

ETHICAL NATURALISM DEFEATED

C. S. Lewis famously argued that if metaphysical naturalism is true, and our moral beliefs are a by-product of our evolution, then the “transcendental pretensions” of morality are “exposed for a sham.”¹ As Lewis understood it, the Darwinian account tells us that our various moral beliefs derive ultimately from deeply ingrained social instincts, which, along with the libido and the withdrawal reflex, have been hardwired in to further reproductive ends. Lewis concludes from this that the dictates of conscience are little more than an aggregate of subjective impulses, which, though distributed widely throughout our species, are no more capable of being true or false “than a vomit or a yawn.”² On naturalism, says Lewis, any claim to the effect that “I ought” is on a par with “I itch,” and “my impulse to serve posterity is just the same sort of thing as my fondness for cheese.”³ Morality is thus an “illusion,”⁴ little more than a “twist of the mind.”⁵ The naturalist who accepts the Darwinian account is thus driven to some variety of what Lewis saw as an untenable moral skepticism. The theist can provide a much more plausible reckoning of our moral beliefs.

But such an argument meets with some rather stiff resistance these days. When Lewis was writing, ethical naturalism was widely regarded as a lost cause, having been mortally wounded by G.E. Moore’s celebrated “Open Question” argument. And Moore’s own answer to the naturalist, a variety of non-naturalism that posited the existence of irreducibly moral facts or properties, had given way to varieties of non-cognitivism that dominated the metaethical landscape through the better part of the twentieth century, and which were, on one plausible interpretation, the true historical beneficiaries of Moore’s argument.⁶ Few of Lewis’s colleagues would have wished to defend moral realism

against his argument during this “heyday of analytic metaethics.”⁷ His critical contemporaries were more likely to reject both his theism and his moral realism, perhaps even suggesting that the two were equally afflicted of cognitive vacuity.

But a tribe of “stark raving moral realists”⁸ has settled upon the metaethical landscape, defending a variety of ethical naturalism that was not a serious option in Lewis’s—or Moore’s—day. According to this view, moral properties are either identical to, or supervenient upon, natural properties. And the relation between natural terms and moral terms is no more analytic than is the relation between “water” and “H₂O.” The view is thus impervious to Moore’s argument—at least in its original version.⁹ To Lewis’s talk of the “transcendental pretensions” of morality, adherents of the view might urge that morality never *needed* to put on such transcendental airs. Peter Railton, for one, has urged, “Moral values and imperatives need be grounded in nothing more transcendental than facts about man and his environment.”¹⁰ If this is so, then, once such facts are in place, one might think that an understanding of their *origins* is quite beside the point.

Further, in referring to morality as an “illusion” or a “sham,” Lewis’s language resonates with that of sociobiologists Michael Ruse and E.O. Wilson, who have conspired to tell us that “ethics as we understand it is an illusion fobbed off on us by our genes in order to get us to cooperate.”¹¹ Sociobiology is thus, perhaps, an unwitting ally to Lewis’s moral argument. But Ruse and Wilson have been indicted on the charge of “greedy reductionism.”¹² Granting that evolutionary forces have had an enormous influence in shaping our psychology and our cognitive faculties does not *in itself* preclude our arriving at true beliefs, some of which are of a moral nature. Perhaps natural

selection has merely provided us with the faculties necessary for rational deliberation, so that our moral beliefs are a function of practical reason as required by the most plausible theories of morality. Perhaps, as Philip Kitcher suggests, human morality is *Menschenwerk*, wrought over millennia of human cultural reflection upon the nature of man and the circumstances in the world in which he is placed.¹³ Railton, for instance, has argued that morality just is rationality from a social standpoint.¹⁴ Insofar as the Lewisian argument is wedded to widely discredited sociobiological assumptions, it is attacking a man of straw.

In this paper I argue that, whereas such objections contain insights that most certainly have a bearing on how we should think of the evolutionary implications for morality, nevertheless, the metaphysical naturalist who accepts a Darwinian account of the origins and nature of morality has a defeater for the belief in ethical naturalism, and, indeed, for any moral belief whatever. The Lewisian argument should be *adjusted* in light of these new developments in metaethics, but the adjusted version retains the conclusion that the metaphysical naturalist who embraces that Darwinian account ought not to be a moral realist.

I

Why think that a Darwinian account of the origins of human morality casts suspicion upon our ordinary moral beliefs? At first blush, at least, it appears that such an argument is guilty of the *genetic fallacy*. From *Belief B was produced by cause C* nothing whatsoever follows (deductively) regarding B's truth or falseness. Elliott Sober, however, has argued that some forms of genetic argument may be correct.¹⁵ Suppose we

can show that the explanation of someone's belief is *epistemically independent* of whatever would make the belief true or false. Consider Sober's eccentric colleague, Ben, who believes that he has 73 students in his class because he drew the number 73 from an urn filled with slips of paper numbered from 1 to 100. Drawing the number 73, Ben would believe that this was his enrollment *regardless of the actual number* of students in the class. According to Sober, Ben's belief is "probably false."

