes his magnanimity by lauding himself for it. By
being proud of his want of pride, Karenin indulges in what Marcus Aurelius
referred to as ‘the most intolerable’ kind of pride. Nevertheless, Anna’s
behaviour could also be deemed condemnable under the order-based theory. Her
attraction to Vronsky may be seen to have arisen from the desire for self-
fulfillment on the part of a passionate nature: their relationship provided her with
a means of self-actualisation. But her self-actualisation was gained at the expense
of Karenin’s social position. The complexities of the moral issues contribute to
the depth of the story.

An agent’s esteem may also come at the expense of a respondent’s homeostasis or
safety. A case in point would be the theft of someone’s life-savings by a
dishonest investment manager intent on preserving his social status. Indeed,
various kinds of deception aimed at personal gain may be placed under this head.
Financial fraud such as that mentioned, intellectual fraud in the form of falsified
scientific evidence, and artistic fraud through unacknowledged use of someone
else’s work—all may have the need for esteem as cause, and the impairment of
safety as effect. A plagiarist might attain his goal of a prestigious literary prize, to
the detriment of the financial security of legitimate contenders. To the extent that

377 Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*, translated by George Long (Chicago: The University of
it becomes known, dishonesty of this kind could also breed cynicism and mistrust, thereby damaging the social fabric. Should that occur, dishonesty would act as a barrier to the satisfaction of respondents’ need for belongingness.

We have nearly reached the end of the case studies. Racist attacks by gangs of thugs would be an illustration of an agent’s need for belongingness impinging on a respondent’s need for safety, while the naval rescue mentioned earlier involves the belongingness-homeostasis dyad: some lives were lost (while others were saved) as a result of the sailors’ priorities. Finally, there is the intersection of agent’s safety with respondent’s homeostasis. Examples are hard to come by, perhaps because of the very close proximity between safety and homeostasis. In the absence of safety one’s physiological stability may well suffer; alternatively, homeostatic imbalance would conceivably give rise to feelings of vulnerability. A possible case in point would be that of colonial settlers clearing what they deem to be *terra nullius*. The timber obtained by the settlers provides them with shelter in the form of houses and stockades, but the resultant loss of habitat for native animals places the indigenous population’s food-supply under threat.

A similar (but more controversial) case would be the destruction of poppy and coca fields in Third World countries in an attempt to impede the flow of drugs to other nations. The poppy and coca growers have their means of subsistence destroyed in order to reduce the health and economic risks posed by the drugs. Whether this is really condemnable would depend on whether the drugs are deemed to impact on the homeostasis and safety of users. Conceivably they would, in which case the action could fall into the ‘either commendable or condemnable’ category—or, better to say, commendable from one perspective and condemnable from the other: whether the commendable and condemnable would ever balance out seems to me to be improbable. Determining whether an action is condemnable or commendable can be difficult, but thinking about it in terms of needs (and therefore homosapient order) can at least clarify the issues involved.

To complete this section I want to consider where falsehoods stand with regard to the order-based theory. Falsehoods are lies; they are the opposite of truth.\(^{378}\)

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\(^{378}\) Following Williams, I understand truth to involve both sincerity and accuracy, and falsehoods their opposites. If we are sincere, then our assertions accord with our beliefs. If we are accurate,
Imagine these to be the poles of an axis, and that the axis is intersected at right angles by another axis, the poles of which are morally commendable and morally condemnable.

![Figure 4: Morality of Truth and Falsehood](image)

Perhaps counterintuitively, the picture thus presented indicates that as well as falsehoods being condemnable and truth commendable, there are some falsehoods that are commendable and some truths that are condemnable. But instances are not hard to find. Morally commendable falsehoods constitute the region of the white lie, for example where a person misleads the would-be assassin mentioned earlier with regard to the whereabouts of his intended victim; conversely, by normal standards of decency and humanity, a person would be condemned for responding truthfully to the assassin’s enquiries. The other two sectors of the chiasmus are uncontroversial: truth/commendable and falsehood/condemnable—harmless truth-telling does nothing to lessen homosapient orderliness, while injurious falsehood by definition diminishes it. I will give three examples of the latter.

In the first example, the agent is a school bully and the respondent is another youngster. The bully tweets lying insults about his victim and so broadcasts them to the world. The bully’s motivation is power, in conjunction with malignant self-actualisation (such is his nature). The victim’s self-esteem suffers, and that being more basic than self-actualisation on Maslow’s scale, the bully’s action would be deemed condemnable under the order-based theory.

The second example concerns the ill-fitting shoes that were mentioned on p. 33. Although initially without moral implications (no great harm done), the shoe-
maker (agent) is now assumed to know that the shoes are faulty and that he misleads his customer (respondent) into believing they would meet all of her needs, including comfort. Perhaps business has been slow, and the sale will help him keep it afloat; the customer being gullible takes him at his word. By seeking to preserve his livelihood the shoe-maker is primarily motivated by the need for sustenance, and there is nothing more basic than that. The customer’s homeostatic needs are also affected, in the physical pain she suffers. Besides that, however, when she realises that she has been deceived, her trust in humanity diminishes and her respect for others is undermined. The physical pain might have been minimal, but, on the scales of homosapient order, that in conjunction with the loss of respect could outweigh the shoe-maker’s gain. On the assumption that it does, the order-based theory would adjudicate against the shoemaker’s lie.

Perjury is another case of injurious falsehood, though not straightforwardly so. Imagine a drug-runner on trial in a jurisdiction where the penalty for the offence is death. He lies under oath in an attempt to save his life. The perjuring agent’s need is survival, but that of the respondent—is what? And who exactly is the respondent? With respect to the perjury (as distinct from the drug trafficking), perhaps the state should be seen as respondent, either in its own right or on behalf of its citizenry. In its own right, the state would conceivably suffer some kind of harm at the hand of an agent (for example breach of its perjury laws), and therefore nominally qualify as respondent—but such harm may not be morally significant. For the harm to be morally significant, it would also need to impact on individual human beings.379 Taking, then, individual citizens to be respondent to the perjury, how might they be harmed? A reasonable answer would be: through the rupture of social order that perjury entails; i.e. rupture arising from the breach of society’s laws, any attendant mistrust, and, if such breaches and mistrust were to become widespread, a possible threat to public safety. But now a problem arises. Social order is higher on Maslow’s scale (i.e. less basic) than the need for homeostasis, which boils down to the need for life. In principle, the perjurer would seem to be in the same position as the person who tells a lie in order to divert an assassin; in both cases, a lie is told in the hope of saving a life. It must

379 The state is a social entity, and I have argued against the vesting of moral respondency (and agency) in social entities.
be concluded, I believe, that the theory of order-based morality is inconsistent with the death-penalty. Order-based morality would deem all instances of the death-penalty to be unjust. Note, however, that this is where the line would probably be drawn with respect to perjury. An order-based justification of perjury laws would likely be forthcoming wherever the possible outcome was something less extreme (although corporal punishment may also warrant exemption).

This completes the exposition of the first part of the order-based theory’s ethical aspect. It is obviously utilitarian in nature. In the second part, the theory will be seen also to have a humane aspect that is consistent with virtue ethics. The need for the second part arises from the unresolved ‘lost in the desert’ problem, and from two further problems. The additional problems will now be outlined.

### 7.3 Some Problems for the Order-Based Theory’s Utilitarianism

#### The Unforeseen Consequences Conundrum

Derek Parfit observes that ‘[w]e are often uncertain what the effects of our acts will be.’ The uncertainty, he says, poses a problem for moral theory. The problem would seem to be especially acute for utilitarian theories such as the one I have presented, where decisions with regard to what should be done involve weighing up the consequences of one’s morally classifiable behaviour. Uncertainty about consequences may result in unintended consequences, or unforeseen ones. Some consequences may result in unforeseen consequences, or unforeseeable.

Unforeseeable consequences are in effect also unforeseen, although different levels of blameworthiness may be associated with them. Unfortunate effects arising from what is truly unforeseeable would probably escape blame. But unforeseen consequences also include consequences that one might reasonably be expected to have foreseen; in other words, consequences that should have been foreseen. We are talking here about adverse consequences: favourable

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380 This is consonant with a principle propounded by Rawls, to the effect that that obligations cannot issue from unjust institutions. In the circumstances at hand, the drug-runner on trial would be under no obligation to tell the truth.

381 This is one of ‘four facts’ that Derek Parfit says must be taken into account in moral theory, besides deciding ‘what we should all ideally do.’ The other three are: ‘some of us may act wrongly,’ ‘our acts are not the only effects of our motives;’ and ‘when we feel remorse, or blame each other, this may affect what we later do, and have other effects’ (Parfit, p. 99).

382 The notion of unintended or unforeseen consequences was popularised by the twentieth century sociologist Robert K. Merton.
consequences would be unlikely to attract moral scrutiny. Another situation is also conceivable: where potentially adverse consequences pass through one’s mind, but are set aside because they are adjudged trivial. Parfit uses ‘the fisherman’s dilemma’ to illustrate the problem. The problem is one of overfishing. There is one lake and many fishermen obtain their livelihood from it. If the fishermen do not restrict their catch, fish-stocks would eventually diminish and all would suffer, thereby offsetting any short-term increases in their haul.\textsuperscript{383} Parfit writes, ‘[f]or the sake of small benefits to ourselves, or our families, each of us may deny others much greater total benefits, or impose on others much greater total harms. We may think this permissible because the effects on each of the others will be either trivial or imperceptible. If this is what we think, what we do will often be much worse for all of us.’\textsuperscript{384}

Under the order-based theory, adverse consequences arising from either kind of failure—of not foreseeing them at all, or foreseeing them but trivialising them—would consist in unintended impacts on the basic needs of agents and respondents. Needs that are either discounted or ignored obviously pose a problem. What started out as morally commendable behaviour could be turned into condemnable behaviour by unforeseen consequences. To what extent should verdicts be influenced by unintended consequences? The answer would depend on whether an agent’s ignorance was itself deemed reprehensible. For instance, trivialisation of possible adverse effects would probably attract blame if it was felt that a little effort on the part of the agent would have enabled him to foresee what in fact turned out to be the case. Resolution of the problem will have to wait until after the second aspect of the order-based theory’s ethical position has been explained.

**Unconsummated Intentions**

Moral culpability depends on whether harm suffered is the result of willful action on the part of a competent human agent. One needs to get behind the deeds, in order to understand the intentions of the perpetrator and the spirit in which the act was performed. Ascertainment of an agent’s intentions would often be difficult, but that, in conjunction with one’s assessment of the consequences, could be said to be what moral judgement is about. But what if there are only intentions and no

\textsuperscript{383} Parfit, pp. 84-85.
\textsuperscript{384} Parfit, p. 86.
consequences on which to base moral judgement? Are intentions by themselves sufficient either to commend or to condemn? In the discussion of morally classifiable behaviour in Section 2.3, intentions were held to be morally equivalent to the intended acts themselves, and the idea of moral equivalence appeared to be consistent with the rules of law. The problem is that the order-based theory as it presently stands fails to provide grounds on which a judgement might be based, where intended actions are not carried out. Unless action has occurred, intended victims of planned misdeeds would seem to have suffered little if any harm. The target of a failed conspiracy to murder remains alive, and could even be safer than he was before the conspiracy was uncovered: extra security might have been put in place. The order-based theory’s utilitarianism is ill-equipped to deal with circumstances like these. Its character-based facet will be seen to fill the void.

7.4 Conclusion

With the exception of ‘commendable or condemnable’ scenarios, instances have been found of all of the kinds of moral condemnability deriving from the relationship between the weighted needs of agents and respondents. As indicated, the problem of the apparently undecidable ‘commendable or condemnable’ will be resolved in the next chapter, as part of the discussion of humaneness. On the assumption that the resolution proves satisfactory, and that the other problems that have been raised can also be resolved, the foregoing argument supports the proposition that morality originates in the need for homosapient order. Although examples by themselves could never constitute definitive proof of a theory (a counter-example might be just around the corner), the case studies have shown that adjudications of condemnability under the order-based theory are consistent with those that might be expected of mainstream moral theories.

My contention is that homosapient order is a natural human good that is analogous to justice. Minimally, on those grounds, homosapient order stands in an analogous relationship to moral commendability (i.e., moral good and right). In this chapter, a case has been made for a stronger relationship between them, by showing that moral commendability, and its converse, moral condemnability, can often be explained in terms of the effect that morally classifiable behaviour has on the homosapient order of those involved. But I have previously claimed that our
need for homosapient order is pre-moral; that everyone needs it, regardless of their moral qualities. How, then, might the pre-moral need result in something that is fully moral? I believe an answer may be found in the character of the agent. A good person’s pre-moral need for homosapient order will generally tend to be translated through morally classifiable behaviour into increases in homosapient order; only ‘generally’, because accidents can happen, as can exceptions to the rule. Similarly, the morally classifiable behaviour of a malevolent person will generally tend to translate into decreases in homosapient order. Indeed, the effect that an agent’s pattern of morally classifiable behaviour has on homosapient order can be understood to constitute a measure of the person’s goodness (or badness) of character. The next chapter fleshes out these ideas.
8: HUMAN CHARACTER AND MORALITY

8.1 Good Character, Bad Character

Many thinkers from either side of consequentialist/non-consequentialist divide, and from either side of the cognitivist/non-cognitivist divide as well, have considered personal character to be of great importance to moral theory; and, more to the point, all of them have regarded it as a powerful determinant of how people behave in morally fraught situations. The aim of this chapter is to demonstrate that the order-based theory of morality provides a satisfactory account of goodness of character, and, by implication, badness of character. As an offshoot of that, the theory will be shown to provide rational justification of prescriptions for moral behaviour that are consistent with mainstream moral theory. First some background, beginning with Aristotle.

According to Aristotle, virtue ‘is a state of character concerned with choice, lying in a mean, i.e. the mean relative to us, this being determined by a rational principle, and by that principle by which the man of practical wisdom would determine it.’\(^{385}\) The mean spoken of by Aristotle is one that also charts a course between two extremes, both of which are vices; one being a vice of ‘excess’ and the other of ‘defect’. An example: if one course of action would be prodigal (excess) and another course niggardly (defect), then a middle course would be described as ‘liberal’. Of the two extremes, one is generally more ‘erroneous’ than the other; therefore, the mean that constitutes virtue is not simply the mid-point (i.e. the median) between them, but a context-sensitive judgement that steers the action towards the lesser of the two vices. The virtue of courage provides another example. Courage, Aristotle says, lies between cowardice and foolhardiness: cowardly acts would rarely if ever be seen as courageous while foolhardiness is inconsistent with rational decision-making. A foolhardy person might appear to be courageous, but it would not be courageousness as Aristotle portrays it. Cowardice and foolhardiness are not what courage is. In sum, a person will be virtuous if her character is such that she exercises her reason and

chooses a middle path between two extremes, and then acts in accordance with the choice.\textsuperscript{386}

Character was also important to Hume, who gave this as a maxim: ‘no action can be virtuous, or morally good, unless there be in human nature some motive to produce it, distinct from its sense of morality.’\textsuperscript{387} And what might that motive be? Hume writes: ‘[a]n action, or sentiment, or character is virtuous or vicious; why? because its view causes a pleasure or uneasiness of a particular kind.’\textsuperscript{388} Virtuous action and virtuous character would seem to be inextricably linked, and together they are responsible for a ‘particular kind’ of pleasure. As Foot says, the foundation of moral philosophy for Hume consisted in the action-guiding nature of moral judgement,\textsuperscript{389} and personal character would assuredly have a large bearing on the quality of moral judgement. This is a very important aspect of morality. From a moral perspective, a person’s character consists in the degrees to which it is marked by natural goodness and natural evil. As such, character influences moral judgement and guides action consequent upon moral judgement.

The notion of character entails a sense of personal identity. If everyone existing at this moment of time were not in some way identical to the person they think they were a moment before, or a day before, or whatever other sensible unit of time before, then there would be no point talking about character. I have italicised ‘in some way’ because of the large number of theories on offer with respect to continuity of identity. There are theories that focus on physical continuity, others that look at psychological continuity (especially with regard to memory), and others that consider both of these kinds. I will not attempt to deal with them here, but these words from Derek Parfit on psychological continuity are worth noting:

Some changes of character are deliberately brought about; others are the natural consequence of growing older; others are the natural response to certain kinds of experience. But there would not be continuity of character

\textsuperscript{386} Like Buddha, who exhorted his followers to adhere to ‘the middle way,’ according to which ‘excessive mortification [is] as unreal and unworthy as mere desire and pleasure’ (James, \textit{The Varieties of Religious Experience}, p. 308).
\textsuperscript{387} Hume, \textit{Treatise}, 3.1.1.
\textsuperscript{388} Hume, \textit{Treatise}, 3.1.2.
\textsuperscript{389} See Foot, p. 9.
if radical and unwanted changes were produced by abnormal interference, such as direct tampering with the brain.\textsuperscript{390}

Changes of character on this account may occur in the normal course of events, including, for instance, by means of self-education and encounters with inspirational people. They may also occur abnormally, in the way mentioned by Parfit, and perhaps as a result of indoctrination through brain-washing.

Issues relating to character are relevant to the question of moral worthiness, or desert. A person’s character may change, sometimes radically: think, for example, of the lascivious Augustine before his conversion to Christianity. Some of his actions at that time were certainly contrary to the principles of Christian virtue, but he subsequently became quite a different person. Would the post-conversion Augustine deserve to have been punished for his earlier behaviour? Parfit maintains that desert should vary directly according to the degree of psychological connectedness between past and present selves.\textsuperscript{391} In Augustine’s case, since very little connectedness is apparent there would on Parfit’s principle be little reason to punish him. Variability of character is a fact of life—within individuals themselves as we have just seen, but also across the human species. One would therefore seem to be drawing a very long bow if a generalisation were made with regard to the fundamental goodness or badness of human character. And yet, as I will now demonstrate, some very great thinkers have believed that goodness is indeed the case.