Might we offer a similar evolutionary argument for moral skepticism? Sober suggests that such an argument is a tall order because one would first have to identify (a) the processes of moral belief formation and (b) the would-be truth-makers for moral beliefs, and then show that (a) and (b) are independent.¹⁶ As Sober sees things, such an argument aims to show that "subjectivism" is true.¹⁷

But perhaps a kind of *moral agnosticism* will suffice so that we need not argue for the "probable falseness" of our moral beliefs. Judith Thomson suggests that any red-blooded moral realist should seek to defend the *thesis of moral objectivity*:

(TMO) It is possible to find out about some moral sentences that they are true.¹⁸

Of course, one may challenge TMO either by arguing of putative moral propositions that they are never true or that it is not possible to find out. The former route involves advancing a positive metaethical theory that either denies that "moral sentences" ever express moral propositions (because there just *are* no moral propositions), or denies that moral propositions are ever true, or else denies that their truth is mind-independent. The latter route simply involves arguing that no one is in a position to *know* whether any moral proposition is ever true (or, I suppose for that matter, whether there *are* any moral propositions). This is a sort of moral agnosticism, comparable to the position of the

religious agnostic who maintains that “God exists” expresses a proposition, but we simply cannot know which value to assign it.

To employ Sober’s language, one need not have a *positive* reason for thinking that moral beliefs are epistemically *independent* of any would-be truth-makers; skepticism is in order in the event that we *lack* any positive reason for thinking that there is epistemic dependence. And this situation obtains just in case the best explanation of those beliefs need not suppose that they are true.

It has been said that, for the (metaphysical) naturalist, “Darwinism is the only game in town.”¹⁹ While naturalism might be logically tenable apart from Darwinism, Darwin made it possible to be an intellectually fulfilled naturalist.²⁰ Naturalism sans Darwinism is a worldview at a loss for explanation.

Further, as Daniel Dennett has urged, Darwin’s idea is dangerous precisely because it appeals to a substrate-neutral algorithm that functions as a “universal acid”: it eats through—and transforms—everything. To appeal to natural selection to explain incisors and libidos, but to exclude the deepest springs of human behavior from such an account would seem to be a tenuous position to hold. Moral beliefs are not the sorts of things likely to be overlooked by natural selection because of the important role that they play in survival and reproductive success.²¹ Early ancestors who lacked the impulse to care for their offspring or to cooperate with their fellows would have left few to claim them as ancestors. So it seems that neither a naturalism bereft of Darwinism, nor a restricted Darwinism is a viable option. One is hardly out on a limb, then, in affirming with Sharon Street that, “the forces of natural selection have had a tremendous influence on the content of human evaluative judgments.”²²

According to the Darwinian account, it was reproductively advantageous that we have strong sentiments attached to certain behaviors. One might think that whether those behaviors are objectively right or wrong, whether they bear any moral properties over and above whatever natural properties they possess, is superfluous. It is at least plausible to suppose that the sentiments themselves would have appeared anyway. Darwin speaks of social instincts and sympathies that incline us toward cooperative behavior among our fellows. On such an account, our moral beliefs and the dictates of conscience have emerged ultimately because of their adaptive value. They have such value because they incline us towards adaptive behaviors, and a behavior is adaptive insofar as it tends toward reproductive success. Also, we may observe other species that manifest characteristic social behavior that lends itself to explanation in terms of reproductive fitness and almost certainly does not involve appeal to any moral categories.

Such an account need not suppose that each and every widespread belief or behavior is the direct product of natural selection. As Daniel Dennett wryly puts it, the fact that tribesmen have everywhere and always thrown their spears pointy-end first does not suggest a “pointy-end first gene.” Many such traits are instead to be attributed to “the general non-stupidity of the species.”²³ Indeed, C.S. Lewis’s character, Ransom, in *Out of the Silent Planet*, was surprised to discover that a boat constructed on Malacandra (Mars) was very much like a human-built boat. “Only later did he set himself the question, ‘What else could a boat be like?’” (The astute reader might also have noticed that Malacandran hunters throw *their* spears pointy-end first, as Dennett would have predicted.) Some things are just good ideas, and we may well suppose that some of our moral beliefs are good ideas as well.

Sharon Street distinguishes between *basic evaluative tendencies* and *full-fledged evaluative judgments*. The latter include our specific moral beliefs that might be formulated as moral principles or rules, and they may be explained by appeal to a variety of influences, cultural and otherwise. The former are “proto” forms of evaluative judgment that are unreflective and non-linguistic impulses towards certain behaviors that seem “called for.” She argues that “relentless selection pressure” has had a *direct* and “tremendous” influence on our basic evaluative tendencies and these, in turn, have had a major—but not necessarily overriding—effect on our actual moral beliefs or full-fledged evaluative judgments. While it may well be possible through rational reflection or cultural influence to resist the pull of this basic predisposition, nevertheless, it is within its scaffolds that all moral reflection takes place. Our reflective beliefs about the duties of parenthood or of friendship, for instance, arise from more basic parental and altruistic drives that predate and are presupposed by all such reflection.²⁴

This model for thinking of the evolutionary influences on our moral beliefs at once allows room for Kitcher’s *Menschenwerk*, and it marks off a large and important domain of human moral experience that is almost certainly *not* man made. Street’s “basic evaluative attitudes” correspond, I think, to what Mary Midgley calls “open instincts”—“programs with a gap.”²⁵ The “program” provides *general* directives or tendencies. The “gap” allows room for rational reflection regarding our moral beliefs, but their very rationality is conditional or hypothetical: *given* the program that has been bequeathed to us by our genes, some policies are better than others. But the program itself—with the general “moral” orientation that it determines—is precisely as it is due to its adaptive value given the contingencies of the evolutionary landscape. Even if the gap

is positively *cavernous* for humans, allowing for rational and moral deliberation, it is nevertheless found within the scope of our programming that is directly explained by appeal to natural selection. Moral reasoning would then appear to be *means-end* reasoning, where the ends have been laid down for us by natural selection. If this much is correct, then we have reason to suppose that those moral beliefs of ours that are *bedrock*—those with which we begin and to which we appeal in the construction and assessment of ethical theories—are largely the product of natural selection.