Returning to Hume, Marcia Lind writes: ‘one way to think of what Hume wanted to do … was to detheologize the natural, that is, to keep the normative power of the natural but to do it without God.’\textsuperscript{392} Lind goes on to list some of the things Hume said about the natural, including (1) the natural is ‘universal and inseparable from the species;’ (2) the natural is ‘the foundation of all our thoughts and behavior and that without which human nature would crumble;’ (3) the natural must ‘hold and, even further, [it is] “absolutely impossible” that it not hold;’ and (4) the natural is ‘correct, while the nonnatural is “perverted”’.\textsuperscript{393}

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\textsuperscript{390} Parfit, p. 207.  
\textsuperscript{391} Parfit, p. 326.  
\textsuperscript{393} Lind, pp. 136-137.
\end{flushleft}
relation to the last, Lind notes that Timon the man-hater was cited by Hume as an example of someone with ‘perverted sentiments of morals,’\textsuperscript{394} and that such perversions were understood by him to be a form of malady, or malfunctioning—indeed, ‘nonnatural’. On that basis, normal and natural functioning would include the moral sense of benevolence that Hume promoted, and such functioning would warrant the ascription ‘correct’. Moral sense would accordingly be a law of (human) nature, and it would be ‘requisite’ that all such laws ‘hold’ for ‘humans who are well functioning.’\textsuperscript{395} In Hume’s words, ‘[t]hese sentiments [of morality] are so rooted in our constitution and temper, that without entirely confounding the human mind by disease or madness, ‘tis impossible to extirpate and destroy them.’\textsuperscript{396}

Kant also had a great deal to say about character. He identified three predispositions in the ‘fixed character’ of humankind: animality, humanity and personality. Animality consists in ‘physical and purely mechanical self-love, wherein no reason is demanded:’\textsuperscript{397} it is concerned with self-preservation, propagation of the species and community with other people. Humanity as a predisposition consists in self-love derived from comparing oneself with other people: practical reason is involved in the performance of the comparison, and equality is the main desideratum. Personality is described as ‘the capacity for respect for the moral law as in itself a sufficient incentive of the will.’\textsuperscript{398} As a predisposition, personality is reflected in moral feeling, which is said to be incorporated by the free will ‘into its maxims;’ i.e., inculcated as a principle of conduct. ‘Good character’ is its outcome, and this is something that must be acquired. As mentioned earlier, Kant maintained that the will is the only thing that can be unqualifiedly good. None of the predispositions were seen by him as being in conflict with the moral law (i.e., the Categorical Imperative), and were therefore regarded as basically good. If human nature is predisposed towards the good, how did Kant account for moral evil? His answer was that we also have a

\textsuperscript{394} Lind, p. 140.
\textsuperscript{395} Lind, p. 140. Since it is the ‘normative power of the natural’ that is Lind’s (and by implication Hume’s) concern, the term ‘requisite’ may be understood to mean ‘obligatory’ as distinct from ‘causally necessary’.
\textsuperscript{396} Hume, \textit{Treatise}, 3.1.2.
\textsuperscript{397} Kant, \textit{Religion}, p. 22.
\textsuperscript{398} Kant, \textit{Religion}, pp. 22-23.
propensity for evil, as distinct from a predisposition for it. Predispositions were seen by Kant as being essentially innate, but the propensities can be either innate or acquired. Kant considered self-love, when ‘taken as the principle of all our maxims,’ to be the main source of evil. Respect is prescribed as its remedy.

Respect as a matter of character is also of enormous importance to virtue theorists. As Philippa Foot says, ‘[i]t matters in a human community that people can trust each other, and matters even more that at some basic level humans should have mutual respect. It matters, not just what people do, but what they are.’

Respect was discussed in Section 5.3 in terms of a basic need; trust contributes to respect. Respect and trust are virtues; both are morally commendable.

Virtues are thought by Greg Spence to consist in ‘traits of character.’ Vices also, it would seem, in view of Spence’s indictment of utilitarianism for failing to ‘explain the “data” of the life of character and its issues of courage, compassion, personal loyalty, and vice.’ In making moral judgements, Spence says, there is a need to know what kind of person is involved, including what she thinks of other people and how she feels about herself. Why? one may ask. What would prompt us to ask? Such questions would presumably arise from an attempt to understand or explain the behaviour of a moral agent, and in ascriptions of praise or blame. But some kind of prima facie judgement of commendability or condemnability would seem to be the precipitating event. Spence is critical of non-virtue theories, which, he maintains, ‘pay little or no attention to the areas of life which form character.’ What might those areas be? Fairly obviously, and very generally, the answer would involve consideration of both nature (biology, including genetcics) and nurture (cultural and geographical circumstances), and the

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399 In a review of Pablo Muchnik’s recent book Kant’s Theory of Evil: An Essay on the Dangers of Self-Love and the Aprioricity of History, Holly L Wilson comments on a debate between Henry Allison and Allan Wood. She writes, ‘Allison holds that Kant’s claim that human beings have a universal radical propensity toward evil is an a priori claim not based in experience, whereas Wood believes the truth of Kant’s position can only be supported in the principle of unsociable-sociability, an empirical concept rooted in the species’ character.’ (Holly L. Wilson, in Journal of the History of Philosophy Vol. 50, no. 3 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), p. 462).
400 Kant, Religion, p. 41.
401 Foot, p. 48.
402 Spence, p. 251.
403 Spence, p. 250.
404 Spence, p. 256.
405 Spence, p. 257.
interaction between the two. The Tennyson principle pretty well summarises matters from the perspective of nurture: ‘I am part of all that I have met.’ From the perspective of nature, the principle could be expanded to include ‘and I am part of those who met to make me’. But the important point for present purposes is that character is a determinant of moral commendability and condemnability.

Another question from Spence is also pertinent. He asks ‘whether all virtues are excellences because of their connection to a single dominant telos (goal).’ If one is of a mind to form such a connection, two possible ways of doing it are suggested by Spence: either by linking all of the virtues to a ‘master virtue’, or by having them participate in some kind of ‘common essence, such as common sense.’ Augmentation of homosapient order across all of the parties involved in morally classifiable transactions is teleological in the second sense. Our quest for homosapient order generates a number of sub-goals, in the form of satisfaction of various Maslovian needs, all of which tend towards a common end. The shared essence of the various sub-goals consists in the need for homosapient order. Since the need for homosapient order is pre-moral (good and bad people alike need homosapient order) the need itself is not a virtue; in the same way that common sense (to use Spence’s example) may be directed towards either vicious or virtuous ends.

Spence seems unconvinced as to whether there need be a single dominant telos: ‘a core of all virtue,’ he maintains, ‘is really the assumption in disguise that there is only one good way to live or one correct way for society to develop.’ But is this really a problem? It would not be, I suggest, if the ‘core’ consists in something that is common to all human beings. Foot, for instance, makes a case for practical rationality as a ‘master virtue.’ To speak of a good person, she writes, ‘is to speak of an individual … as concerns his rational will.’ Practical rationality is said to be independent of desire and interest.

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406 Dupré writes, ‘In reflective moments almost everyone agrees that human dispositions develop as a result of interactions between the biological endowment of the organism and the environment in which it develops’ (Dupré, p. 80).
407 Spence, p. 255.
408 Spence, p. 255.
409 Spence, p. 255.
410 Foot, p. 62.
411 Foot, p. 66.
412 Foot, p. 61.
emanates from goodness of character and aims at the propagation of good. Foot sees a connection between ‘the evaluation of human characteristics and operations in general’ and ‘the special subject of goodness of will.’ Goodness of will is definitive of character and is a factor in moral judgement. Goodness of will and good are clearly not synonymous: goodness of will is arguably a specifically human kind of good, while good in general may apply to anything that was consistent with an organism’s natural purpose. My influenza would be good for the virus concerned, but bad for me.

All of the foregoing suggests that character is extremely important in the determination of the goodness or badness of a person’s actions. And so it is, but a criticism of Nietzsche made by Foot is worth noting, for it raises the possibility of character being paid excessive attention. Nietzsche, Foot writes, claimed ‘that the true nature of an action depended … on the nature of the individual who did it,’ rather than the act itself. For Nietzsche, on Foot’s reading, behaviour that would generally be regarded as reprehensible may be excusable, even meritorious, provided the agent is someone outside the ‘herd’; i.e., a ‘master’ rather than a lowly ‘slave’. It is a case of intrinsically commendable character and intrinsically condemnable character. Foot maintains that ‘an action is bad if it has badness from its kind [for example, torture], its end [for example, inducing someone through hypnosis to kill one’s enemy], or its contrariety to the agent’s beliefs about what is good or bad to do.’ Means, ends, and character are all relevant to issues of moral commendability and condemnability. With regard to the agent’s beliefs, Foot writes that ‘acting as one thinks one should not is a very radical form of badness in the will.’ While that may be true, there is nevertheless an implication that the agent knows what should have been done, or not done; that she knows what is good and right.

413 Foot, p. 38.
414 Foot, p. 51.
415 Foot, p. 110. See also Aristotle. In a discussion of the ‘youthful type of character,’ which is guided more by spirit than by intellect, it is said that people of such character ‘would always rather do noble deeds than useful ones: their lives are regulated more by moral feeling than by reasoning; and whereas reasoning leads us to choose what is useful, moral goodness leads us to choose what is noble.’ See Rhetoric, translated by W. Rhys Roberts (Chicago: The University of Chicago, Great Books of the Western World, 1952), Vol. 9, II.12, 1389a.
416 Foot, p. 76.
417 Foot, p. 74.
Against Nietzsche, Foot insists that the nature of one’s acts helps define character, as well as one’s character helping to determine the nature of one’s acts. It is a matter of both/and, not either/or. While ‘it matters a great deal, especially in personal relationships, how someone is rather than simply what he or she does,’ in view of the terrible things done in places like Nazi Germany, Cambodia and Rwanda, ‘we cannot but have a sense of the awfulness of this very fact.’

Character and behaviour both count. A little further on, Foot maintains that norms cannot ‘be taught simply by telling children that they are to be courageous and “authentic”, however important it is to encourage them to be daring and also to allow them to discover their true desires. The norms to be followed must largely be formulated in terms of the prohibition of actions such as murder or theft.’ If Foot’s theory of natural good is predominantly consequentialist, then it is a form of consequentialism that embraces a measure of deontological prescriptiveness.

In this chapter I argue for the notion of humaneness of character, which takes the form of a Maslovian being need. Assuming for the moment that such a need exists, how might it arise? Heredity, an aspect of nature, would play a part, but social and cultural influences may be more significant. Kitcher believes that ‘[c]ultural success exerts pressure to develop schemes of socialization extending the scope of psychological altruism.’ When psychological altruism is culturally endorsed, individuals will tend to become more altruistic than they might otherwise have been. Kitcher explains, ‘[a]ltruism failures can be remedied by harnessing a number of emotions: fear, dread of the unseen enforcer, awe and reverence, a positive desire to be in harmony with the deity’s plans and wishes, even a sense of identity with the society blessed with divine favor. The same ends can be achieved by inspiring people not simply to simulate altruism, but to have altruistic propensities across a wider set of contexts.’ Harnessing of emotions is consistent with the notion of principled consideration, which will soon be seen to be fundamental to humaneness: but it is important to note that the emotions are only harnessed, not expunged. Well-socialised people, Kitcher writes, ‘act to help others through a mixture of motives—through taking others’ wishes seriously,

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418 Foot, p. 113.
419 Foot, p. 114.
420 Kitcher, p. 132.
421 Kitcher, p. 131.
through sympathetic emotions, through respect for the supposed source of the ethical code, through a sense of identity with a group, through worries about the results of breaking the rules.\textsuperscript{422} Well-socialised people would generally be regarded as people of good character. I would only add that the needs of others would also be taken seriously by them.

The main claims that I will be making are that a person of good character is a humane person, and that a humane person is someone who tends towards Maslovian self-actualisation. Conversely, a person of bad character is an inhumane person, and someone who tends towards malignant self-actualisation. But before getting to either of those issues there is a problem that must be considered. If character is such a strong a determinant of the commendability or otherwise of one’s morally relevant behaviour, where might one find room for freedom to choose and to operate? Since freedom to choose from alternative courses of action is necessary to moral classifiability, an inconsistency seems to have arisen.

8.2 Character and Freedom

Maslow can be seen as having pointed to the problem of freedom in the distinction he drew between coping (need-motivated and goal-directed) behaviour and expressive (of personality) behaviour (see p. 65). Usually, Maslow says, a person’s behaviour is a mixture of both kinds of behaviour, but its expressive aspect would seem to militate against freedom: we do what we do simply because we are what we are, and we are what we are because of such determinants as our biology, our environment, and our cultural setting. We may have little choice with regard to any of these and all of them affect our values (as well as our needs, wants, preferences and interests). As Augustine said, ‘one is a slave to things in which one places one’s highest values.’\textsuperscript{423} If our character makes slaves of us, how could we possibly be free?

Augustine’s dictum has a ring of truth about it, and, if values are indeed registrants of needs (see p. 118), then it would follow that we are slaves to our highest needs. In the terminology of this thesis, that would mean that we are

\textsuperscript{422} Kitcher, p. 131.
slaves to our need for homosapient order. It is necessary for us to have the need satisfied. Not ‘necessary’ in the logical sense of the term; rather, it is physically and psychologically necessary—satisfaction of the need for homosapient order is necessary to our survival and to our well-being: physically, socially, and eudaimonically. Necessity would seem to leave little room for freedom, perhaps none at all; and yet we would usually want to say that freedom in the form of free will is necessary to moral decision-making. But the claim of this thesis is that the basic needs, including the need for homosapient order, are fundamental to morality. Assuming that to be the case, the proposed theory would appear to be closed to freedom. How, then, might morality be served, or even get started?

The answer, I suggest, can be found in the personal character of agents. Good character, bad character; good will or ill will, rather than free will—the subject was touched on in the discussion of Foot’s concepts of natural good and natural viciousness. In Section 5.4 freedom in the form of self-determination was held to be a Maslovian B-need: everyone needs freedom, good and bad people alike. In light of Augustine’s dictum, we might even say that the needs that determine our behaviour include our need to be free. If that seems paradoxical, the problem can be circumvented by recognising that a good person also has a need to be good: and that the need to be good is an expression of the person’s need for homosapient order. A good person’s decisions in respect of how she chooses to meet her preferences and wants will be guided by that need. A person of good character is a Maslovian self-actualiser—she is possessed of a Kantian predisposition to goodness (like humankind in general, according to Kant). Her actions are constrained—or, more strongly, determined—by her character, but that is no impediment to morality. Her goodness inclines her to choose courses of action that do not infringe the needs of others, especially when those needs are more basic than her own. Her goodness also encompasses the power of self-restraint, the exercise of which contributes to the satisfaction of her need for freedom.

In view of the determined nature of her actions, would the good person’s good deeds be deserving of praise? Perhaps not so much deserving of it, but her actions would nevertheless tend to be commended by similarly attuned people, which may
be most of us.\textsuperscript{424} Rationality would be downplayed, but not eliminated. Reason would still be brought to bear in the moral decision-making (between alternative courses of action) of a good person, but it would not be the be-all and end-all of morality. And a certain level of mature rationality would be necessary to the formation of moral character, either good or bad. Young children and people with severe cognitive disabilities are not part of the goodness-badness scenario. They may be regarded as mischievous, or loving, or withdrawn (as in cases of autism), or naïve, and so on: but few of us would regard traits such as these as being relevant to morality.

It would seem to follow from what I have just said that a bad person, someone of an immoral character, has a need to be bad. If the person could not have done otherwise, on what grounds could he reasonably be blamed for his vicious action? This is really just the obverse of the case relating to the commendation of good actions. A vicious agent’s behaviour will be held to be reprehensible by the same people who praise the actions of a good person. I have already said that I will not be discussing how a person comes to be either of bad character or of good character, but, to repeat, nature and nurture would both be factors, as would the interaction between them; in addition, a person’s choices with regard to how his or her basic needs should be satisfied would also be influential.

Some of a person’s actions will not be morally relevant, including those that have no effect on anyone else; for example, choosing which ice-cream flavour to have today. But many actions will be morally relevant, i.e. they will be instances of morally classifiable behaviour, because of the beneficial or harmful effects they have on others. On the basis of the foregoing ideas, morally classifiable behaviour may be re-defined as behaviour that is either commended or condemned by a person of good character. Behaviour will justifiably be commended if it does not impact adversely on the satisfaction of another’s basic needs; behaviour will justifiably be condemned if it does have an adverse impact.\textsuperscript{425} An adverse impact is a harmful impact.

\textsuperscript{424} Although Foot does not tie good to commendation (see Foot, p. 39), they are assuredly related in some way. Commendation, or praise (and their opposites) are ineradicable members of our moral vocabulary, as are goodness and viciousness.

\textsuperscript{425} The notion of adverse impact on needs is consistent with the so-called harm principle, which derives from Mill’s view that a person should be at liberty to do anything provided no harm is done to others (see \textit{On Liberty}, Chapter 1).
With regard to the putative nexus between condemnation and harm, some reservations expressed by Foot are worth noting. She recounts an incident from the life of an anthropologist, who refrained from taking a photograph of an indigenous assistant because of an undertaking he had given not to do so. He could have taken the photograph without letting on, leaving his subject unharmed. The photograph would conceivably have been useful to his research, but his promise was more important to him. The trust to which upheld promises contribute is an aspect of human good. Now while there is no reason that I can think of to dispute any of this, I wonder if harm (or potential harm) might nevertheless have arisen if the picture had been taken. Would not the anthropologist himself have exposed himself to harm—for example, from a feeling of shame, and perhaps remorse—if he had taken the forbidden photograph? As well as harm to others, self-harm would usually be considered contrary to good. If we have ever done something that is deserving of shame (as the vast majority of us would have done), then it would be a blot on our (hopefully otherwise) good character. Untrustworthiness, Foot says, is a bad human disposition (as is disrespect).