Looking around at other species, we see varying behaviors in varying circumstances of reproductive fitness. The maternal instinct of a sea turtle, for instance, drives her only to lay her eggs somewhere above the high tide mark. Sea turtles do not establish college funds for their children. And the difference between what constitutes good motherhood in turtles and that in humans is handily explained by appeal to natural selection and the circumstances of fitness. We seem, then, to have a clear case of non-moral means to non-moral ends—not unlike the advent of opposable thumbs or the gag reflex. If this is so, then have we any reason to think that our moral beliefs are best explained on the assumption that they are *true*?²⁶ With such considerations in mind, Tamler Sommers and Alex Rosenberg write,

The Darwinian explanation becomes the Darwinian Nihilist’s “explaining away” when it becomes apparent that the best explanation—blind variation and natural selection—for the emergence of our ethical belief does not require that these beliefs have truth-makers. To turn the Darwinian explanation into an “explaining away” the Nihilist needs only the uncontroversial scientific principle that if our

best theory of why people believe P does not require that P is true, then there are no grounds to believe P is true.²⁷

Darwinism, it seems, presents an undercutting defeater. We have no reason to believe that the best explanation for our moral beliefs involves their truth. And so, perhaps moral skepticism is in order.

II

How might the ethical naturalist reply? Nicholas Sturgeon has a pair of papers to which we might look for a promising rejoinder. “Moral Explanations” is Sturgeon’s reply to Gilbert Harman’s argument to the effect that moral facts, if such there are, appear to be explanatorily irrelevant. Like the argument of this paper, Harman’s is an epistemological argument for moral skepticism. Sturgeon’s later paper, “Nonmoral Explanations,” extends his discussion of the explanatory relevance of moral facts and considers whether any general nonmoral explanations—Darwinian explanations in particular—serve to undermine moral explanations. We might expect that, between the two discussions, there are the makings of a plausible reply to the present argument. Here, I’ll offer a brief account of each of Sturgeon’s arguments, attempting to lay bare the core of each of his respective replies. I’ll save my own assessment of Sturgeon’s arguments for part III.

Sturgeon’s target in “Moral Explanations” is Harman’s so-called “problem with ethics”—the concern that moral facts, if such there are, appear to be explanatorily irrelevant in a way that natural facts are not.²⁸ Hitler’s behavior, for example, may be fully explained by appealing only to certain natural facts about him, such as his anti-Semitism, monomania, and will to power. According to Harman, we need not suppose

that, over and above such natural facts, there is a moral fact of Hitler's depravity. Nor must we appeal to his actual depravity in order to explain our *belief* that he was depraved. "You need only make assumptions about the psychology or moral sensibility of the person making the moral observation."²⁹ Harman may thus be viewed as arguing in his own manner that we "have no reason to believe that the best explanation for our moral beliefs involves their truth." We've no good reason to suppose that the causes of those beliefs are dependent upon whatever would make them true.

Sturgeon replies first by noting that moral facts are commonly and plausibly thought to have explanatory relevance. Both Hitler's behavior and our belief that he was depraved are handily explained by his actual depravity, and this is, in fact, the default explanation. He observes, "Many moral explanations appear to be good explanations... that are not obviously undermined by anything else we know." "Sober people frequently offer such explanations of moral observations and beliefs," and "many of these explanations look plausible enough on the surface to be worth taking seriously."³⁰

Citing Quine's naturalized epistemology, Sturgeon notes, "We cannot decide whether one explanation is better than another without relying on beliefs we already have about the world."³¹ Quine's approach bears some affinities to the strategy of reflective equilibrium,³² which Stephen Darwal, et al, have identified as the epistemological method of Sturgeon and other naturalists.³³ The method, employed in both science and ethics, begins with certain considered judgments, and with the assumption that our theories, scientific and otherwise, are roughly correct,³⁴ then moves "dialectically in this way between plausible general theses and plausible views about cases, thus seeking a reflective equilibrium."³⁵ Sturgeon notes that, whereas he allows for the inclusion of

moral beliefs among the initial set, Harman does not. But, he argues, there is no non-question-begging justification for singling out moral beliefs as unwelcome in the initial set, while allowing those of a scientific or common sense nature.

Harman's argument requires us to consider the conditional, *If Hitler had done just what he did but was not morally depraved, we would, nevertheless, have believed that he was depraved.* But this calls for our entertaining the possibility

(H) Hitler would have done just what he did even had he not been morally depraved.

(H), in turn, presupposes that there is a possible world in which Hitler does what he does but is not morally depraved. One will seriously entertain such a counterfactual only in the event that one accepts

(H') There is a possible world W in which Hitler's natural properties are identical to those that he possesses in the actual world but in which Hitler is not depraved.

But Sturgeon's own moral theory invokes a supervenience thesis that might be put in the following form.

(S) For every world W, every natural property N and every moral property M, if M supervenes upon N in W, then for all worlds W*, if N obtains in W* then M obtains and supervenes upon N in W*.

Allowing that there is a world that includes N but not M requires either denying that M *actually* supervenes upon N or holding that (S) is false. And so (H') and (S) together entail that there is *no possible world* in which Hitler's having the personality and displaying the behavior that he did constitutes depravity. To get off the ground,

Harman's argument tacitly *assumes* that there are no moral facts or properties, which, of course, is the very point at issue.

Further, Harman must be understood to suppose that we would have *believed* that Hitler was depraved even if, despite having done all of the things that we know him to have done, he was *not*, in fact, depraved. One should be prepared to grant this point only if one has already granted that our whole moral theory is "hopelessly wrong."³⁶ But the fact that our theory *would* be wrong *were* this possible is no reason for either abandoning the theory or embracing the possibility. Thinking otherwise provides a recipe for skepticism of a more global variety.³⁷ Thus, "We should deny that any skeptical conclusion follows from this. In particular, we should deny that it follows that moral facts play no role in explaining our moral judgments."³⁸

In "Nonmoral Explanations" Sturgeon considers cases in which one might plausibly think that moral explanations are supplanted by nonmoral ones. He settles into an assessment of Allan Gibbard's Darwinian argument for a non-cognitivist interpretation of our moral beliefs as it is presented in Gibbard's *Wise Choices, Apt Feelings*.

Gibbard envisions early "bargaining situations" in which some form of cooperation between self-interested individuals proves beneficial for all involved. Here, "beneficial" means, roughly, getting what one wants out of a bargain, and the assumption is that getting what one wants has some reproductive advantage. The problem is that, unless self-interest is checked in some way, the bargaining—and thus, the beneficial cooperation—breaks down.

Suppose that, although each party to the bargain has an interest in getting as much as possible, each knows that, like him, the others are willing to retaliate if they are left with less than their share. There is a stable outcome in which each is satisfied with getting his share, that is, an outcome that is least likely to prompt retaliation on the part of any members, which could lead to a breakdown in the bargaining. Gibbard reasons that there would be a selection advantage to a certain kind of sentiment—a disposition inclining one toward certain behaviors—that would be attached to this stable outcome. The sentiment in question is a disposition to be angry or resentful if one receives less than one’s share and to be satisfied with an outcome in which one receives one’s entire share. With the advent of language humans came to use words that were functionally equivalent to our words “just” or “fair” to express the positive sentiment attached to an outcome in which goods are distributed in some roughly equal manner. Thus, there is fitness in a particular sentiment that would likely be distributed widely. Moral language describes or expresses this sentiment. The result is a form of non-cognitivism, or, at least, a variety of anti-realism with regard to moral properties.

Sturgeon’s reply takes the form of a dilemma: either Gibbard’s bargainers come to agree upon some determinate natural property that is the referent of terms like “fair” and “just,” or different individuals or groups come to favor different outcomes and thus competing conceptions of justice. The latter case provides no solution to the bargaining problem, and, if anything, produces even greater instability.³⁹ Thus, Gibbard’s evolutionary account must suppose eventual consensus. But this is a “potentially realist” story, since there is a property that humans have been able to detect, favor and *describe* as “just.” “Perhaps,” Sturgeon suggests, “our ancestors sometimes called bargaining

outcomes *just* because they really were.”⁴⁰ In this case, people have come to “care about justice” and “are also able to resolve disputes about it.” And perhaps “achieving consensus in debate might be a way...of detecting a property.”⁴¹ Why, then, Sturgeon asks, should we not think that Gibbard’s bargainers are “referring to a real property that they care about, and about which their views are often correct?”⁴²

Further, moral explanations that appeal to justice enjoy the same plausibility as do appeals to, say, Hitler’s depravity.

The justice of a society ... is supposed to stabilize it; and people are alleged to prosper precisely because of their justice. Of course, there is also a tradition that attacks this latter claim as a pious fiction. But the most prominent opposing view also treats justice as explanatory. That justice always pays, and that justice sometimes costs, are both views that cast justice as a property with causal efficacy.⁴³

If an equitable distribution of goods tends toward societal stability, and people have come to believe that such equity is just, then why not conclude that the fact that the bargaining outcome *is*, in fact, just, explains both the belief and the stability? Why not suppose that the non-moral evolutionary explanation *amplifies* rather than *undermines* the moral explanation?⁴⁴ Echoing his reply to Harman, Sturgeon notes that Gibbard’s account “does *nothing* whatever” to favor the “irrealist” account over the realist one. His general conclusion is that “nothing we know of our evolutionary history” supplies us with an undermining nonmoral explanation “or makes irrealism any more plausible than the moral realism that I am prepared to defend.”⁴⁵

In his replies to both Harman and Gibbard, Sturgeon relies upon the sorts of considered judgments that most of us share, and then observes that there is nothing in their respective arguments that should be thought to undermine the authority of those judgments. Harman begs the question against the moral realist. Gibbard's evolutionary story on its most plausible rendering is perfectly consistent with the sorts of things that ethical naturalists wish to say.