I now want to expand on the notion that a good person has a need to be good, conversely for a person of bad character. My contention is that a good person is a humane person, and that human beings generally have a need for humaneness: specifically, a need that forms part of the need for Maslovian self-actualisation, and which is therefore traceable to the need for homosapient order. This constitutes the second facet of the proposed order-based ethics.

8.3 The Order-Based Theory’s Humane Facet

Humaneness Defined

A definition of humaneness that is consistent with the order-based theory may be stated thus: humaneness consists in principled consideration of the needs of others. Humane consideration is principled because, when adopted as a rule of life, it is fully informed by reason and it is maintained and acted upon with consistency. Humaneness issues in guidance, or prescriptions, for action. Humaneness is consideration in two senses of the term ‘consideration’:

426 Foot, pp. 47-48.
427 Foot, p. 48.
thoughtfulness and tolerance. Thoughtfulness consists in thinking before acting; it involves attentiveness and reflectiveness. By means of attentiveness we take in as much relevant information as we are able; by means of reflectiveness we become aware of alternative courses of action from which to choose, and by the same means determine what kind of action would best serve our interests and the interests of others. With regard to interests, we would be aware that our own interests would usually be best served by attending to the interests of relevant others, for example those to whom we are bound by ties of affection or duty. In so far as it is humane, thoughtfulness occurs against a moral background: as Owen Flanagan says, ‘[r]eflectiveness is good if and only if it is carried out with decent ethical standards.’\textsuperscript{428} The same applies to consideration in general, with tolerance providing material for the background, i.e. tolerance as revealed in one’s actions, including the words one uses when referring to other beings. A tolerant person will understand that other people have needs that are similar to her own needs, and that their needs may be subject to different hierarchical arrangements; in some cases so different that ultimate ends also differ. She will also understand that people may feel compelled to satisfy their needs in different ways; exemplified, as already mentioned, by a Muslim’s refusal to eat pork and by a Jew’s insistence on food that is kosher—there are many other such instances, including the custom of fish on Fridays practised by some Christians, and the Buddhist’s vegetarianism. Being both thoughtful and tolerant, a humane person recognises that the needs of others may sometimes outweigh his or her own needs.

Humane rationality (or rational humaneness) will now be explained. To this point thoughtfulness and tolerance have been seen to be qualities of a humane person. Others to be discussed are empathy and reciprocity.

For Kitcher, empathy is a cognitive aspect of altruism, as is the capacity to understand ‘the nature of a social counterpart to a solitary context ….\textsuperscript{429} Psychological altruism occurs when one’s desires as they would have been in a solitary context are modified should other people become involved; and modified in such a way that fulfillment of the perceived desires of others is sought in any other context.


\textsuperscript{429} Kitcher, p. 34.
action that is undertaken. Empathy is the result. Some ideas from J. L. Mackie are also apposite. According to Mackie, ‘a humane disposition is a vital part of the core of morality.’ Mackie describes three stages of universalisation of moral judgements, the second of which consists in ‘putting oneself in the other person’s place.’ The first stage of universalisation involves the belief that moral judgements reached by others should be the same as one’s own. The first stage would not prevent a bigot from maintaining that everyone should judge according to his own prejudiced mind-set, but the second stage would. There is a mooted third stage, where ‘different tastes and rival ideas’ usurp one’s own tastes and ideas, whereby one effectively becomes the other, with all of the other’s desires, beliefs, commitments and so forth. Mackie rejects the third stage on the grounds of impracticability: as well as that, since it discounts one’s own desires and so forth to the point of irrelevance, one would be entitled to think that it would be a much attenuated form of universalisation.

Like Kant, Mackie considers that universalisation of moral judgements occurs by virtue of the fact that people who are committed to the belief that a particular action is morally commendable or condemnable generally think that everyone should be equally committed with regard to ‘relevantly similar’ actions. Mackie doesn’t use the word empathy, but empathy could be viewed as the emotional counterpart to the rational processes he is talking about. A humane disposition is likely to be an empathetic one. Other beings would tend to be seen to be like us, with similar or even identical sets of needs, albeit with diverse practices with respect to their satisfaction. A sense of fellow-feeling that encompasses human beings in general would be a feature of a humane disposition, perhaps akin to the moral sense advocated by Hume and others. All-encompassing fellow-feeling would arise from recognition of the interconnectedness of the world and its constituents; interconnectedness of the

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431 Mackie, p. 90 ff.
432 Mackie, p. 92 ff.
433 Mackie, p. 83.
434 The correspondence between humaneness and various theories that hold human nature to be fundamentally good (those of Plato, Hume, Kant, and Maslow), was signalled earlier, in the discussion of homosapient order and the good.
kind envisaged by Aristotle (see p. 29). Everyone would come to be regarded as a morally relevant being—perhaps some non-humans as well.

Reciprocity is the next humane norm that I wish to discuss. Reciprocity entails a sense of ‘evenhandedness’, where something is returned for another thing, and the thing returned is appropriate in the context, though not necessarily the same as the other thing. Reciprocity is akin to justice, both moral and legal. Reciprocity is a norm that is central to various systems of ethics. The Confucian, for example, maintains that ‘when a man carries out the principles of conscientiousness and reciprocity he is not far from the moral law. What you do not wish others should do unto you, do not do unto them.’ Confucians call this ‘the Golden Mean’, and its resemblance to the Golden Rule of Christianity is obvious. The Golden Mean guides so-called ‘superior’ people in the conduct of their worldly affairs. Although Confucian reciprocity is set within a particular cultural tradition, and the ideas involved are only partially applicable to other traditions, the resemblance between the two Golden tenets is indicative of a widespread and cross-cultural acceptance of the importance of reciprocity. The principle can also be found at the centre of a formulation of an atheistic ethics, that of naturalism. As Thomas W. Clark puts it, the so-called ‘Golden Rule of Reciprocity’ gets us ‘what we most want as social creatures: to flourish as individuals within a community.’

Flourishing through reciprocity fits comfortably within the order-based theory of morality. Individual flourishing is a Maslovian being need, one that answers to our need for E-order. Reciprocity within a community is a means of satisfying our need for S-order. It may also be noted that the ethical principles espoused by humanism include valorisation of individual dignity and value, maximisation of freedom and choice, mutual responsibility and duty, and empathetic caring. The first two involve human flourishing and therefore E-order, while the other two are concerned with our need for belongingness and esteem, and are therefore relevant to S-order.

437 See Australian Humanist, No. 97, Autumn 2010, p. 1. Humanism is consistent with the naturalism that is built into the order-based theory of morality. The naturalistic order-based theory and humanism both eschew supernaturalistic explanation, and the moral principles in each of them are very similar in character.
Humaneness finds expression in several of Maslow’s B-values: goodness first and foremost. Evil is opposed to goodness, and manifests as nihilism, selfishness, hatred and cynicism.\(^{438}\) Nihilism, Camus explains, is indifferent to life, one’s own as well as that of others.\(^{439}\) Life is needed for morality, and, arguably, morality is needed for life; normal human life at least. Selfishness, hatred and cynicism are indifferent to life, if not to one’s own then certainly to that of other beings; all of the characteristics are beset with misanthropy. Other relevant B-values are wholeness, and what Maslow refers to as ‘dichotomy-transcendence.’ The dichotomy he had in mind is that between ‘us’ and ‘them’, where everything is seen in terms of duelling and warfare.\(^{440}\) Transcendence overcomes dichotomy by instilling a sense of wholeness: a sense of all-encompassing fellow-feeling results, thereby bringing empathy into play—as someone who overcomes the dichotomy might express it, ‘we are all in this together’. Justice is another of Maslow’s B-values: reciprocity as evenhandedness would be a feature of justice, which was earlier seen to be analogous to homosapient order.

Since B-needs are tied in with the over-arching need for self-actualisation, recognition by an agent of the needs and values of others becomes a factor in the agent’s own need for self-actualisation.\(^{441}\) As far as I can tell, Maslow makes no specific mention of a need for humaneness, but I believe his B-values and corresponding B-needs point decisively in that direction.\(^{442}\) Further, in the same way that we need to give respect as well as receive it, we need both to be humane and to be treated humanely. If the Golden Rule and the Golden Mean are considered intuitively correct, then the benefits of reciprocal humaneness would be readily apparent. As explained in this section, norms that reflect B-needed humaneness include thoughtfulness, tolerance, empathy and reciprocity: such norms provide ample guidance for the conduct of a decent and good life.

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\(^{438}\) See *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*, p. 308.
\(^{439}\) *The Rebel*, p. 14. Such was Sade’s philosophy—nihilistic naturalism that resolved into absolute egoism.
\(^{440}\) *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*, p. 308.
\(^{441}\) Maslovian self-actualisation only, not malignant self-actualisation: assimilation of the needs of others is blocked by the selfishness inherent in malignant self-actualisation.
\(^{442}\) This is consistent with Spinoza, who was one of Maslow’s philosophical muses. According to Spinoza, ‘[t]he good which everyone who seeks virtue wants for himself, he also desires for other men …’ (*The Ethics*, 3p37). Spinoza’s argument for the proposition is as always complex, but it invokes several themes that are central to the notion of humaneness. The themes include development of the powers of understanding, kindliness, generosity and friendship.
A place for B-needed humaneness can be found in the ethical project propounded by Kitcher. ‘Some of our desires,’ Kitcher writes, ‘are directed toward ourselves and our own well-being; other desires may be directed toward the welfare of other people. Desires of the first type are the hallmark of egoism, but those of the latter sort are altruistic.’ Character is a key: to be ‘an altruist is to have a particular kind of relational structure in your life—when you come to see that what you do will affect other people, the wants you have, the emotions you feel, the intentions you form, change from what they would have been in the absence of that recognition.’ Principled consideration would seem to be an effective way of coming to see these things. I would only add ‘needs’ to the ‘wants’ etc. mentioned by Kitcher. I will have more to say about the implications of B-needed humaneness after further probing the notion by considering whether specific modes of humaneness are discernible.

**Modes of Humaneness**

People may be more or less humane, based on the extent to which they interact with the world in a principled and considerate manner. Humaneness is conceivable as a continuum ranging from minimum to maximum—a continuum pervaded by B-needfulness. Nevertheless, some fairly distinct modes of humaneness are also conceivable, based on the degree to which others’ needs are assimilated by agents. The degrees of assimilation, or modes, that will be examined here are denoted ‘for-my-sake’, ‘for-our-sake’, and ‘for-your-sake’, where ‘my’ stands for agent, ‘our’ for agent plus respondent, and ‘your’ for respondent only. The three modes will be seen to resemble the various stages of universalisation described by Mackie. Humane people have a need to be humane and the need is reflected in their values and behaviour. In a world devoid of a beneficent deity, which is the world I am assuming to be the case, humane human beings are the only source of moral goodness. Under the ‘for-my-sake’ mode, others’ needs are recognised as being morally relevant; under the ‘for-our-sake’ mode, the same kind of recognition occurs but a further step is taken: others’ needs are integrated with one’s own needs. The third mode, ‘for-your-sake’,
entails the replacement of one’s own needs and values by the other’s needs and values. The three modes will now be explained.

In cases of for-my-sake humaneness, justification for taking the needs and values of others into account ensues from the likelihood that a rational agent would appreciate that others have needs and values, and acknowledge the part played by the satisfaction of others’ needs in the satisfaction of his or her own needs. Spinoza’s theory is apposite here. Spinoza recognised that other people are important to us and set about deriving an ethics from the substance he often referred to as ‘nature’. The result was a naturalistic ethics—naturalistic because of his non-supernaturalistic interpretation of nature; and because of the emphasis he placed on the explanatory power of causation in his deployment of the principle of sufficient reason. According to Spinoza, a being whose psyche includes the capacity for rational thought realises that its power of acting may be enhanced by other beings and other things. Exemplified, perhaps, by students when they appreciate that teachers have something useful to impart, and people generally when their reliance on environmental circumstances becomes apparent. Rational beings on that account understand that their power of acting is enhanced or facilitated through the enhancement or facilitation of the power of acting enjoyed by other beings. Consequently, rational beings strive to bring into effect conditions that are conducive to the satisfaction of the needs of others as well as their own needs. In other words, consistent with their own interests and with the interests of others: a community of interests, one might say.

Spinoza’s system can be seen as an attempt to reconcile self-interest with ethical life: human behaviour is fundamentally motivated by striving for self-determined action, which may be presumed to arise from self-interest. While that might seem to be an unpromising source for an ethics, Spinoza nevertheless managed to produce one. Spinoza’s was a kind of rationally-based moral egoism,445 in so far as acts that superficially appear to be contrary to one’s interests come to be justified by demonstrating that the acts concerned are or were—all things

445 Such was Midgley’s assessment of Spinoza’s ethics: see *Beast and Man*. Cf. also Hegel, who placed passion between self-interest and behaviour: human activity, he maintained, is influenced primarily and most powerfully by passion, where passion is understood as a force arising from the pursuit of ‘particular interests, special aims, or, if you will, by selfish intentions’ (Hegel quoted, Beiser, pp. 268-269). Hegel was an admirer of Spinoza’s work, and it is easy to see his predecessor’s influence in this idea.
considered—in fact consistent with them.\(^{446}\) The same principle is evident in Hume’s proposition to the effect that obligations should be fulfilled in order to secure the trust of one’s fellow beings.\(^{447}\) because it is in one’s interests to be trusted.\(^{448}\) Cooperation depends on trust;\(^{449}\) and, as Matt Ridley has said, to ‘reap the long-term reward of cooperation may require you to forgo the short-term temptation of self-interest.’\(^{450}\) Self-interest, it might be added, would be served by cooperation, also in the long-term. Therefore, for-my-sake norms would include cooperativeness and trust, and, more generally, reflect a wide array of values that are attuned to the needs of the community. Such needs would range over the complete Maslovian hierarchy and therefore entail the need for homosapient order. Spinoza’s ideas point to the plausibility of for-my-sake humaneness, but they leave open the question of whether for-our-sake humaneness might also be possible. That question will now be addressed.

For-our-sake humaneness is characterised by a higher degree of assimilation of others’ needs and values, relative to that which occurs in for-my-sake humaneness. A for-our-sake agent needs to satisfy others’ needs because others’ needs have in fact contributed to—and become part of—his own set of needs. The agent would have attained Mackie’s second stage of universalisation, and therefore be able to imagine himself placed in the situations that others find

\(^{446}\) Kurt Baier, ‘Egoism’, in Singer (editor): A Companion to Ethics, p. 201. In a review of Matthew J. Kisner’s recent book Spinoza on Human Freedom: Reason Autonomy, and the Good Life, Matthew Homan notes that ‘Kisner locates the chief moral compass in Spinoza in the two “dictates of reason”: (i) seek your own advantage; and (ii) desire nothing for yourself which you do not desire for other men’ (Matthew Homan, in Journal of the History of Philosophy Vol. 50, no. 3 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), p. 460). But the two dictates conflict with one another: how might the second be reconciled with the first? Kisner is seen to reject ‘a purely instrumental interpretation of benevolence’, i.e. we are benevolent because it satisfies my (selfish) ends. Rather, ‘we are neither merely using others when, as good Spinozists, we promote their advantage, nor is our activity on their behalf independent of our own.’ For Kisner, ‘acting for the good of others is constitutive of acting for our own good’ (Homan, p. 460). This is consistent with the notion of humaneness. The idea seems intuitively (and experientially) correct: all of those who take pleasure in helping others would attest it, and I think that may apply to most of us.

\(^{447}\) See Finnis, p. 301.

\(^{448}\) Besides this egoistic perspective, trust also has aspects that are pertinent to social connectedness and aspects of human flourishing: ‘In a basically moral society, trust is an integral part of the social and moral fabric of life,’ and it contributes ‘to one another’s flourishing by affirming each other’s moral worth.’ See Laurence Thomas, ‘Trust, Affirmation, and Moral Character: A Critique of Kantian Morality’, in Flanagan and Rorty (editors): Identity, Character, and Morality: Essays in Moral Psychology, pp. 249-250.

\(^{449}\) Bernard Williams writes, ‘A necessary condition of co-operative activity is trust, where this involves the willingness of one party to rely on another to act in certain ways’ (Truth and Truthfulness, p. 88).

themselves in. Maslovian dichotomy-transcendence would be characteristic of his outlook on the world: the sharp dichotomy between ‘he’ and ‘them’ would be supplanted by a sense of wholeness. On that account, a for-our-sake humane person may be presumed to have a relatively high capacity for assimilation of the needs of others, either innately or because of effort undertaken to attain it. In either case, such a person would deserve the epithet ‘magnanimous’, in the sense of ‘greatness of spirit’ (this is the etymological sense of magnanimity). Magnanimity in turn conjures up notions of human excellence and sheer goodness of character.

Because of its implicit goodness, a for-our-sake life would be a life consistent with the tenets of Aristotelian virtue ethics and Kantian deontology. As Gary Watson explains, virtues ‘are those traits that enable one to live a characteristically human life, or to live in accordance with one’s nature as a human being’.

Virtues are also described as ‘human excellences,’ not dissimilarly to Philippa Foot’s notion of ‘natural goodness’. With regard to Kantian deontology, a for-our-sake agent would respect the values of other people. He would be unlikely to treat other people as means to the attainment of his own ends. Indeed, others’ ends are now his ends as well: a small ‘kingdom of ends’ would have come into being, as envisaged by Kant. Respect for the dignity of others would be likely, in the Kantian sense of dignity, i.e. irreplaceable or unique individuality.

For-your-sakeness is the third mode of humaneness. It is characterised by an agent’s replacing his or her own needs with those of a respondent. At first blush such a move would seem improbable, but it happens. Parents in famine-stricken lands who forgo food for the sake of their children would be an example;

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452 A great deal of the present thesis has been taken up with the argument that homosapient order constitutes the end (objective) of morality. Homosapient order is something that is aimed at, albeit in the guise of satisfying our various needs. If the argument to this stage is valid, then moral behaviour can be understood to culminate (end) in an increase in homosapient order. In its accord with the notion of end, the order-based theory of morality asserts its consequentialist credentials.

453 A kingdom of ends is one aspect of the Categorical Imperative.

454 Psychological altruism as defined by Kitcher corresponds to for-our-sake humaneness and to for-your-sake humaneness. Kitcher maintains that the interests of others may be adopted by an agent with more or less intensity (p. 23). I would say, less for a for-our-sake humane agent and more for a for-your-sake agent. Altruistic responses by an individual may vary, depending on who and what are involved.
more generally, sacrifices are frequently made for family members. Not only family members, however, as demonstrated by ‘the custom of the sea’. According to the custom, shipwrecked sailors faced with starvation choose to offer themselves as food for their crewmates, and the person to be killed and eaten is selected by drawing lots (as is the person who must do the killing). Perhaps the most famous example of the custom is one that involved the ship *Essex*, which sank after being rammed by a whale early in the nineteenth century. The incident served as inspiration for Herman Melville’s novel *Moby Dick*. The *Essex*’s crew took to whaleboats in an attempt to reach land, many thousands of kilometres away. After several weeks and in dire straits, the men in one of the boats chose to exercise the custom of the sea. A young man was consequently killed and eaten. (Another who later died of natural causes also served as food for the survivors.)455 By choosing to abide by the custom, at the risk of their lives and the possibility of having to do something they would normally find abhorrent, sailors effectively forfeit their own needs for the sake of others. Shades of for-my-sake and for-our-sake humaneness might also be detected, because of the pay-off for the participant in terms of survival chances, but the high probability of becoming either the person killed or the killer inclines me towards the more extreme for-your-sake mode. The willingness shown by many people to make the supreme sacrifice suggests that the need for humane assimilation of others’ needs runs very deep indeed.

A question that might be asked is whether one’s mode of humaneness is fixed, i.e. invariable for the duration of one’s mature life-span. This would be the same as asking whether one’s character is variable; for example, between good and better, or better and worse, and so on. Fairly clearly, variations may occur. Augustine’s conversion from licentiousness to saintliness would be an example. How might variations be brought about? A short answer would be by means of changes to any of the determinants of character: i.e., very broadly, changes at the level of

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455 Endorsement of the custom of the sea by participants in it accords with the legal position on the matter. The *Essex* incident passed without legal sanction, unlike another nineteenth century shipwreck, that of the *Mignonette*. In the latter case, some of the crew of a lifeboat chose to kill and eat a member who had lapsed into unconsciousness after falling ill. Whereas the actions of the *Essex* men were based on the acquiescence of all involved, those of the *Mignonette* were not. Upon rescue, the *Mignonette* perpetrators were charged with murder and received life sentences: necessity was deemed insufficient justification for what they did, which seems right. The sentences were subsequently commuted to six months imprisonment.
biology or psychology, changes to one’s social circumstances, and changes of cultural setting. Biologically and psychologically, a once-gentle person afflicted by dementia may become violent. Socially, a person known for her gregariousness may become morose, even vindictive, after losing her job. Culturally, brighter educational opportunities may enable someone to develop a greater awareness of the interconnectedness of things and their needs. I want to dwell on this last matter for a moment, for it leads into the next topic for discussion, namely whether humaneness, when understood as a need, constitutes grounds for optimism with regard to the propagation of morality.

A heightened awareness of interconnectedness in the world would conceivably foster imaginative insight into others’ problems, i.e. the kind of imaginative insight spoken of by Isaiah Berlin (see footnote, p. 91). Imaginative insight is akin to empathy—it involves the emotions—and were it to eventuate the emotions would also be elevated: emotions ranging across the entirety of Spinoza’s spectrum, from joy to sadness. Joy, such as the esteem that is elicited by evidence of supererogatory goodness; sadness, such as the disgust that is evoked by acts of extreme cruelty: emulation might follow the first, and amelioration the second. Also joy commingled with sadness, such as the widespread generosity with which people sometimes respond to those affected by natural disasters. For-my-sake humaneness might serve as a stage for the development of for-our-sake and for-your-sake humaneness, although some people could by-pass the first and go directly to the second or third. But none of the modes entails that another’s need-driven morally wrong or evil behaviour should be condoned. In the same way that we justifiably feel ashamed of some of the things we have done, the misdeeds of others may also be justifiably condemned.

**Humaneness and Hope**

Humaneness as I have defined it could entitle one to believe that morally commendable behaviour will inevitably become more widespread. Understood as B-need, humaneness would have to be regarded as basic, i.e. a need that is essential to humanness as presently constituted. That being the case, the order-based theory of morality can be understood to imply that decency and goodness

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456 Benevolence appears to be consequential upon education in Spinoza’s ethics. Education was also seen by Plato to be a key to orderliness of the soul.
should prevail over crassness and evil. However, since B-needs are the highest needs on Maslow’s scale, lower-order needs such as the need for homeostasis and the need for safety would have to be met to the satisfaction of agents before the need for humaneness could attain full motivational force. Although strife may have to grow to calamitous proportions before humaneness becomes totally dissipated, the needs of others are unlikely to be uppermost in the minds of people on the verge of starvation or in some other kind of extreme need. On that account, inequities such as grossly disproportionate distributions of the world’s goods between nations and between people within nations would pose a threat to the propagation of humaneness—whereupon grounds become evident for tempering the optimism I have just proposed.

I am not suggesting that everyone whose lower-order needs are met would necessarily become humane. There have been plenty of malefactors who have not been victims of deprivation, and there probably always will be. However, what I am suggesting is that more goodness, more homosapient order, and more humaneness would exist if the level of satisfaction of lower-order needs were universally raised, i.e. at the societal or community level. Although individual Maslovian self-actualisers are by definition humane regardless of their circumstances, taking care of any unmet lower-order needs could enable them to spread their beneficence over a wider range of respondents. From the opposite perspective, malignant self-actualisers—those whose characters incline them towards morally condemnable behaviour—may have less cause to inflict harm. Since political will and action would likely be required to redress inequities such as those mentioned, the Aristotelian continuity between ethics and politics again comes into view. I said earlier that I would not be pursuing the putative continuity at any length, but a few words on it here would not be astray.

457 This assumes that the species continues to evolve in the same direction as hitherto. As Kitcher makes clear, we have not always been the moral beings that we are now, from which it follows that the direction of evolution to date has been from less morality towards more morality. But the direction could conceivably change, if by some chance inhumaneness were found to possess a selective advantage. Along with moral sceptics, the countless victims of the strife that has pervaded the world ever since the beginning of recorded history may well doubt whether goodness will ever hold sway. But the ideas of Plato, Hume and others that I have recounted, along with innovations such as the UDHR, are suggestive of the existence of a fundamental goodness of human nature, and of the possibility of its gaining the upper hand over our similarly fundamental susceptibility to condemnable behaviour. The path to humaneness is not without obstacles.
In line with Isaiah Berlin’s description of moral values as ultimate ends (see footnote, p. 7), political action could perhaps be conceived of as a means of achieving such ends; indeed, politics is commonly understood to mean precisely that. Now to describe grossly disproportionate distributions as inequitable is obviously to invoke a moral value, namely the value of fairness. In cases of extreme inequity, political action could take the form of rebellion by ‘have-nots’, or perhaps initiation and acceptance by ‘haves’ of legislation that redirects some of their property. David Braybrooke’s connection of social policy to needs is apposite here (see p. 70): redistributive legislation would be an instance of social policy. In this quite minimal sense, I think Aristotle was correct in his claim of continuity.

Legislation under the auspices of politics comes with reasons for acting (or not acting) in certain ways. ‘That is what the law stipulates’, we might say—we understand that transgressions, if detected, will be punished. Morality is also concerned with understanding reasons for acting (or not acting) in certain ways. As Philippa Foot says, morality ‘serves to produce and prevent action, because the understanding of reasons can do that.’\textsuperscript{458} In the case of morality, however, a transgression (or what would amount to such if a particular course of action were to be adopted) will always be known to a competent agent, regardless of whether anyone else knows about it. For competent agents, therefore, moral transgressions will always be subject to ‘punishment’ (for example, in the form of feelings of guilt, shame, or remorse). Moral transgressions would be understood to consist in the violation of the needs of others, and our understanding that this is the case would provide us with rational justification for acting in a morally commendable manner. But that is not the whole story. While such understanding can prevent us from straying, we might also be inspired more directly to seek the path of virtue; to find a way, say, between Aristotle’s vices of excess and defect. How so? Humane prescriptions for conduct provide the key.

\textbf{8.4 The Nature of Humane Prescriptiveness}

According to Philip Kitcher, the moral philosopher must be prepared to meet what he refers to as ‘the sceptical challenge.’ Sceptical challenges are issued in the

\footnote{Foot, p. 18.}
form of ‘why should I be bound by a particular kind of morality?’, or perhaps by any kind of morality whatsoever. Kitcher maintains that such challenges should be envisaged as ‘posed by ordinary people, whose socialization is reasonably effective and who feel the tug of ethical commands.’

‘Ordinary people’, I suggest, are those who tend more towards Maslovian self-actualisation than the malignant variety; they are the predominantly humane people who set our standards of good and right, as well as challenging them from time to time. Kitcher, like Foot, acknowledges that deontological prescriptions provide an effective measure against the sceptical challenge. How might an order-based ethicist deal with the sceptical challenge? The answer has two parts: first through the issuance of practicable rules of conduct; second by providing rational justification for adhering to the rules. The first is the subject of the present section; the second will be dealt with in the next section.

Moral rule-setting is concerned with the kinds of behaviour that should be either promoted or prohibited. It is a matter of what is permissible and impermissible, notions that were first encountered in the discussion of moral commendability in Chapter 2. The issue there was one of ‘moral breathing space’, with consequentialists allegedly being overloaded with obligations and left with insufficient breathing space by the permissibility option. Taking that to be the case, that which is permissible may best be defined in terms of impermissibility—anything that is not impermissible is permissible. This would be consistent with the negative definition of the good (that which is not evil) proposed by Aquinas and endorsed by Foot, which I adapted for the purposes of formulating an order-based definition of commendability (i.e. that which is not condemnable). But specification of the impermissible (and therefore permissible) may not be easy. Even something seemingly as straightforward as ‘I must not kill’ is fraught with difficulties, as will now be shown.

We generally prefer that other things not be killed—we chase the cat away if we see it stalking a bird. Some people carry the tendency to extremes; for example Jain monks in India, who wear face-masks to prevent the destruction of microbes through inhalation. But there is a deep irony in our reluctance to kill, because all animal life depends on death. We rely for our existence on the death of organisms

459 Kitcher, p. 279.
below us on the food chain—similarly for every other link in the chain apart from most kinds of flora. To seek the death of at least some organisms is natural to us. Why, then, do we shoo the cat away? After all, it is only acting in accordance with its nature. Might it have something to do with the fact that we seem to be the only kinds of creatures with an awareness of the death that awaits us? Susanne K. Langer observed that such knowledge is a major difference between us and other animals; the latter certainly seek to avoid death but they have no knowledge of its inevitability.\textsuperscript{460} Such knowledge could reinforce the repugnance that the thought of death usually elicits, and prompt us to prevent it wherever practicable. These are only surmises, of course, and they need not be carried any further here.\textsuperscript{461}

Notwithstanding the difficulties involved in rule-setting, a humane person will understand that some things are condemnable and will avoid doing them. As far as the order-based theory is concerned, condemnable consists in voluntary behaviour that detracts from the satisfaction of the basic needs of others, when those needs are more basic than those of the agent. Rules may therefore take the form of ‘I must not do X unless Y’; for example, ‘I must not kill (or condone killing) except in dire circumstances’ (harking back to the custom of the sea). Of course, ‘dire circumstances’ would almost certainly be defined differently by different people at different times. I realise that qualified rules are not entirely satisfactory, and perhaps leave too much moral breathing space; but they may be the best we can do, given the multiplicity of situations and circumstances anyone is likely to encounter in the course of a full life. Instead of ‘rules’, ‘guidelines’ could be a better way of describing humane prescriptions: this would be consistent with the notion of principled consideration.

Finally, might there be candidates for unqualified rules? If there are, I suspect they would be few in number. ‘I must not be cruel’ could be one. As defined by Judith Shklar, cruelty consists in ‘the willful inflicting of physical pain on a


\textsuperscript{461} Another possible reason for frustrating the cat in its endeavours is worth noting. Pain-prevention could conceivably be more important to us than pleasure-attainment: this would be consistent with the Aquinas/Foot position on the negative definition of good. The bird’s potential pain carries more weight for us than the cat’s pleasure.
weaker being in order to cause anguish and fear, and would on that account encompass torture, which is widely condemned. The stalking cat would be excused on the grounds that its objective is not the bird’s anguish and fear. By contrast, human beings who deliberately inflict pain in order to obtain pleasure, or without any foreseeable offsetting benefit to the respondent (such as might be expected of the dentist’s drill), would certainly deserve censure. Griffin asks, ‘When does one establish that I had a reason not to be cruel to you?’ And he answers, ‘My reason comes partly from inevitable features of our conceptual framework: my seeing you as a person involves my accepting that there are certain basic values at stake in your life, and my seeing them as values produces a reason for me to respect them.’ Substitute needs for values, and Griffin’s words sum up very accurately what humaneness consists in.

Humane prescriptions relating to conduct can be understood as guidelines and rules set down by a person of good character, i.e. a Maslovian self-actualiser. Humane guidelines and rules will recognise the rights of others, such as those specified in the UDHR; they will be grounded in our basic needs, with the need for homosapient order being the most basic of all. Humaneness of character answers the consequentialist question of ‘what kind of person should I be?’ Humane rules and guidelines issuing from a humane character answer the deontologist question ‘what ought to be done?’ The two questions, and the responses to them, are clearly interdependent.

Prescriptiveness requires that a necessary connection be made between moral judgement and action. In spite of its non-deontological character, the order-based theory is equipped to provide backing for guidelines and rules of conduct through the posited relationship between needs and rights. Rights are things that are right to respect, so it is right to act in accordance with them. This brings me

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463 Cruelty requires little or no deliberation in order for most of us to reach a judgement. In a discussion of cruelty, James Griffin writes, ‘[t]here are prudential values and disvalues so basic, so centrally embedded in our conceptual framework—pain, for instance—that the idea of deliberation to reach the conclusion that it is a value or disvalue does not fit the case ….. A moral notion such as “cruel”, being conceptually so close to “pain”, inherits much of its obviousness’ (Griffin, p. 125).
464 Griffin, p. 125.
465 Foot, p. 18.
the second issue that was identified at the beginning of the section, namely rational justification.

8.5 Rational Justification of Humane Behaviour

Philippa Foot imagines a sceptic asking: ‘what if I do not care about being a good human being,’\(^466\) or, as she prefers to express it, ‘the question is not whether we have reason to aim at being good human beings, but rather whether we have reason to aim at those things at which good human beings must aim ….’\(^467\) From my point of view, the word ‘must’ points to how the question, in either form, might be answered. ‘Must’ implies need: for example, we must have food in order to survive; food is therefore needed by us. So we get back to needs; ultimately, I would say, to the need for homosapient order, which issues in the need for humaneness as well as lower order needs such as the need for food. Perhaps the question asked by Foot should be envisaged as emanating from a person of bad character, since it is hard to imagine why a virtuous person would ever ask it; except, perhaps in a rhetorical sense, or in the role of devil’s advocate.

Needs are reflected in values. We value the satisfaction of our needs, so rational beings such as ourselves may generally be expected to act in ways that are consistent with our needs. We act rationally when we attempt to satisfy our needs; that is to say, it is rationally justifiable for us to attempt to satisfy our need for homosapient order. By virtue of their registration in values, needs influence our decisions with regard to choices between alternative courses of action. In other words, and in the terminology of this thesis, needs and values are inescapably implicated in morally classifiable behaviour. Individual needs and values tend to become embedded in social standards and rules of behaviour; i.e. in norms. As mentioned in Chapter 2, some norms are moral norms, i.e. standards whose breach attracts moral censure.\(^468\) Norms affect behaviour for reasons ranging from avoidance of censure to decency and basic goodness.

How individual needs and values become embedded in norms is a complex issue, but there is plenty of evidence to suggest that the embedding happens. The case studies discussed in the previous chapter might be cited in this regard. All of the

\(^466\) Foot, p. 52.  
\(^467\) Foot, p. 53.  
\(^468\) To use the same example from Chapter 2, as distinct from rules of etiquette.
infractions recounted there attracted opprobrium that was both explainable and justifiable in terms of needs—or, more accurately, in terms of the relative positions (and weights) of the needs of agent and respondent on Maslow’s scale. The transition from values to norms could perhaps be traced to genetic similarities across the human species and cultural similarities within social groups. Accordingly, a great deal of similarity will be found between the things that people value, especially if one’s inspection is confined to a particular culture and a particular time. But the same kinds of basic needs have long been part of the human condition. For example, the need for esteem has had very wide application ever since the earliest recorded times. The need for esteem can also be viewed as the need to avoid dis-esteem, or, as it might be expressed, the need to avoid censure, including moral censure. The need to avoid moral censure could be regarded as a negative means of embedding moral norms. I will now suggest how the embedding of such norms might also be given a positive face.

Norms based solely on the needs and values of agents would not be morally credible; indeed, they could hardly be called moral norms. However, by valuing the needs of others, the satisfaction of others’ needs in effect becomes a need on the part of the agent—as I have said, or as Midgley has said, values register needs. Should that occur, an agent would be rationally justified in seeking to satisfy the needs of others. Even so, an agent who is heedless of the needs of others might sometimes—perhaps often—engage in behaviour that is ostensibly moral, i.e. superficially commendable. Any behaviour that does not impinge on others’ needs would pass at least one test of commendability.