The legitimacy of reflective equilibrium as a method in ethics is the subject of some debate. I am of the opinion that something very much like it is how we must proceed in the construction, justification and assessment of our moral theories.⁴⁶ I think, for instance, that we ought not to strangle babies just to watch their faces turn blue. My belief is not justified by way of inference. Rather, it appears to be a part of my original equipment, and I assume that anyone with a properly functioning conscience comes similarly equipped. You offer an ethical theory that entails that baby-strangling is laudable, or at least that I cannot know that it is wrong. I reject your theory, impressive as it may otherwise be, on the grounds that it has "iniquitous implications."⁴⁷ This is business as usual in moral philosophy.

But, whereas Sturgeon claims that moral explanations and beliefs are "not obviously undermined by anything else we know," as we have seen, our evolutionary argument for skepticism purports to do just that: Darwinian explanations serve as undercutting defeaters of our moral beliefs. Given the evolutionary account, there is good reason to suppose that certain of our most fundamental moral beliefs—Street's "basic evaluative tendencies" or Midgley's "open instincts"—are the *direct* product of natural selection and are in place because of their reproductive advantage. If this is so,

then we have reason to think that the very considered judgments with which we begin in reflective equilibrium are fitness-aimed—or, at least, their very plausibility is a function of that disposition that has been bequeathed by our genes. And unless we have some reason for supposing that such fitness-aimed beliefs are also truth-aimed, how shall we assuage Sharon Street’s worry that “If the fund of evaluative judgments with which human reflection began was thoroughly contaminated with illegitimate influence ... then the tools of rational reflection were equally contaminated, for the latter are always just a subset of the former.”⁴⁸ How shall we rule out the following possibility described by Michael Ruse?

The Darwinian argues that morality simply does not work (from a biological perspective), unless we believe that it is objective. Darwinian theory shows that, in fact, morality is a function of (subjective) feelings; but it shows also that we have (and must have) the illusion of objectivity.⁴⁹

Simply urging that moral explanations are widely and plausibly thought to be valid fails to address the Darwinian skeptic’s assertion that her theory not only explains our *having* such beliefs, but also the fact that we have an undying confidence in their *truth*. So far as I can see, nothing that Sturgeon says in his replies either to Harman or Gibbard serves to allay such worries. The skeptical worry that arises from Darwinian considerations, then, is that our moral beliefs are the product of mechanisms that were fitness-aimed, and such an explanation seems to compete with their being truth-aimed.

Sturgeon is correct, I think, in his observation that there are occasions on which our moral beliefs might be said to be *amplified* rather than undermined by accompanying non-moral explanations. For example, to the Freudian charge that theistic belief is the

product of “wish-fulfillment,” the theist may reply that such a feature of human psychology is just what we should expect if theism is true.⁵⁰ Is the Darwinian account of our moral beliefs likewise just what we should expect in the event that those beliefs are true? Is there a plausible story available to the ethical naturalist that will do such work? Such a story would presumably provide some reason for supposing that our moral beliefs are indeed truth-aimed, and, given the evolutionary account that we have been considering, this would amount to the claim that basic human moral predispositions were fitness-conferring *because* the beliefs that they engender are *true*. So far as I can tell, Sturgeon provides no such account.

On some externalist theory of justification, such as a causal theory, one might have, as Norman Daniels puts it, a “little story that gets told about why we should pay homage ultimately to those [considered] judgments and indirectly to the principles that systematize them.”⁵¹ The account might follow that which is offered on behalf of ordinary perceptual or memory beliefs, or the everyday conclusions that we reach by induction. Quine offers such a story with a Darwinian spin to inspire confidence in our ability to acquire knowledge of the world around us. “Creatures inveterately wrong in their inductions have a pathetic but praiseworthy tendency to die before reproducing their kind,” he suggests.⁵² Alvin Plantinga, of course, has challenged such stories with what he calls “Darwin’s Doubt.” The connection between fitness-conferring behavior and true belief might not be so certain as Quine suggests.⁵³

Darwin should be even more dubious when such stories involve our moral beliefs. A vindicating story regarding our moral beliefs that followed Quine’s lead would maintain that such beliefs are fitness-conferring because they are true. But which is more

plausible, given the Darwinian account: (a) we sense a deep obligation to care for our children because this basic instinct confers reproductive fitness (irrespective of the question of truth), or (b) the instinct is fitness-conferring because the resulting belief is *true*? Darwin's theory suggests the former.

Have we any reason to suppose that our current stock of moral predispositions would *always* be favored by natural selection? There may be such things as “forced moves” in evolutionary design space. As Daniel Dennett has pointed out, given locomotion, stereoscopic vision is likely a forced move. Should we think that the actual dictates of conscience as we experience them are likewise the result of a forced move? I don't see that we should. The natural world is replete with examples of instinctual behaviors that display anything but equitable treatment, even among conspecifics. And in such cases, plausible Darwinian stories are in the offing. Darwin suggested that, whereas any social animal that had developed intellectual faculties on a par with actual human intellectual faculties would be highly likely to develop a “conscience”—prompting it towards certain behaviors with a strong sense of their appropriateness, along with the corollary emotions of guilt, shame and remorse—the actual directives of that conscience might have been significantly different. Thus, he suggested that the following counterfactual, involving an “extreme case,” is true.

If ... men were reared under precisely the same conditions as hive-bees, there can hardly be a doubt that our unmarried females would, like the worker-bees, think it a sacred duty to kill their brothers, and mothers would strive to kill their fertile daughters, and no one would think of interfering.⁵⁴

Given the actual conditions of our “rearing,” we have come to believe that our children and siblings are deserving of our care and respect, and that equitable bargaining outcomes are just. But here we are asked to imagine a world in which the resulting fundamental moral orientation—Midgley’s open instincts—is different. Darwin appears to countenance the possibility of a species that is prompted, *even upon reflection*, to behave in ways that are inequitable, and, from our standpoint, unjust. If rational and moral reflection takes its cue from a more primitive predisposition, then have we any reason for supposing that such reflection—the product of culture—would inevitably settle upon equitable treatment?

I believe that such Darwinian counterfactuals cast grave doubts upon Sturgeon’s moral explanations for our moral beliefs. Consider the sort of world that Darwin envisions. Here, *Infanticide is a sacred duty* is a belief that is fitness-conferring. Reflective equilibrium in such a world would presumably cast the belief in a good light. Is the belief also *true*?

One might expect that a straightforward implication of Sturgeon’s supervenience thesis would be that such beliefs are false. We learned earlier that there is *no possible world* in which Hitler (or anyone) has just those natural properties that Hitler actually displays but is not depraved. Indeed, Sturgeon is of the Kripkean conviction that moral terms rigidly designate natural properties. Thus, moral terms function in much the same way as natural kind terms in that they pick out natural properties and track those same properties across worlds. Thus, if infanticide is *in fact* wrong, then we might expect Sturgeon to conclude that it would be wrong even in those worlds in which it is regularly practiced and celebrated.

But to insist that our moral terms rigidly designate specific earthly natural properties to which human sentiments have come to be attached appears to be an instance of what Judith Thomson has called “metaphysical imperialism.” In seeking the reference of “good” as used in “this is a good hammer,” Thomson suggests that the natural property that best serves here is “being such as to facilitate hammering nails in in manners that conduce to satisfying the wants people typically hammer nails in to satisfy.” She opts for this property as opposed to the more determinate properties of “being well-balanced, strong, with an easily graspable handle, and so on.”⁵⁵ Even though *we* may find that the latter set of properties coextends with those that “conduce to satisfying the wants that people typically hammer nails in to satisfy,” there are all sorts of “odd possible worlds” in which people typically have quite different wants for which deviant hammers come in handy. There are worlds in which “large slabs of granite” do the best job in this regard. And so we are being metaphysical imperialists if we presume to impose *our* nail-hammering wants upon denizens of those worlds. She thus fixes upon a property that is less determinate than those that characterize hammers of earthly goodness: it is good insofar as it *answers to wants*, and chunks of granite serve well in this respect in some possible worlds.

The ethical *non*-naturalist might very well maintain that the “justice” in such worlds is ill-conceived and that natural selection has had an unfortunate and distorting influence there, alleging that some *transcendent* principle of justice as equality is among the verities. Russ Shafer-Landau, for instance, compares moral laws to mathematical or logical laws, and asks why the former should be any more problematic than the latter.⁵⁶ If Twin Earth logicians have a penchant for affirming the consequent, then they stand in

need of correction. There is certainly nothing “imperialistic” about that. But our ethical naturalist has identified justice as a particular set of natural properties upon which human evolution has, in fact, converged. Whatever circumstances of justice have obtained on earth are contingent and fail to obtain in those Darwinian worlds. It seems that we’ve no more reason to think that *earthly* justice is normative there than we have for denying that those denizens, who lack C-fibers, ever experience pain.⁵⁷

Should Sturgeon allow that such beliefs are *true*, as well as fitness-conferring, in such worlds?⁵⁸ Suppose so. Then it would seem that either Sturgeon’s supervenience thesis is false, since the world in question is one in which wrongness fails to supervene upon the relevant natural properties, or the *actual* supervenience base is something different from what we might have imagined. The sacredness of infanticide might be *in virtue* of the fact that it is conducive to fitness—so that truth follows fitness, so to speak—or it may be fitness-conferring *because* it is true. Either way, Sturgeon’s own ethical theory will be in for some readjustment along unexpected and, I think, implausible, lines. Whatever we say of the truth conditions of *Infanticide is a sacred duty* in that Darwinian world will function as a universal acid, bearing implications for the shared moral beliefs of the actual world—if the actual world is similarly Darwinian.

If the truth-maker there is the belief’s conduciveness to reproductive fitness, then, presumably, our own moral beliefs, opposed as they are to those in that Darwinian world, will be true in virtue of their conduciveness to fitness here. Did Sturgeon wish to say, implausibly, that the moral properties of an action supervene upon the overall reproductive advantage that it confers?