How might the needs of others be assimilated by an agent? The answer I have proposed is: by way of humaneness. I have argued that assimilation of the needs of others by a humane agent itself constitutes a need—a Maslovian B-need. In its service as a need, humaneness itself constitutes a source of rational justification for adhering to any norms that emanate from it. I have also argued that humaneness comes in varying degrees, ‘for-my-sake’, ‘for-our-sake’, and ‘for-your-sake’. In this way the order-based theory provides rational justification of prescriptions for conduct.

469 ‘Assimilate’ is used here in the sense ascribed to it by Bohm, namely “to digest” or make into a comprehensive and inseparable whole (which includes oneself.” See Bohm, p. 178.
To complete this chapter I wish to examine how the concept of humaneness deals with three problems that were outlined earlier: the first concerns what appeared to be undecidable ‘commendable or condemnable’ cases, as depicted in Table 1 (p. 140), including the ‘lost in the desert’ case study; the second is the ‘unforeseen consequences conundrum’, and the third is the problem of ‘unconsummated intentions’. The problem of variable ordering of hierarchies of needs will be discussed in Section 10.3 under the heading ‘Moral Relativism’.

8.6 Solutions to the Utilitarian Problems

Commendable or Condemnable

If the needs of agent and respondent are so finely balanced that they are practically equal in weight, and if the agent’s action impacts adversely on the needs of the respondent, then, from a utilitarian perspective, the order-based ethicist appears to be stranded in no-man’s land, without grounds for determining whether the act should be commended or condemned. Humaneness provides the necessary grounds. The act would be condemned if it is contrary to the tenets of humaneness: i.e., if it proceeds from unprincipled consideration (or perhaps no consideration whatsoever), if it is characterised by intolerance, or if it is devoid of empathy. If it is none of these things, then the act would be commendable. Similar considerations could help decide problematic cases such as the naval rescue that was discussed earlier, where colleagues of the rescuers were saved and some asylum-seekers were not. Were the actions of the rescuers in violation of any of the stated tenets? Only a detailed analysis of the evidence could tell whether they were breached, but the stated norms of humaneness would at least provide criteria on which a judgement might be based.

On p. 141 two men were found to be stranded in the desert with a limited supply of food. One of them appropriates all of the food for his exclusive use and decamps. Because the needs of the two men were identical, the order-based theory seemed incapable of determining whether the act was commendable or condemnable. But we would surely want to say that it deserves to be condemned. From the discussion of humaneness it can now be seen how condemnation would arise from the theory. As well as infringing the homeostatic need of the abandoned person, the runaway also infringes his own need for humaneness. This
of course assumes that he is fundamentally a Maslovian self-actualiser, and that his action is out of character. If that were not the case—if he was predominantly a malignant self-actualiser, i.e. a person of bad character—then the negative effect of his self-actualising behaviour (i.e. his evil, see p. 131) would offset whatever increase in homeostatic order he personally managed to achieve. However, on the assumption that he was usually inclined towards goodness, his action would be contrary to his need to be humane. Remorse would probably be a consequence, as well as the likely death of his erstwhile companion. Homosapient order would diminish across all parties involved in the incident, regardless of the character of the perpetrator. Appropriation of the food would be morally condemnable.

The Unforeseen Consequences Conundrum

The unforeseen consequences conundrum consists in basic needs that are unintentionally and adversely impacted upon by morally classifiable behaviour. They may be impacted upon for any of three reasons: they are either unforeseeable, or unforeseen, or foreseen and ignored because they are thought to be trivial. Principled consideration by a humane agent would mitigate the latter two. In the earlier discussion I used Parfit’s overfishing example to illustrate the problem. The problems of overfishing have been widely publicised. If Parfit’s fishermen had taken notice of the issues, and perhaps discussed them among themselves, they might have changed their practices—they might even have passed on their new awareness of ecological interconnectedness to their children. Unforeseeable adverse consequences would seem to be simply unfortunate; but, again, what was once unforeseeable might become foreseeable if one were to think carefully about the relevant issues. And thinking carefully about relevant issues is a feature of principled consideration; i.e., of humaneness.

Unconsummated Intentions

The problem in this case was that the utilitarian facet of the order-based theory provided insufficient grounds (and perhaps no grounds at all) for equating the morality of unconsummated intentions with the morality of the intended acts. A planned intention that fails in its intent would seem to have little effect on the level of homosapient order in the world. A conspiracy to murder may have no effect on the intended target until murder is actually attempted or carried out. And
it is here that an order-based theorist must look beyond the theory’s utilitarianism: the issue must be confronted squarely from a character-based perspective, specifically on the basis of humaneness. The conspirators violate the basic human need for humaneness, and it is on that footing that the order-based theory provides an answer to the moral condemnability of the action (or non-action). Similarly, but conversely, an intended beneficent action that fails in its attempt would be praiseworthy. A person who dives into dangerous surf to rescue a child who has fallen into the water would deserve moral commendation, regardless of whether the rescue proves successful.

8.7 Conclusion

If humaneness is as I have described it, where is the evidence that it exists, or that it is even possible? Regardless of whether the logic of the metaethical theory is considered sound, humaneness will be better demonstrated by deeds than by theories. Such was Wittgenstein’s position on ethics in the *Tractatus*, where he also observed that that the mere existence of language in the world demonstrates that language is possible. Analogously, the existence of humaneness in the world would suffice to show that it is possible. Just one humane act by someone at some time would be proof of its existence, and most of us would admit the possibility of humaneness on that basis. Exemplars could be cited, for example Spinoza, who personified it in his humble way of life and steadfast advocacy of reason. Other figures who come to mind are the Buddha, Albert Schweitzer and Desmond Tutu. But the order-based theory requires that there be more than isolated instances of humaneness; indeed, far more—it requires that it be the condition of the multitude of ordinary folk. What evidence can be brought to bear in that regard?

For an answer to the last question, I think we may refer to the same kinds—indeed the same set—of evidence that was presented in previous chapters for the moral relevance of needs, and the (generally) natural goodness of human character. Many thinkers—from Plato through to Kant, Hume and Maslow—have concluded that there is within humankind a preponderance of good over bad. Further, and perhaps more convincingly, the sheer existence of the UDHR is strongly indicative of a general preference among people for the right and the good as distinct from the wrong and the bad—and of our need for humaneness. A cynic, or moral sceptic, might chime in here with the contention that while an individual
may well prefer to be treated equitably and kindly, that would not preclude him from holding that everyone else may be treated inhumanely. And there is probably nothing in a logical sense that would rule out such an inference. But if the individual were to take a pragmatic stance, then he would surely see that equity and kindness must be reciprocated: if they are not, they could vanish altogether. The pragmatic stance would conceivably result in the inculcation of a Kantian maxim, and would at least get as far as for-my-sake humaneness.

This completes Part III of the thesis. The order-based theory of morality has been seen to give rise to a dual-faceted ethics, one facet being of a utilitarian nature and the other being character-based. From a utilitarian perspective, our need for homosapient order motivates our morally classifiable behaviour, i.e. behaviour that is either morally commendable or morally condemnable depending on the effect that it has on the needs of others. From a character-based perspective, our need for homosapient order manifests as a need for humaneness in people who are fundamentally concerned with justice, i.e. those who tend towards Maslovian self-actualisation as distinct from malignant self-actualisation. As well as being motivated by their own need for homosapient order, malignant self-actualisers may also act from a need to inflict homosapient disorder on others. Humane behaviour is behaviour that respects the needs of others; it is behaviour that is consistent with norms of thoughtfulness, tolerance, empathy, and reciprocity. In effect, humane agents make the needs of others their own, thereby providing them with rational justification for acting in accordance with humane norms, since it is rationally justifiable for us to attempt to satisfy our needs.

The fourth and final part of the thesis follows. It begins with an investigation of the ontological status of homosapient order.
Part IV: FOUNDATIONS, CHALLENGES, CONCLUSION

9: FOUNDATIONALIST CREDENTIALS

9.1 To Ground or Not to Ground?

In this chapter I will attempt to demonstrate that homosapient order provides grounds on which to base a secular morality, and that it therefore serves to satisfy the philosophical need that was spoken of in Chapter 1. To that end, I will argue for the reality of homosapient order. The reality of homosapient order will be established in a roundabout way: it will be shown to be the conceptual counterpart of something that is integral to our living experience, namely homosapient disorder. By virtue of its form as a concept, I will maintain that homosapient order constitutes the basis of a viable ontological commitment. According to Quine, ‘[o]ne’s ontology is basic to the conceptual scheme by which he interprets all experiences, even the most commonplace ones.’ Moral experiences assuredly qualify as ‘commonplace’ experiences, from which it follows that clarification of one’s ontology, which is a branch of metaphysics, would help one understand what morality is about. At least, I believe that it follows. By being the subject of an ontological commitment, homosapient order assumes the mantle of an operative reality; or, perhaps, of an ‘as if’ reality. Before getting started, there is a question that needs to be confronted, for a sceptic may well ask: why must there be a ground for morality?

From the perspective of the present thesis, an appropriate answer to the question just posed would be—because it responds to the philosophical need of metaphysically inclined secularists. Not all secularists are so inclined. Richard Rorty, for instance, has maintained that metaphysics lapsed into unpopularity when historians from the time of Hegel (i.e., early in the nineteenth century) drew a line under history and culture, and asserted that we need go no deeper for an explanation of human nature. According to Rorty, historians divide into two camps, depending on their views on the relationship between personal

471 See Rorty, Contingency, irony, and solidarity, p. xiii.
perfectibility and socialisation. On the one hand, there are those who reject socialisation as something ‘antithetical to something deep within us and instead advance the cause of self-creation and private autonomy.’ On the other hand, there are those who consider the desire for personal perfection to be ‘infected with “irrationalism” and “aestheticism” and instead seek the development of “a more just and free human community.” Those in the first group (of which Nietzsche is a member) are said by Rorty to believe there is ‘something common to all human beings—for example, the will to power, or libidinal impulses.’ The theory presented in this thesis is heavily dependent on the notion of a set of needs (including the need for homosapient order) that is common to humankind; in which case, the theory could reasonably be regarded as consistent with the first sense of ‘historicist’. While that may be so, the kind of order relevant to morality has also been found to have a strong social element, so the order-based theory could also be regarded as consistent with the other sense of the term. But the main point that I wish to make with respect to historicism is that the history and status of homosapient order could well constitute a very important aspect of human history and culture—even to the extent of informing and conditioning whatever might be understood to lie in the region above the aforementioned ‘line’.

Like Rorty, although for different reasons, Philippa Foot also opposes foundationalism. Consequentialism in general and utilitarianism in particular are said by Foot to have as their foundation ‘a proposition linking goodness of action in one way or another to the goodness of states of affairs.’ But she rejects this in no uncertain manner: ‘there is no room for such a foundational proposition in the theory of natural normativity.’ The basis of her objection appears to be that mismatches can occur between good states of affairs and natural goodness. She uses the example of pestilential creatures such as mosquitoes: for them, natural good in the form of exponential breeding would hardly be describable as a good state of affairs (for us and other targets of their stings). If that is a correct reading, then I think the order-based theory can meet the objection. According to the theory, morally relevant states of affairs are those induced by a morally relevant

472 Rorty, p. xiv.
473 Rorty, p. xiv.
474 Rorty, p. xiii.
475 Foot, p. 49. Foot’s italics.
agent; i.e., by a human being. But Foot insists, the ‘idea of good and better states of affairs does not belong to the basic structure of the evaluation of human action ….‘\textsuperscript{476} My thesis attempts to show otherwise.

Metaphysics is concerned with things of which no direct experiential knowledge is attainable by us. In other words, metaphysical pursuit is of an \textit{a priori} nature, but not necessarily \textit{a priori} to the exclusion of \textit{a posteriori}. Indeed, since \textit{a priori} is a term used to describe knowledge that is attained by thought alone, without input from experience, one may well wonder whether such a thing is possible. Human beings inevitably experience things, and consequently acquire knowledge in an \textit{a posteriori} manner. Knowledge derived experientially would very likely influence the way we think about things that are inaccessible to direct experience.

But many people nevertheless think (and wonder) about experientially inaccessible things, for example ‘first causes’, and the ‘true nature’ of things. Speculation with regard to first causes is prompted by questions along the lines of ‘how did the universe and life within it originate?’ and may lead to such notions as ‘God as uncaused cause’, as promulgated by Aristotle. With regard to the nature of things, Kant argued that the cognitive equipment possessed by human beings necessarily conditions the way in which we perceive and think about things, and that the true nature of the objects of perception will therefore always elude us—hence his insistence on the distinction between unknowable-unknown \textit{noumena} and knowable-and-sometimes-known \textit{phenomena}. Clearly, if metaphysics were solely concerned with \textit{noumena}, then, on Kant’s thesis, it would be a futile exercise—as indeed Kant maintained it is, in his \textit{Critique of Pure Reason}. However, notwithstanding his disavowal of metaphysical inquiry into \textit{noumena}, Kant himself persisted with metaphysical inquiry of the kind I am interested in: i.e., in discovering and understanding the foundations of morality.

I will lead into the argument for moral foundations with some ideas from Spinoza. I have acknowledged Spinoza to be one of my main guiding lights, so his views are of interest; especially in their opposition to some of the ideas I am promoting. Spinoza endeavoured to locate the grounds of an ethics of benevolence in

\textsuperscript{476} Foot, p. 49.
something other than the will of a benign deity. But the ‘something other’ for him was certainly not order.

9.2 Spinoza on the Foundation of Ethics and the Reality of Order

Spinoza’s metaphysics centres on substance monism, according to which all things are one, and things that are perceived to be separate and distinct entities are in fact modes of the single substance. Human beings are one kind of mode of substance, a kind specially equipped with a capacity for reason. Reason enables us to attain some understanding of reality. Such understanding would include coming to grips with the principle of conatus: as noted earlier, conatus signifies that everyone and everything strives for survival and an increase in power. Power, Spinoza maintained, derives from the possession of adequate ideas with regard to the causes of things. From there comes the crucial step to an ethics. Having attained an understanding of our true nature as modes of the single substance, it becomes impossible that we should wish to harm other modes, whence benevolence. To harm others would, in effect, amount to self-harm, which would be contrary to the principle of conatus.

Although Spinoza’s ethics is specifically concerned with interpersonal relationships, its embrace might be seen to encompass entities other than other human beings, since all things are modes of substance—grounds, perhaps, for extending the range of ethics to objects other than human beings.477 There are also consequences for education. Since reason provides the basis of benevolence, it would be to everyone’s benefit if reason in the population were increased as far as possible. All in all, Spinoza’s is a profoundly naturalistic478 solution to the problem of how ethics might be grounded in metaphysics. Although his metaphysics explicitly emanates from an entity referred to as ‘God’, the deity in his system is effectively everything that exists, and could only be said to provide the inspiration for an ethics by virtue of the interconnectedness of things and our

477 But that is another story, not to be pursued here.
478 ‘Naturalistic’ because of Spinoza’s overriding concern with the principle of sufficient reason, which Morris R. Cohen formulates as follows: ‘Everything is connected in definite ways with definite other things, so that its full nature is not revealed except by its position and relations within a system.’ See ‘The Metaphysics of Reason and Scientific Method’ in American Philosophical Naturalism in the Twentieth Century, edited by John Ryder (New York: Prometheus Books, 1994), p. 250.
understanding of the connections. In Spinoza’s system, there is no omnipotent, omniscient creator from whom an ethics has been received. However, because of the doubtful (modal) status of individual human beings, Spinoza’s substance monism might be considered too high a price to pay for a link between metaphysics and ethics. The objective of the present chapter is to demonstrate that homosapient order provides the required link. Spinoza would certainly have rejected any such connection, because, in his view, order is not real; and if order is not real, in some sense of the term ‘real’, then it is hard to see how homosapient order could perform any kind of ontological service.

According to Spinoza, order is imagined when we project our predilection for order onto external phenomena. Justice, fairness and honour, and order itself, are all said by Spinoza to be human constructions, and derivations from human nature. Specifically with regard to order, Spinoza avowed that ‘because those who do not understand the nature of things, but only imagine them, affirm nothing concerning things, and take the imagination for the intellect, they firmly believe, in their ignorance of things and of their own nature, that there is order in things.’

In response to that, I would suggest that the very existence (i.e. reality) of things-plural could be called into question by Spinoza’s substance monism. If the singular substance is the only thing to which thingness may legitimately be attributed, then there would be no other things in respect of which prioritisation (i.e. ordering) could occur. In a rather convoluted way, Spinoza’s ontology could be held to be consistent with his denial of the reality of order: a Spinozist might even derive the denial from the ontology. However, I will soon argue for an ontology that is inconsistent with substance monism, and must reject the argument from Spinoza’s ontology.

Whether Spinoza was entirely consistent with regard to the unreality of order might also be questioned. For instance, he can be found maintaining that ‘the order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things.’ According to him, thought always runs in parallel with physical objects. The theory is known as ‘parallelism’, and Spinoza promoted a very strict version of it: neither thought nor extended beings were believed by him to be

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479 The Ethics, 1app3.
480 The Ethics, 2p7.
explainable in terms of the other. In other words, the causal chains that give rise both to thought and to physical objects are totally independent of one other. Now, if reality were accorded to the modes of the all-encompassing substance, instead of confining it to substance as I did a moment ago, and if the things that Spinoza speaks of here are regarded as modes, then the ‘order and connection’ between the things (as distinct from our ideas about order) would also be real: his parallelism would demand as much.

Further, among the infinite modes of substance proposed by Spinoza were the laws of nature. Laws of nature can be thought of in two senses: on the one hand, as human constructs; on the other hand, as real relationships (probably causal) between real things. In either sense, they are indicative of order. Laws of nature as we formulate them are generalisations with respect to real things and the relations between them. Albert Einstein’s $E = mc^2$ will no longer have anyone to reflect on it after the human species has become extinct, but energy and matter will continue to behave in the manner described by the equation (or perhaps in accordance with a later and better account of the physics involved). By referring to laws of nature as modes of substance, Spinoza was presumably thinking of them in an objectively real sense, rather than human constructs. If that is so, then his ascription of unreality to order would be questionable.

Laws of nature might amount in the first instance to beliefs or conceptions distilled from perceptions of physical orderliness: planetary movements, seasonal variations in the climate, patterns of generation and degeneration, and so forth. Whether there are things in nature that correspond to the beliefs is the point at issue. Spinozists would say there are not, but I will now argue otherwise.

**9.3 What is Real?**

What does reality consist of? Many answers have been proposed. The issues are complex, and I can only provide the briefest of sketches. I begin with an account of the opposition between two principal streams of ontology, *thing-based* versus *stuff-based*.482

481 ‘All rational beings’ would probably be preferable to ‘human species’, since other species that are able to comprehend such things may eventually evolve. Furthermore, other such beings may already exist elsewhere in the universe.

482 The discussion is based on Theodore Sider’s *Four Dimensionalism: An Ontology of Persistence and Time* (New York: Clarendon Press, 2003 [first published 2001]).
The dispute between the stated ontologies centres on the question of when fundamental reality is thought to become individuated, i.e., it is a dispute about wholes and parts. An extreme stuff-based ontologist would insist that only one individual exists: namely, the stuff of which reality is composed. Spinoza’s metaphysics of substance monism is of this kind—all things were believed by him to be one, while things that are commonly perceived to be separate and distinct entities were seen as modes of the single substance. Extreme thing-based ontologists would conversely hold that reality consists in the multitude of bits (for example sub-atomic particles) of which aggregates are composed: such ontologists deny that aggregates of any kind are real, even though we talk—mistakenly—about them as if they were. A less extreme stuff-based ontologist would grant that stuff can credibly be thought of as being divided into assemblages that can be referred to as ‘things’. A moderate thing-based ontologist would acknowledge that fundamental bits invariably merge to form composites: any one ‘bit’ can be a part of an array of wholes. The less extreme versions of the two ontologies therefore converge on one another.

My commitment is to the point of convergence; in other words, to the view that there is more than one thing in the world, where ‘thing’ consists of a portion of stuff. The phrase ‘portion of stuff’ comes from Quine, and my commitment is based on Quine’s ontology. Why Quine’s?—basically because of its austerity. As Chris Swoyer and Francesco Orilia have said, there is a fundamental ontological trade-off which ‘reflects the perennial tension between explanatory power and epistemic risk.’ A rich and lavish ontology may be able to explain many things, but at the cost of uncertainty with regard to its postulated entities. The explanatory power of a more modest ontology may be more restricted, but the greater certainty of its postulates could weigh in its favour. Quine’s ontology is of the latter kind. In Quine’s opinion, the only kinds of things that exist are physical objects (as distinguished by science) and sets (as used in the construction of mathematics). Equal in rank to physical objects in the Quinean ontology are the ‘states-of-being’ in which physical objects may be found to exist. If something as

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austere as this is sufficient to generate a basis on which morality can be found to rest, then it seems to me that the basis would indeed be sound. It would offer far harder challenges to the construction of a moral theory, and any theory that is consistent with it might therefore be seen to possess a high degree of rigor.

Here is something Quine said:

Looking at actual science as a going concern, we can fix in a general way on the domain of objects. Physical objects, to begin with—denizens of space-time—clearly belong. This category embraces indiscriminately what would ancienly have been distinguished as substances and modes as states of substances. A man is a four dimensional object, extending say eighty-three years in the time dimension. Each spatio-temporal part of man counts as another and smaller four-dimensional object. A president-elect is one such, two months long. A fit of ague is another, if for ontological clarity we identify it, as we conveniently may, with its victim for the duration of the seizure.485

A state-of-being on this basis is equivalent to an ‘ancient’ mode of substance, and is identical to the physical object of which it is a state for as long as the state lasts. Quine’s ontology has an attractive simplicity about it. I nevertheless propose to focus predominantly on physical objects: sets are of no significance to moral theory, whereas physical objects such as human beings are of utmost significance. Also significant are what I will refer to as ‘social entities’, which will be included in the ontology alongside physical objects.

Most physical objects are composites of other physical objects, so non-composite things presumably form the basis of composite things. What might the non-composite entities be? Science is divided between the sub-atomic particles of quantum physics and so-called ‘strings’. Whether particles or strings, the most fundamental things go under the rubric ‘matter’, which, according to Einstein’s $E = mc^2$, is equivalent to energy.486 Perhaps the formation of physical entities could

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486 Strictly speaking, ‘m’ in Einstein’s equation stands for mass, not matter. However, since mass is the exclusive property of matter (and things composed of matter), the stated equivalence is valid. As well as equivalence, what the equation tells us is that mass (and therefore matter) and energy are transformable into one another. Huge amounts of energy (E) are locked up in each unit
be regarded as an act of order-imposition, whereby inchoate, seething, disorderly accumulations of energy waves (i.e. electromagnetic waves) are converted into the things that, for us, represent physical objects. We might even see in this a basis for bringing about a merger between stuff-based ontology and thing-based ontology, with energy waves as stuff and physical objects as things, each being transformable into the other. Above the level of the most fundamental things, things combine to form other things. Lower level things become parts of other wholes, for example when atoms combine to form molecules, and molecules are joined into cells. Composite entities arising from acts of combination are wholes in their own right. Composite entities can also decompose. Composition and decomposition through combination and dis-combination pervade nature.

With regard to states-of-being of physical objects, such states can be thought of in terms of the location within spacetime of both the entity concerned and the parts of which the entity is composed. If they were otherwise located, then the entity would be something other than it is. If I have ague, then, because of the presence of the virus in my cells, my physical constitution is not the same as when I do not have ague—nor would the way I feel be the same.

I come now to social entities, which I wish to add to the Quinean ontology. The term refers to organisations that have living physical objects at the lowest level of membership. Ant colonies, bird flocks, whale pods, chimpanzee tribes, human families, corporations, and nations are just a few of the many kinds of social entities. Individual ants, birds, persons and so forth are the parts that come together to form their respective social entities. The concept of social entity is fundamental to many fields of inquiry: amongst others, it is indispensible to economics, sociology, anthropology, and social psychology. Quine’s inclusion of sets in his ontology was based on the fact that sets are fundamental to mathematical science, and therefore all ‘science as currently constituted.’ Social entities could be admissible on similar grounds.

Social entities may themselves be constituents of other social entities. Student unions and sporting associations within a university are examples of the latter, but

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of mass (m), since the latter must be multiplied by the square of the speed of light (c²) in order to obtain the former.

there are always individual people at the base level of the over-arching entity. Social entities are wholes whose parts are held together by some kind of unifying principle. Physical objects are subject to unifying principles that are generally explainable in terms of physics, chemistry and biology—variously for objects ranging from atoms to organisms. The unifying principles applicable to social entities are of a different nature. They include cooperation, custom, love, norms, laws, and like-mindedness—some of which would be permeated by values, and none of which would be satisfactorily explainable in the same terms as those appropriate for physical objects.

Like physical objects, social entities are subject to various states-of-being. They may be functional or dysfunctional, at war or not at war, authoritarian or democratic, orderly or disorderly, and so on. Quine's inclusion of the office of president-elect as an example of a state-of-being could help confirm the reality that I am attributing to social entities. The office depends for its existence on the laws of the nation, so the state-of-being in question has a social aspect as well as an individual (physically objective) one. In the terms of this argument, the social entity (nation) is in a particular state-of-being (of having a president-elect). Moreover, the social entity and state-of-being are identical for as long as the state-of-being lasts—the nation with a president-elect is different from the nation without one.

The ontology resulting from these deliberations is fundamentally Quinean, but, because of the inclusion of social entities, 'Q-R' ('R' for revised) could be a suitable label for it. In summary, my ontological commitment with respect to things centres on physical objects and social entities, in conjunction with their various states-of-being—Peter with ague is not the same as Peter without ague; a nation with a president-elect is not the same as the nation without a president-elect. For some physical objects, states-of-being may include states-of-mind, or brain-states. States-of-mind correspond to thought, and in this sense, all thoughts are real, i.e. exist. Whether the things that are thought of are also real is another (epistemological) matter. The question that must now be asked is whether homosapient order is real.
9.4 The Experiential Reality of Homosapient Disorder

The tack I will be taking is based on the Q-R ontology, and the proposition I wish to defend is that disorder in general and homosapient disorder in particular are experiential realities for us. By ‘experiential reality’ I mean something that is empirically observable and verifiable. Disorder is experienced by us in the form of a need, specifically as a need to ameliorate the disorderly state. There would seem little reason to doubt the reality of the various Maslovian needs, and all of these were shown in Chapter 5 to be symptomatic of the need for homosapient order—or, as it might otherwise be expressed, of the need to avoid homosapient disorder. On the basis of Q-R, homosapient disorder would be real if it were either a physical object or a social entity, or a state-of-being of either a physical object or social entity. The possibility of homosapient disorder being a physical object or a social entity can be dismissed, but it may plausibly be regarded as a state-of-being of a particular kind of physical object, namely a human being. Alternatively, it might be regarded either as an essential property of humanness, or as an internal relation thereof. All three are reasonable candidates (there may be others as well), and a case could be made for each of them. However, I do not think its precise ontological specification matters all that much. Its reality is the point at issue, and the fact that it is experienced by all human beings would seem to be sufficient confirmation of its existence. For the purposes of exposition, I will continue to speak of homosapient disorder as a Q-R state-of-being.

Since physical objects and social entities are all likely to be in some kind of state-of-being for the duration of their existence, and since homosapient disorder applies to human beings, my proposition is that homosapient disorder consists in states-of-being of either human beings either in their own right or as members of social entities, and is therefore Q-R real. The discussion that follows is based on Table 2, which is shown on the next page.

488 Refer Swoyer and Orilia, p. 34. An essential property of an individual is such that the individual ‘has the property in every possible circumstance in which the individual exists.’ Internal relations ‘are usually understood as the relational analogues of essential (monadic) properties.’
Table 2: Homosapient Order as States-of Being of Physical Objects and Social Entities

The question is whether the characteristics of homosapient disorder can plausibly be said to be states-of-being of human beings either in their own right or as members of social entities. On the first row of the table, P-disorderly objects would be in a state of disunity and dysfunctionality, the latter in the sense of ‘poor working order’. The converse P-orderly states-of-being are those shown in column 4; they are among the general characteristics of order identified in Section 3.1. Ague was one of Quine’s examples of a state-of-being, as a state of ill-health: it could reasonably be regarded as a state of disorder, specifically here as a state of P-disorder that may be suffered by human beings (and some other kinds of organisms as well). The disorderliness of P-disorderly objects arguably consists in states-of-being such as those described.

In the discussion in Section 3.2, social order was seen to be characteristic of many creatures besides human beings; for example honeybees and chimpanzees. However, because moral agency is confined to human beings, I will focus here

\[\text{Table 2: Homosapient Order as States-of Being of Physical Objects and Social Entities}\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Homosapient Order/disOrder</th>
<th>Relevant Object</th>
<th>Associated State-of-Being: Homosapient Disorder</th>
<th>Contrary Homosapient Orderly Conception</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical (P)</td>
<td>Human Beings</td>
<td>Disunity, Dysfunctional</td>
<td>Wholeness, Functional integrity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical (P)</td>
<td>Human Beings</td>
<td>Ague</td>
<td>Freedom from ague</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social (S)</td>
<td>Human Beings</td>
<td>Disrespectfulness, Rejection of law, riotousness, Insecurity, cynicism, Isolation, Lawlessness</td>
<td>Respectfulness, Obedience to law, Confidence in state, Community-mindedness, Justness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social (S)</td>
<td>Human Beings</td>
<td>Riotous, Unjust, Arbitrary, unlawful</td>
<td>Peaceful, Just, Lawful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eudaimonic (E)</td>
<td>Human Beings</td>
<td>Disunity, Disbelief, mistrust, cynicism, Vulgarity, tastelessness, Selfishness, Selfishness, Hopelessness, meaninglessness</td>
<td>Wholeness, Truth seeking, Aesthetically vibrant, Other-directedness, Justness, Self-respect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For reasons that are explained in Section 2.3.
on human S-disorder. From a human perspective, disrespectfulness may reasonably be inferred to be characteristic of S-disorder, and lawlessness is specifically mentioned by Aristotle and Maslow; lawlessness might well culminate in riotousness. Insecurity and cynicism are metapathologies that Maslow associates with injustice (see p. 59), and they suitably describe what could happen if confidence in the state were lacking. Community-mindedness has been included as a state-of-being associable with S-order to counterpoint isolation, which was considered by Aristotle to be contrary to the notion of ‘social animal,’ or ‘sociability’ as the general state-of-being might be called. Justness is the last of the states-of-being included under S-order. The term is intended to describe the state-of-being of a just person, i.e. one who is concerned with justice, but it is also associable with E-order: it has both a social dimension and a eudaimonic one. Its social aspect might be summed up as ‘respect for and observance of the law’; its S-disorderly counterpart consists in rejection of the law.

To this point I have been discussing S-disorder from the perspective of individual members of a social entity, but the notion of S-disorder is also applicable to social entities themselves. Expressions such as ‘just society’, or, to use an expression from Rawls, ‘fair society’, are common enough—as are their opposites. Similarly with some of the other S-disorderly states-of-being I have mentioned: for example lawlessness, arbitrariness and riotousness, which have obvious S-orderly counterparts in lawfulness and peacefulness. All of the S-disorderly and S-orderly states of being that have been mentioned would both derive from and impact on the people that comprise the social entities in question (see Section 6.6).

Turning now to E-disorder, the first state-of-being listed in the table is disintegration, in a feeling that ‘the world is falling apart.’ Its converse manifests as wholeness, which is one of Maslow’s B-Values. A feeling is a state-of-being, like ague is. I have suggested that E-order is attainable by means of intellectual achievement. In the table, intellectual achievement is reflected in ‘truth-seeking’, which is another of Maslow’s B-Values—disbelief, mistrust and cynicism are the corresponding metapathologies, and are states-of-being associable with E-disorder. Next we have aesthetic vibrancy, which was said in Section 4.2 to be another means of attaining E-order (there expressed as ‘aesthetic

experience’). Vulgarity and tastelessness are counterpart E-disorderly states-of-being. E-disorderliness is also characterised by selfishness, which is contrary to other-directedness. Other-directedness is described by Finnis as an element of justice (see p. 58), and is an apt cognomen for generosity of spirit, or good-spiritedness, the latter being a literal rendering of ‘eudaimonia’. The ideas are based on those of Aristotle and Maslow. Similarly, justness as a state of personal character, as distinct from justness in an S-orderly (juridical) sense, is also opposed to selfishness, which can be understood to be the hallmark of the Aristotelian self-sufficient ‘god or beast’ (see p. 47); i.e., a person who feels no need for anyone else’s involvement in his or her life. Finally, there are the contraries ‘hopelessness’ and ‘self-respect’. Self-disrespect may arise from thwarted expectations, the upshot of which could be a sense of hopelessness, or meaninglessness, and a feeling that there is nothing to work or live for.491 All of the E-disorderly conditions that have been mentioned point towards a need for homosapient order, and are clearly states-of-being that can be experienced by individual human beings.

This completes the argument for the reality of homosapient disorder. P-, S-, and E-disorder have all been found to consist in states-of-being of human beings and social entities composed of human beings, in which case each of them may reasonably be claimed to be Q-R real. While an exhaustive list of states-of-being would be very hard (if not impossible) to compile, I hope that the one presented here will be adjudged sufficiently comprehensive to justify the claim. Since the three kinds of disorder combine to form homosapient disorder, homosapient disorder may also be considered real.

9.5 Homosapient Order and Ontological Commitment

The reality of homosapient disorder is an unpleasant aspect of the human condition. Homosapient disorder is a state-of-being that we attempt to ameliorate, by means of behaviour designed to satisfy the various Maslovian needs. The design, or purpose, of such behaviour is to get as close as possible to a state of homosapient order. States of perfect homosapient order are probably unattainable, but that need not prevent us from believing in them. The belief forms the basis of

491 The idea is Maslow’s. See The Farther Reaches of Human Nature, p. 309.
an ontological commitment. The notion of ontological commitment is explained by Thomas Hofweber as follows: ‘given that we have certain beliefs, do these beliefs … bring with them a rational commitment to an answer to such questions as “Are there numbers?” [Likewise, are there properties? Is there order?] If our beliefs bring with them a rational commitment to an answer to an ontological question about the existence of certain entities then we can say we are committed to the existence of these entities.’

In other words, evidence for the existence of a thing derives from a rational commitment to it, and the rational commitment originates in certain beliefs about the thing in question. I believe that enough evidence of needs-based homosapient order (and disorder) has been provided in this thesis to justify an ontological commitment to it.

By virtue of the ontological commitment, homosapient order becomes an operative reality. By ‘operative reality’ I mean something that is unified and real in the sense that it operates within nature so as to cause certain things to happen (by virtue of our commitment to it). That it is operative in the indicated manner was the subject of Chapter 5, where homosapient order was linked to the basic needs of human beings (basic needs cause us to behave in certain ways, including ways that are susceptible to moral judgement). Even Spinoza might have conceded as much. A few pages ago there was mention of his having spoken about the human predilection for order, and about order as a construct of our imagination. On that basis, the reality of the concept of order would at least have to be acknowledged, as would the fact that it causes us to do certain things—in Spinoza’s case, the reality of the concept of order causes us to imagine orderly states of affairs that are external to us.

Something that is operatively real may be conceived of as if it were real, even while its precise ontological status remains unresolved. More strongly, J. J. C. Smart is reported as having said: ‘[i]f the world behaves as if things of such and such a kind exist, then the best explanation of this fact is that they really do exist.’