If, on the other hand, the counterfactual beliefs in those Darwinian worlds are

fitness-conferring *because* they are true, then, given the supervenience thesis, it would seem that the moral properties that obtain in that world supervene upon natural properties that may be found in the actual world as well as in those worlds, and, thus, a natural property that is common to both the nurturing and the strangling of babies.⁵⁹ And, of course, there is no reason to limit the scope of such Darwinian counterfactuals to Darwin's particular example. Are there Darwinian worlds in which manifestly inequitable arrangements are deemed just, in which the notion of individual rights is excoriated as a dangerous heresy,⁶⁰ or in which someone with the character of a Hitler—Schitler, perhaps—is deemed a saint? Then the natural properties, upon which justice and injustice or depravity and saintliness supervene, are neither equity nor inequity, cruelty or kindness but something that is less determinate and serves as the genus for these seemingly opposed species of moral properties.⁶¹ Whether the corresponding moral principle will be sufficiently determinate to ground a recognizable and robust version of moral realism might well be doubted.

Perhaps Sturgeon or some other ethical naturalist can offer some account that sits comfortably with the implications of Darwinian counterfactuals. My present argument is not that there is no possibly true story that can be told. However, in considering the sorts of circumstances that Darwin describes, it seems that the most plausible explanation is that such counterfactual moral beliefs are formed as the result of selection pressures that are themselves in place due to the contingencies of the evolutionary landscape—contingencies that are morally indifferent. Such beliefs are evolutionary means to non-moral reproductive ends. While ethical naturalists in those worlds no doubt argue for the

supervenience of the moral upon the natural, the efficacy of moral explanations, and the existence of corresponding moral facts, we should, I think, regard them as mistaken.

But if the moral beliefs of the actual world have also taken their cue from predispositions that were fitness-conferring, then it is hard to see why our own ethical naturalists are in any better position so to argue.

IV

I suggested earlier that the ethical non-naturalist may have a ready reply to the argument from Darwinian counterfactuals. If moral properties transcend the natural world, then one might think that certain natural properties bear a *necessary* relation to the moral properties that they exemplify, regardless of any evolutionary possibilities. But the non-naturalist who is also a metaphysical naturalist seems to have problems of his own in the face of such Darwinian counterfactuals. If moral beliefs are ultimately the product of whatever selection pressures were in place given the contingencies of the evolutionary landscape, and if there is a vast range of possible outcomes, how is it that unguided human evolution on earth has resulted in just those moral beliefs that accord with the verities? A sort of “moral fine-tuning argument” is suggested. The theist may have an advantage just here.

Consider, for example, Robert Adams’s theistic framework for ethics as presented in his *Finite and Infinite Goods*. Adams identifies moral values with certain “excellences,” and each is such in virtue of its resemblance to the excellence of God. If this is so, and if divine excellence is fixed across worlds, then, presumably, creaturely excellences are similarly invariant. The moral beliefs described in our Darwinian counterfactuals are false.⁶² Adams would agree with Sturgeon that there is no possible

world in which anyone has the character of an Adolph Hitler but is not depraved. And this is true in virtue of the relation that such traits bear to the divine excellences in all such worlds.⁶³ Adams's theistic view thus provides the metaphysical underpinnings for speaking of the necessary truth of moral judgments.

But more important for our present purposes is the *epistemological* role that God plays in a view such as Adams's. Such an account comes complete with an explanation for the general reliability of those moral beliefs with which we engage in reflective equilibrium.

If we suppose that God directly or indirectly causes human beings to regard as excellent approximately those things that are Godlike in the relevant way, it follows that there is a causal and explanatory connection between facts of excellence and beliefs that we may regard as justified about excellence, and hence it is in general no accident that such beliefs are correct when they are.⁶⁴

The theist is thus in a position to offer Daniels' "little story" that would explain the general reliability of considered judgments. Certain of our moral beliefs—in particular, those that are presupposed in all moral reflection—are truth-aimed because human moral faculties are designed to guide human conduct in light of moral truth.

Sturgeon is correct to observe in reply to Harman that we have no more reason to be skeptical about our moral beliefs than we have for those other beliefs of common life. I am as certain that recreational baby-strangling is wrong as I am that I have a head and that it is not made of glass. Neither belief is had by way of inference. Both seem warranted. And both are such as to be accepted ineluctably by all people whose faculties are in good repair. But the theist can explain why this is so in a way that the naturalist

cannot. Our moral faculties have been fashioned in the “same shop” by “the same artist”⁶⁵ as our other cognitive faculties.⁶⁶

¹ C.S. Lewis, *Miracles* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 2001; Originally published 1947), p. 59.

² *Miracles*, p. 58.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ C.S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain* (New York: Macmillan, 1943), p. 20.

⁶ See Stephen Darwall, Allan Gibbard and Peter Railton, “Toward *Fin de siecle Ethics*,” *Philosophical Review* Volume 101, Number 1 (January 1992): 115-189. They observe that Prichard, Nowell-Smith, and others saw the real force of the argument as highlighting the problem of the normative import of *any* descriptive account of the good, regardless of where alleged moral facts are located, in the natural world or elsewhere.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Peter Railton’s self-description in “Moral Realism,” *Philosophical Review*, Volume 95, Issue 2 (April, 1986), p. 165.

⁹ Terence Horgan and Mark Timmons offer an interesting version of Moore’s argument involving a “Moral Twin Earth” thought experiment in “Trouble for New Wave Moral Semantics: The ‘Open Question Argument’ Revived,” *Philosophical Papers* (1992): 153-175.