Human beings are of the world, and we behave as if disorder exists. Disorder exists in the form of homeostatic imbalance, in fractured social relations,

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in spiritual conflict, or in any of the other ways that have been mentioned. We
behave in ways whose purpose is to redress the disorder. Disorder gives rise to
the need for order, and the need for order (including homosapient order) finds
expression in the various Maslovian needs. Needs, and therefore disorder, are
real. Whether that is sufficient to make order per se (including homosapient
order) real may be debatable, but I think it can be claimed to be a legitimate
concept: i.e., something that can sensibly be thought about and made the subject
of philosophical discourse. Homosapient order on that account may be conceived
of as the conceptual counterpart of experiential homosapient disorder.

It is hard to imagine how there ever could be a world totally free of disorder.
(Physically, we know, this is impossible, because of the operation of the Second
Law of thermodynamics.) The phenomenal world would always be characterised
by degrees of disorder, including homosapient disorder. A continuum of
homosapient disorder is conceivable, with homosapient order as one of the
extremes and maximum homosapient disorder as the other. Neither extreme
would be attainable by us: maximum homosapient disorder would entail the death
of the human species; maximum order would be prevented by the Second Law.

Disorder avoidance (including avoidance of homosapient disorder) is foundational
in so far as human beings could not exist without it. Since order follows upon
disorder avoidance, order (including homosapient order) may also be considered
foundational. Disorder avoidance (and therefore order-attainment) is necessary to
human existence, and therefore also to the existence of morality. Whether it is
also sufficient for morality is the point at issue. This thesis can be regarded as an
attempt to show that it is. Morality has been shown to be explainable in terms of
disorder avoidance in the form of satisfaction of basic needs.

9.6 The Need for Homosapient Order as Ground for Morality
What I am proposing is this: as something that is real, homosapient disorder
constitutes philosophical ground on which a secular morality can be based. But
now it might be asked: in what sense could a state-of-being be said to be the
ground of anything? The being itself would appear to be ontologically prior to its
state—the being comes first. The objection has force, but I think it can be met by
looking behind the state, with a view to discovering its cause—for example, the
ague virus, and the electoral laws and processes that bring a president-elect into being. So we now have a ‘cause-of-state’ to consider—whereupon another question would probably arise: what was the cause of the cause-of-state? An infinite regress looms.

I believe the regress can be brought to a halt in the need for homosapient order. The need for homosapient order is generated by the experienced reality of homosapient disorder in conjunction with the operative, as if reality of homosapient order. The fact of the disorder and the idea that the disorder might be ameliorated give rise to the need to move from the disorderly state-of-being to a more orderly state-of-being. We need homosapient order in order to survive and to flourish. If homosapient order is deficient in any way (for example, due to insufficient food), then we would in normal circumstances seek to redress the deficit—i.e., satisfy the need. But now the objector would most likely ask: how, in principle, does the need for homosapient order differ from homosapient order itself? Are they not both states-of-being in which a person might find herself? Furthermore, the objector might warn us against looking behind the need to find its cause, since that would only give rise to the same kind of regress. Again, I think the objection has force. What is the cause of the need? How might this new regress be terminated?

I suggest that it can be terminated by distinguishing between two senses of the term ‘need’. On the one hand, need in the sense of requiring something to redress a deficit (‘lack’ for short); on the other hand, need in the sense of being necessarily so, or ‘could not have been otherwise’ (‘necessary’ for short). A person trapped in a desert might lack the water that would keep him alive. Metaphysically speaking, this would be regarded as a contingent event, and his thirsty state-of-being a contingent phenomenon. Matters could have been different: for example, if he had decided on a skiing holiday instead of trekking through central Australia. However, for the same person—indeed any person—an adequate supply of water would always be a necessity, regardless of his or her circumstances. Metaphysically, this would be considered a physically necessary phenomenon: it is a permanent state-of-being, one that is fully coincident with each and every individual. Metaphysically, the individual himself is a physical contingency, since he did not have to be born; but as soon as he was born, an
adequate supply of water became necessary for him: it could not have been otherwise. Need as lack may be transitory, but that which is necessary persists as long as life lasts. Viewed as a necessary need, the need for homosapient order is an essential property of humanness; in other words, it is a permanent state-of-being for each and every human being. Need as lack derives from need as necessary: if something is necessary, then it would be lacked if it were not obtained; but the reverse does not apply—just because we lack something (for example a million dollars in the bank) does not mean that it is necessary. Homosapient order has been shown to be ‘necessarily’ needed by human beings. Homosapient order is an ineradicable feature of the human condition. In which case, the problem of priority dissolves: in virtue of being coincident with Homo sapiens, the need for homosapient order is neither prior nor posterior. The need for homosapient order is a fundamental state-of-being that is uniquely human, and it is also pre-moral: it therefore satisfies the requirements of the philosophical ground I am looking for.

The order-based theory of morality has now been fully formulated. Before bringing the thesis to a conclusion, some possible objections to the theory will be considered. The objections are the subject of the next chapter.

494 From the perspective of determinism, everything may be contingent, including life itself.
10: CONTRA ORDER-BASED MORALITY

10.1 Objections Aplenty
Some challenges to the theory of order-based morality have already been encountered, including the issues of asymmetric chirality (Section 3.2), the weighting of needs (Section 7.2), whether morality needs a secular foundation, and whether a secular foundation exists (Chapter 9). Here I tackle five further potential obstacles: determinism, relativism, morality without needs, genetic fallaciousness, and naturalistic fallaciousness. Literature relevant to them is examined under the respective headings.

10.2 Determinism
In general, determinists place causation at the centre of their theories, a move that some believe to be inimical to freedom, and therefore contrary to moral responsibility. Those who believe that to be the case are known as incompatibilists. Incompatibilists divide into two main camps: hard determinists, who insist on determinism and deny the possibility of objective grounds for moral standards; and voluntarists who insist on freedom and morality and reject determinism because of that. But there are others who seek to accommodate both freedom and determinism: they are known as compatibilists. Compatibilism holds that objective moral standards are possible, and that all phenomena have a cause (or chain of causes).

‘Deterministic’ would seem to be an apt description of the order-based theory, because of the emphasis it places on the metaethical ‘how did we come to be moral beings?’ question. The how question is distinct from the ethical what and why questions: what is it that we describe as morally commendable?, and why should morally commendable courses of action be undertaken? Answers to the metaethical question centre on explanation in terms of causation; answers to the ethical questions focus on justification in terms of reasons.

Metaethically, the order-based theory of morality is deterministic. The theory holds that human beings are moral beings because of our need for homosapient order. To put it more bluntly, our need for homosapient order is the cause of our morality: this is how we came to be moral. It is a contingent fact that we are
moral beings, and explanation of that fact centres on homosapient order. Our need for homosapient order is expressed through the various Maslovian basic needs, and these in turn find expression in wants, preferences, desires and interests, all of which are influenced by our nature and by our geopolitical, social and cultural circumstances. Metaethically, there is no place for freedom in the order-based theory of morality. Is it any different from an ethical perspective?

At first sight, it would seem not. The determinism of the how answers infiltrates answers to the ethical what and why questions. According to the theory, morally commendable behaviour is caused by our need to be humane, which is an aspect of our need for homosapient order. Our need for humaneness is encompassed by our need for Maslovian self-actualisation. The need for inhumaneness is encompassed by the need for malignant self-actualisation. Morally classifiable behaviour is determined by these needs of ours. The same needs contribute to the formation of our character, and character has been shown to constrain the ways in which we behave. But an opening for freedom is perceptible here. The kind of constraint involved is that which feeds into self-restraint: self-restraint is tantamount to self-legislation, which is the literal meaning of autonomy.495 A humane person is someone who, when confronted with a choice among alternative courses of action, acknowledges the needs of others in whatever action she decides to undertake, or feels she should undertake.

Character-forming decisions and courses of action provide another possible opening for freedom. For example, willed avoidance of deleterious influences; or taking on a course of moral philosophy; or performing volunteer work; or, indeed, any humane behaviour whatsoever—all are constitutive of character. Such actions undoubtedly depend to some extent on the quality of one’s character at the time of embarking on a new endeavour, and luck may also have a great deal to do

495 See Barbara Herman, ‘Obligation and Performance: A Kantian Account of Moral Conflict’, in Flanagan and Rorty (editors), Identity, Character, and Morality: Essays in Moral Psychology, p. 319. Self-restraint as self-legislation entails self-command. One effectively orders oneself (i.e. commands oneself) either to do something or refrain from doing something. Having said that, I must backtrack from a position I took earlier; or at least modify it. In the discussion of the general characteristics of order I indicated that order in the sense of ‘command’ would be excluded from the conception of homosapient order. It was there noted that the notion of command is central to Isaiah Berlin’s conception of morality. It is now clear that the exclusion should be relaxed to allow ‘command’ in the sense of ‘self-command’ through. Self-command is indeed relevant to homosapient order, by virtue of its involvement with freedom.
with whatever opportunities happen to present themselves. Nevertheless, when opportunities do arise, we would generally be free (or feel that we are free) to decide whether or not to avail ourselves of them.

Also from the perspective of ethics, the order-based theory holds that moral commendability arises when an agent’s morally classifiable behaviour produces an increase in the level of homosapient order across all of the parties involved. An increase in homosapient order in such circumstances is morally commendable because it is the product of humane behaviour, and humane behaviour is behaviour that is natural to the majority of human beings. In Philippa Foot’s terminology, humane behaviour is a natural good for human beings. The ethical question of ‘what is good?’ is answered by reference to the metaethical explanation of how we came to be moral beings. Because of that, the order-based theory of morality is deterministic. But the theory nevertheless allows a limited place for freedom of choice. The theory may therefore be regarded as compatibilist.

The order-based theory of morality embraces causality in the ways that have been described. The theory also accommodates freedom. None of this is to say whether compatibilism is ‘better’ than either or both kinds of incompatibilism, but it seems to me that causation and freedom are facts about our moral life, and that moral theory must therefore account for both of them.

10.3 Moral Relativism

As David Wong explains it, moral relativism ‘often takes the form of a denial that any single moral code has universal validity, and an assertion that moral truth and justifiability, if there are any such things, are in some way relative to factors that are culturally and historically contingent.’\textsuperscript{496} Such is the doctrine of metaethical relativism, which is distinguished from normative moral relativism. The latter ‘holds that it is wrong to pass judgement on others who have substantially different values, or try to make them conform to one’s values, for the reason that their values are as valid as one’s own.’\textsuperscript{497} Abstention from all such judgements might be described as an extreme form of normative relativism. A more reasonable version, in Wong’s view, would permit the passing of judgement on

\textsuperscript{496} Wong, p. 442.  
\textsuperscript{497} Wong, p. 442.
those who have substantially different values: \(^{498}\) in his words, ‘[t]he mere existence of deep and wide disagreements in ethics … does not disprove the possibility that moral judgements can be objectively correct or incorrect about certain facts.’\(^{499}\) Judgements of objective correctness would presumably have to be based on some kind of pre-existing standards of conduct, which would previously have passed the test of objective correctness. To speak of objective correctness involves a move away from relativism and towards absolutism; the latter opposes relativism by insisting on the universal validity of certain moral principles.

Absolutism might be described in terms of ‘ethical exclusiveness’, where only one code of ethics among a number of codes is believed to be valid. Nihilism, whereby all ethical codes are held to be equally invalid and therefore excluded en bloc could also be described as absolutist. Against absolutism of either kind there would be ethical inclusiveness, or pluralism. Because of their inclusiveness, pluralists would likely embrace the sort of moderate normative moral relativism mentioned by Wong. Philip Kitcher is pluralist in this sense—he defends a position in ethics that is close to that advocated by Isaiah Berlin, ‘[o]ne important feature of [which] is the recognition by each of the rival traditions of the values taken as fundamental by the other ….’ \(^{500}\) But recognition of another’s fundamental values need not, in Kitcher’s view, prevent one from believing that some codes of ethics are better or worse than others. According to Kitcher, codes of ethics will be ‘better’ if they advance the ethical project and ‘worse’ if they retard it. \(^{501}\) ‘Better’ and ‘worse’ involve the kinds of judgements of objective correctness and objective incorrectness that are characteristic of moderate normative relativism.

Kitcher’s pluralism also embraces a metaethical relativist position. He associates the good with the circumstances in which people find themselves: the good, he says, ‘is local, linked to circumstances and problems; it is constructed through group attempts to solve problems; and it evolves.’ \(^{502}\) In other words, good is variable depending on circumstances: the contents of any codes of ethics

\(^{498}\) Wong, p. 448.
\(^{499}\) Wong, p. 445.
\(^{500}\) Kitcher, p. 249 (footnote).
\(^{502}\) Kitcher, p. 288.
emanating from the various conceptions of good would be similarly variable. What may not be variable in the scenario depicted by Kitcher, or indeed any other scenario (apart from nihilism), is the sheer existence of some kind of code of ethics, at least since the beginning of the ethical project fifty thousand years ago.

In Section 6.2 I argued that values originate in needs. Taking that to be the case, Kitcher’s pluralistic assertion with regard to the reciprocal recognition of fundamental values may be paraphrased along the lines of ‘recognition by members of rival traditions of the needs taken as fundamental by the other’. And with the recognition of needs comes the order-based theory of morality. As is the case with Kitcher, the order-based theory also contains fixed and variable elements. Fixed is the existence of our basic human needs, all of which emanate from the need for homosapient order (basic needs may evolve, but basic they remain). Variable are our hierarchies of needs. I have conjectured that the hierarchical arrangement of needs may vary from one age or culture to another; and if variation occurs, ultimate values would likely differ.

The commonality of the basic Maslovian needs may enable us to enhance our understanding of one another’s ultimate values, including those of denizens of different ages and cultures. By way of illustration, an order-based ethicist would understand why a devout Muslim would be deeply offended by a public (and publicised) Koran-burning by a fundamentalist official from another religion. Let us imagine that the official was driven by his belief that his is the only true religion and that anything precious to people of other faiths constitutes fair game. The need motivating his action may have been esteem (of his fellow fundamentalists); or perhaps self-actualisation, either in the form of a desire to harm through an exercise of power, or by means of expressing the religious zealotry that is fundamental to his character—it is hard to think of anything else that could inspire such a deed. The need of the Muslim would be far more basic than either esteem or self-actualisation, even though religious symbolism would usually be regarded as catering to a spiritual need. As well as being of spiritual concern, and therefore involved in self-actualisation, preservation of the sanctity of his holy book would probably be counted among the Muslim’s most weighty needs, in company perhaps with his subsistence needs. An order-based ethicist would therefore deem the fundamentalist’s desecration of the Koran to be morally
condemnable. Matters would be worse if the desecration provoked revenge attacks, resulting in collateral death and injury. If such attacks were predictable, then the Koran-burner would be culpable, as would the assailants. The basic right to life would have been violated.

More generally, as a counter-measure against absolutism and extreme normative relativism, differences in hierarchies of needs could be transcended by focusing on needs of the most basic kind—basic in terms of the hierarchies of respondent persons. Ultimate values may vary, but violation of them would always be morally suspect; though not necessarily condemnable, because of the existence of ‘perverted’ (to use Hume’s expression again) scales of value. This would be consistent with the pluralism advocated by Berlin and Kitcher. To what extent should an order-based ethicist tolerate different moral standards? It follows from the foregoing discussion that tolerance would vary according to the needs at stake and their position on his or her hierarchical scale of urgency: the more pressing the need, the lower the degree of tolerance of violating behaviour. However, inhumane behaviour would never be tolerated. Relativism is at the centre of important moral issues, but thinking about them in terms of needs, and therefore homosapient order, would seem capable of shedding light on them.

In sum, as long as cultural differences persist, we will remain stuck with differing notions of right and good, and of wrong and evil. Relativism, therefore, is a fact of life, and it is to the order-based theory’s credit that it accommodates that fact. Moreover, it offers an explanation as to why various moral standards exist. Differing hierarchical arrangements of needs and differing ultimate ends certainly complicate matters, but there would seem to be no requirement for morality to be simple. An order-based ethicist will recognise the complexities and take them into account when making moral judgements.

10.4 Morality without Needs

Are there instances of moral commendability and condemnnability that cannot be traced to the need for homosapient order, through the various Maslovian needs? It seems that David Braybrooke would think so, for he maintains that ‘[s]elf-development can be understood to be an important moral consideration without
being taken to be a need. Braybrooke’s point could pose a serious challenge to the order-based theory, especially if it were extendable beyond the particular need mentioned by him. A fundamental aspect of the theory is that moral sentiments and judgements are anchored in needs, at bottom the need for homosapient order. Here a very real difficulty must be acknowledged. Proof of the theory has largely relied on empirical support in the form of case studies: the only kind of *a priori* validation that I have been able to offer consists in the sequence of ideas that began with the necessity of orderliness to life as expressed in the kinds of needs universally experienced by human beings, and ended with the moral significance of the needs when placed in a hierarchy. My hope is that the position emanating from the ideas will be regarded as plausible; but there is nothing conceptually necessary about the way in which they have been combined.

I think Braybrooke’s specific point is rebuttable, on the grounds that self-development is something that a person undertakes with intent: a choice is made to work towards some kind of goal or ideal, whereupon appropriate action follows. If the action affects other people, self-development can be understood to involve morally classifiable behaviour; the person concerned becomes open to morally assessable interactions, primarily as agent but also as respondent. As agent, actions directed towards self-development could conceivably impact adversely on someone else’s needs, for example by monopilising scarce resources. As respondent, if another person’s action (or inaction) impeded the self-developer, then, depending on the need that motivated the action (or inaction), moral condemnability may have occurred. Furthermore, self-development would often involve intellectual achievement and aesthetic experience, and therefore, on Maslow’s theory, be motivated by the need for those things.

Perhaps the most that can be said by way of general rebuttal is that disproof of the theory would presumably have to follow similarly empirical lines, but without the underpinning provided by the need for homosapient order. Having given the matter some thought, I have been unable to find any instances of moral commendability and condemnability that cannot be accounted for by the order-based theory.

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10.5 The Genetic Fallacy

Genetic fallacies consist in the endorsement or disapproval of an idea solely on the basis of its origins or history. Unless its past affects the present value of the idea, its merits or demerits are all that count. For example, if I were to say that my belief in the moral relevance of order was sparked by august and ancient Taoist texts, it would be fallacious to endorse the resultant theory solely on the grounds of the authority of the texts; and it would also be fallacious to condemn it merely because of the antiquity of the initial impetus. Grounds like those, taken in isolation, would hardly constitute an argument, either for or against.

A version of the genetic fallacy pertaining specifically to moral theory has been proposed by Stephen Pope. According to Pope, a genetic fallacy would be committed if one were to confuse the causal origins of morality with moral justification. A causal process or mechanism is said by Pope to explain ‘the material factors which produce phenotypical structures or behaviors. For example, one can say that, under stated conditions, a chromosomal sequence of nucleotide bases causes the production of a protein in particular cells.’ Causes, he continues, must be distinguished from functions: the latter ‘refer to effects of a behavior or structure that might provide reasons for the evolution of this particular structure or behavior.’ Altruism is given by Pope as an example of function: he writes, ‘[i]t may be the case that certain forms of altruism have provided and continue to provide a selective advantage to members of the species (i.e., they may contribute to survival and reproduction).’ However, he adds, ‘one may not infer from the fact of adaptation that the cause of particular assistance giving acts is genetic or biological.’

The order-based theory of morality is patently concerned with causes, and would therefore seem vulnerable to the kind of challenge mounted by Pope. But the theory has a defence: a two-pronged one, in fact, although with shared weapons.

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505 It seems to me that any such confusion could also be regarded as a Humean naturalistic fallacy, i.e. an argument from ‘is’ to ‘ought’. See the next section.
506 Pope, p. 104.
508 Pope, p. 104.
The first line of defence is based on the distinction between, on the one hand, need, and, on the other hand, satisfaction of the need. The need causes us to try to satisfy the need; satisfaction of the need is our goal, which provides us with reasons for acting in ways that we believe will enable us to attain the goal.

Example: Jack is on a cruise with three friends when a freak wave capsizes their boat. Jack manages to get hold of a life-jacket before the boat sinks taking the rest of their safety equipment with it. All four are poor swimmers; they are a long way from shore. The threat to Jack’s safety and his wish to survive give rise to the thought that he might be able to dog-paddle all the way to land assisted by the life-jacket’s buoyancy. His companions would be left in the lurch, and he is immediately ashamed of having considered such a selfish act. His better nature asserts itself, whereupon his need for humaneness coalesces with his need for safety. His goal is still survival, but now it is the survival of all four instead of his alone: their needs are now his needs. The altered goal gives rise to altered means. Perhaps, he thinks, we might all get through this if we were to take turns with the life-jacket, and hope that rescuers arrive in time. Schematically, the sequence is this: situation leads to need which entails a goal which provides reasons for employing means of attaining the goal. And while that is going on, the original situation might be modified in such a way as to give rise to a revised set of needs, whence altered goals and reasons for employing different means—and so on.

Decisions with regard to goals and the means employed to attain them are the stuff of moral commendability and condemnability. Goals and means that fall under the influence of the need for humaneness provide us with reasons for acting in ways that recognise the importance of others’ needs: they can therefore be aligned with the functions spoken of by Pope.

The second line of defence also makes use of the notions of ‘cause’ and ‘goal’; in this case, however, ‘goal’ is subsumed under ‘cause’. Should we be asked to give a reason for acting humanely, i.e. asked to justify our action, we might say something along the lines of ‘because I felt that it was my duty to do so’, or ‘because I consider the needs of others to be important’. The term ‘because’ in these formulations brings another kind of ‘cause’ into play; it expands the notion
of cause along Aristotelian lines by embracing teleological causation. The feelings and thoughts of the agent reflect his beliefs about the way in which people should conduct themselves, including himself. Teleological causation brings our beliefs into contact with the situation at hand and provides us with reasons for doing what we do. The need-driven cause would ultimately be attributable to a combination of biological and contextual (cultural, social, etc.) factors; it operates in the manner of a ‘push’. The teleological-driven cause might be similarly attributable, although contextual factors would probably predominate; teleological causation operates in the manner of a ‘pull’. Push-style causation includes the genetic and biological causes referred to by Pope. Pull-style causation emanates from our past experiences and education, which give rise to beliefs with regard to that which is morally justifiable. Moral good in the form of humaneness is our telos; we are drawn towards it when we act humanely; i.e. when due respect is paid to the needs of others, along with our own needs. The order-based theory of morality accommodates both kinds of causation, and enables us to distinguish between causal (material) origins and moral justification. The two-pronged defence should be enough to deflect a Pope-style attack. The first defence involves opening up Pope’s notion of ‘function’ to admit the goal of need-driven behaviour; the second extends Pope’s notion of ‘cause’ to include teleological causation. While genetic fallaciousness might be safely set aside, naturalistic fallaciousness could pose a more serious challenge.

10.6 The Naturalistic Fallacy
At least two versions of what are referred to as ‘naturalistic fallacies’ are discernible. One stems from Hume’s ideas and the other from those of G. E. Moore. Respectively, the two kinds of fallacy may be characterised as ‘logical’ and ‘metaphysical’.

Hume was troubled by the slippage in some philosophical arguments between factual premises and ethical conclusions, i.e., between ‘is’ and ‘ought’. Kitcher refers to this as ‘Hume’s Challenge’. Example (mine): cruelty is

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509 Formal causation and efficient causation would also be admitted by an Aristotelian, alongside material causation and teleological causation.
510 See Hume, Treatise 3.1.1.
511 Kitcher, §40.
painful; therefore one ought not to be cruel. One way of solving the problem (if it is indeed a problem\textsuperscript{512}) would be to begin with an ethical premise. Example: people ought to be able to live their lives without being subjected to cruelty; therefore etc. The inference is logically satisfactory, and the problem is shifted to justification of the premise—why shouldn’t people be subjected to cruelty? Kant would have an answer to that: for someone to say that cruelty is acceptable, he or she would have to accept that they might rightfully be subjected to cruelty. Since that would be unlikely, the principle would be contrary to universalisation in the form of a Categorical Imperative. The order-based theory also has an answer: cruelty is contrary to some of our most basic needs, including homeostasis, safety and respect.

Another way of dealing with Hume’s challenge would be to break down the distinction between fact and value.\textsuperscript{513} Needs, I maintain, are factual: they are real by virtue of the contribution they make to states-of-being of those who have them. While commendability and condemnability are incontestably value-terms, morally relevant values are based on morally relevant needs, from which it follows that such values are also facts.\textsuperscript{514} In the previous chapter, I claimed that order consists in bodily states that are described in terms of orderliness and disorderliness.

\textsuperscript{512} As Kitcher notes, nondeductive modes of inference may be employed (p. 257). Kitcher’s preferred strategy, however, is to substitute ‘ethical progress’ for ‘ethical truth’ (p. 258 ff.). Fundamentally, if a rule works (ameliorates a problem between people in a social setting), then it makes sense to institutionalise it (my gloss). The ‘inference’ is essentially pragmatic; reason and the emotions both contribute to it. Ethical progress is made. Cruelty would be prohibited because, if sufficiently widespread, it is socially destructive. (Whether that is sufficient reason, or the only reason, for prohibiting cruelty is debatable. It seems to me that the personal abhorrence elicited by it needs to be recognised: the individual must be brought into the picture, as is done by Kant and the order-based theory.)

\textsuperscript{513} Casebeer writes, ‘our intuitions that Hume is on to something with the naturalistic fallacy are driven by either (a) implicit analytic/synthetic distinctions or (b) an inappropriate theory of naturalized ethics’ (Casebeer, p. 22). Casebeer contends that Quine and Dewey effectively dismantled the distinction between analytic propositions and synthetic propositions, and he understandably believes that his own naturalised theory is not inappropriate. If, he writes, ‘our beliefs are appropriately (that is, pragmatically) formed, so-called analytic statements are nothing more than extremely well confirmed scientific facts. Any attempt to argue that “come what may, we can never infer norms from empirical judgements,” as Hume and Moore do, would entrench an indefensible assumption. We should therefore be open to the possibility of a reduction of normative properties to natural, functional properties’ (Casebeer, p. 23). Casebeer argues that moral conclusions ‘follow abductively from properly construed non-normative premises’ (Casebeer, p. 4. Abduction is a form of inference introduced by C. S. Peirce; conclusions are drawn by abductive inference when something about a population is said to be the case based on a limited number of samples. Abductive inferences are never apodictic).

\textsuperscript{514} Not everything that we value is based on needs. In Section 6.2 I used the example of the valued (but unneeded) book by a favourite author to draw a distinction between need-related values and other values. Under the order-based theory, all values that are morally relevant would be based on needs.
Midgley makes a similar point in her contention that facts often go beyond ‘the raw data of sense,’ and beyond physical facts, i.e. facts ‘that can be stated in the terms of physics.’ In her view, if something is, for example, dangerous or dirty, unique or legal, then it is a fact that it is so.\textsuperscript{515} Such descriptions have objective reference, and they carry with them ascriptions of value. Order and legality are right, i.e. good in a morally relevant sense of ‘right’; conversely for disorder and dirtiness—whereupon ought and is become reciprocally influential with respect to one another. Bias or prejudice would almost inevitably infiltrate the ascriptions, so it could not be said that they are objective in the sense of ‘free from bias’; but they could nevertheless attain objectivity in another sense, i.e., as things accessible to cognition—as such, they become capable of contributing to the content of our consciousness. By so doing, the values themselves become facts, and are inextricably entwined with other facts. The logical problem perceived by Hume is thereby dissolved.

Turning now to Moore’s challenge, which I have labelled ‘metaphysical’, a naturalistic fallacy is said by Moore to occur when an ethical concept (for example good) is directly derived from a natural concept (for example order). Even if it is demonstrable that morality is at least analogically connected to the physical phenomenon of order, would it follow that the common physical and biological impulse also helps form the basis of a universal moral principle? That would require a very big leap, an unnecessary if not impossible one in Moore’s view. For him, ‘the main object of ethics, as a systematic science, is to give reasons for thinking this or that is good ....’\textsuperscript{516} Moore’s fundamental position is that good is a ‘simple’ concept that is impervious to reduction to non-moral concepts. By seeking to explain morality in terms of order and needs, my project is clearly at odds with Moore. How might the objection be met?

The first thing to note is that ‘good’ for Moore is something that is entirely natural: it occurs within the ambit of nature, and is attached as an epithet to things that are considered (or felt) to be good—such as food, love and music. It is the task of philosophy, he says, to explain why such things are good. This seems to conflict quite strongly with the order-based theory, according to which moral

\textsuperscript{515} Midgley, \textit{Beast and Man}, p. 170.

commendability derives from (is caused by, and therefore explained by) an increment in homosapient order. But the conflict may be only superficial. For it is clear that homosapient order is a consequence of such things as food, love and music; or, more precisely, consequential upon satisfaction of our need for them. In other words, homosapient order is good, as was argued in Section 4.4, where it was found to be analogous to justice. Moreover, homosapient order is a good that encompasses all of the things that are likely to be regarded as good, for the simple reason that it is consequential upon satisfaction of our basic needs, which is of fundamental value to us. Finally, homosapient order is a good that is as natural to the same extent that human beings are natural, which is to say fully natural.

By their very nature accounts of morality such as the order-based theory are destined to fall foul of Moore’s idea. But a theory that satisfactorily explains the origins and nature of morality could lead one to wonder whether the naturalistic fallacy might itself be fallacious. As well as dealing with origins, any such theory would also have to provide rational justification for engaging in moral behaviour, and for a theory to be satisfactory in all of these respects it would at least have to be coherent. I think the order-based theory measures up well in that regard. As well as coherence, however, the theory would have to be based on valid principles and formed from sound propositions. To my mind the principle of homosapient order is patently valid: we would simply not exist without some degree of homosapient order. The propositions that I have expounded are also reasonably defensible. I have argued that homosapient order is operatively real, and I believe human beings have been shown to have a need for homosapient order, that the need for homosapient order finds expression in the various human needs identified by Maslow, and that moral commendability and condemnnability can be explained in terms of hierarchical arrangements of needs (and therefore in terms of homosapient order). The foregoing propositions constitute the basis of the explanatory or descriptive part of the theory. In addition, I have shown that the need for Maslovian self-actualisation is characterised by the need for humaneness (defined as ‘principled consideration’), and that it is rationally justifiable for us to seek satisfaction of our needs. The order-based theory seems to me to be satisfactory from both a metaethical point of view and an ethical point
of view. I believe it has the resources to combat charges of naturalistic fallaciousness.

The various challenges to the proposed theory having been discussed, I can now bring the thesis to a conclusion.
11: CONCLUSION

To conclude the thesis I will consider whether the objectives that were listed in Sections 1.1 and 2.5 have been met.

Objective A: Explain how we came to be moral beings

I have argued that human needs can be traced to a fundamental need for homosapient order, which is an amalgam of physical order, social order and eudaimonic order. I have also argued that morality can be described and justified in terms of needs. The arguments culminated in the order-based theory of morality, which, as well as describing and justifying morality, explains the origin of morality—the answer being, because of the fundamental need just mentioned.

Objective B: Demonstrate that the proposed theory explains what right and good consist in

Right has been explained in terms of the effect of morally classifiable behaviour on the needs of agents and respondents. Homosapient order is a natural good for human beings; it is also the end (telos) of morally commendable behaviour.

Objective C: Show what kind of moral norms issue from the theory

The theory issues in humane norms. These include thoughtfulness, tolerance, empathy and reciprocity. The theory is also fundamentally egalitarian, in its assertion of equality of everyone’s basic needs. These are moral norms that are consistent with mainstream consequentialist and deontological theories.

Objective D: Show why adherence to norms generated by the theory is justifiable

The norms issuing from the theory stem from our putative need for humaneness. We act in a rationally justifiable manner when we act to satisfy our needs. Adherence to the norms of humaneness is therefore rationally justifiable.

Objective E: Show that the norms issuing from the theory are consistent with extant moral theory, both consequentialist and non-consequentialist

The rights specified in the UDHR are largely explainable in terms of our basic needs, and, according to order-based theory, all of our basic needs are expressions of the need for homosapient order. Rights are therefore explainable in terms of
homosapient order. Although some of the stipulations of the UDHR are controversial, those that are not would generally be embraced by deontologists. The order-based theory’s consequentialist credentials are more straightforward. The theory holds that the end of morally classifiable behaviour is homosapient order, which has been held to be a natural human good. The comments on Objective H below are also relevant to this objective.

Objective F: Differentiate the proposed theory from extant moral theories

The order-based theory provides answers to the questions of what good, right, bad and wrong all consist in, from a metaethical perspective. It is a broad ranging theory that also answers to the putative philosophical need. Whether that is enough to differentiate it from extant theories may be questionable. James Griffin doubts whether the sorts of ethics that can revolutionise motivation are plausible. And those that are plausible, he says, cannot revolutionise motivation.517 I would not want to claim that the order-based theory is revolutionary. It is certainly not that, but plausibility may be claimed for it because of the close fit between its prescriptions and those of other theories of ethics. Furthermore, the concept of homosapient order, which is novel, may be sufficient to warrant a claim of uniqueness. The concept is deeply involved in all of the metaethical, ethical and philosophical issues that have been raised.

Objective G: Show that the order-based theory provides a plausible secular foundation on which morality can be based

In Chapter 9 I argued that morality stems from our need for homosapient order. Homosapient order was shown to be real in the sense of being a state-of-being that is uniquely human.

Objective H: Show that the theory provides reasonable answers to the fundamental questions emanating from the consequentialist/non-consequentialist divide

The fundamental questions emanating from the consequentialist/non-consequentialist divide are, respectively: ‘what kind of person should I be?’ and ‘what ought I to do?’ To the consequentialist, the answer would be: I should be a humane person, because the need for humaneness is embedded in the need for

517 Griffin, p. 73.
homosapient order, and I will be the kind of person I want to be in the event that my need for humaneness is satisfied. Conversely, I will be inhumane if I deliberately set about frustrating someone else’s need for homosapient order. Guidelines for behaviour are derivable from our basic needs (see above, Objective C), thereby helping us decide what ought to be done in morally fraught situations; accordingly, the theory addresses the main concern of deontologists.

Objective I: Show that homosapient order is something more than merely a dream, that it is not too distant to be of any practical (i.e. moral) concern

Is homosapient order an unrealistic dream? The question arises from a point made by Dewey. The entire thesis may be viewed as a response to the question, and the answer is no. It is no on Dewey’s terms, because attainment of homosapient order by means of satisfying a basic need in effect constitutes an intermediate end. To satisfy any of our basic needs is a means to an overall end, as well as an end in itself. Our basic needs are certainly not distant from us: our survival and general well-being depend on their being met. Furthermore, the answer is no because homosapient order is something that exists in the world. It is operatively real as well as something that human beings need.

It seems to me that the objectives of the thesis may reasonably be claimed to have been achieved.
APPENDIX: A DIAGRAM OF THE THESIS

Human Life → Need for Homosapient Order (Pre-Moral) → Non-Morally Classifiable Behaviour

Morally Classifiable Behaviour

Beneficent Human Nature (Normal) → Satisfaction of the Need for Maslovian Self-Actualisation (Humaneness)

Maleficent Human Nature (Defective) → Satisfaction of the Maslovian Needs (Except Self-Actualisation) → Satisfaction of the Need for Malignant Self-Actualisation

Commendable → + (adds to)

Condemnable → (subtracts from)

Homosapient Order

Notes
(a) The arrow signifies that maleficently inclined people (as well as beneficent ones) may engage in morally classifiable behaviour that is commendable. A maleficent person need not impinge on others’ needs all of the time.
(b) Conversely to (a), there would be the occasional lapse into morally censurable behaviour by someone who is generally beneficent.

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