¹⁰ Peter Railton, “Moral Realism,” *Philosophical Review* XCV (April, 1986), p. 201.

¹¹ “Evolution of Ethics,” p. 51.

¹² The term is introduced by Daniel Dennett in *Darwin’s Dangerous Idea* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995). Wilson is a “greedy reductionist” in Dennett’s sense in that he assumes that human behavior and culture is reined in on a short genetic leash. Genetic explanations for widely distributed behaviors and beliefs supplant more plausible cultural explanations.

¹³ Thus, Philip Kitcher writes, “All that selection may have done for us is to equip us with the capacity for various social arrangements and the capacity to formulate ethical rules. Recognizing that not every trait we care to focus on need have been the target of natural selection, we shall no longer be tempted to argue that any respectable history of our ethical behavior must identify some selective advantage for those beings who first adopted a system of ethical precepts. It is entirely possible that evolution fashioned the basic cognitive capacities—*alles ubriges ist Menschenwerk*.” *Vaulting Ambition* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1985), p. 418.

¹⁴ “Moral Realism,” pp. 184ff.

¹⁵ Elliott Sober, *From a Biological Point of View* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 93-113.

¹⁶ Sharon Street has recently presented the “value realist” with a “Darwinian Dilemma” on just this point. Either there is a relation or there is not. If there is not, and if we suppose that evolution has shaped our basic evaluative attitudes, then moral skepticism is in order. If there *is* a relation, then it is either that moral beliefs have reproductive fitness *because* they are true (the “tracking” relation), or we have the moral beliefs that we have because of the fitness that they conferred (the “adaptive link” account). But the tracking account is implausible from a scientific standpoint. And the adaptive link account suggests some variety of non-realism. See “A Darwinian Dilemma for Realist Theories of Value,” *Philosophical Studies* (2006) 127: 109-166.

¹⁷ Sober’s notion of “subjectivism” here is perhaps a bit idiosyncratic. He sets it off against “realism” and “conventionalism,” where the latter includes any view that maintains that the truth of any ethical statement is mind-dependent. “Subjectivism” is the view that “no normative ethical statement is true.” Thus, he has

in mind non-cognitivism, error theory and the like. Cf. Ibid. pp. 100-101.

¹⁸ Gilbert Harman and Judith Thomson, *Moral Relativism and Moral Objectivity* (Blackwell Publishers: Oxford, 1996), p. 68. Where Thomson speaks of *sentences* as true or false, I shift my discussion to *propositions* in the immediate discussion to come.

¹⁹ A catchy phrase. I've heard and read Alvin Plantinga saying this. Tamler Sommers and Alex Rosenberg have also said this (in the article cited below). Now I've started saying it.

²⁰ "Although atheism might have been *logically* tenable before Darwin, Darwin made it possible to be a intellectually fulfilled atheist." So writes Richard Dawkins in *The Blind Watchmaker* (New York: Norton, 1986), p. 6.

²¹ Tamler Sommers and Alex Rosenberg, "Darwin's Nihilistic Idea," *Philosophy and Biology* 18 (November, 2003), p. 659.

²² "A Darwinian Dilemma for Realist Theories of Value," p. 113.

²³ *Darwin's Dangerous Idea*, p. 485. .

²⁴ Perhaps we have an illustration of the sort of distinction that Street has in mind in a recent striking example of cultural behavior among dolphins. Bottlenose dolphins off of Australia have been spotted wearing sea sponges on their snouts. The sponges protect them from sharp objects and stinging marine animals while foraging on the bottom. Further, the behavior appears to be passed on exclusively from mothers to daughters. As a Washington Post article puts it, "An international team of researchers has produced evidence that the animals' antics represent a form of culture, which would add the dolphins to an elite group of species that pass traditions down through generations without being compelled by their genes." It is highly unlikely that this behavior is the product of a sponge-on-the-snout gene. It is, to paraphrase Philip Kitcher, *delphinwerk*. But it is not *at all* unlikely that the mothers' behavior in rearing their daughters and passing on such Good Ideas to them *is* explained by appeal to natural selection. As one might put it, basic delphine maternal behavior is "not just a good idea; it's the law."

²⁵ Mary Midgley, *Beast and Man* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 53. She notes, for example, that, while the basic directive to *come home* is instinctual, it is *open* in that there are many ways of doing so. David Hume observed rationality in nest-building birds. Nesting itself is an end to which they are directed by their animal nature, but one can observe deliberate selection of the right materials, as some items are rejected for

others.

²⁶ Consider Alvin Plantinga's example of an undercutting defeater (borrowed from Pollock): "You visit a factory: the items ["widgets"] coming down the assembly line look red and you form the belief that they are indeed red, a belief that has warrant by virtue of the way you are appeared to. You are then told by a local authority that this part of the assembly line is a quality control module, where the items are irradiated by red light in order to make it easier to detect a certain kind of flaw. You then no longer believe that the items you are looking at are red—not because you have reason to believe that they are some other color, but because your belief that they are red has been undermined by what you were told." Might we argue that we are in the same position regarding the moral properties of actions as we are regarding the color of widgets? See Alvin Plantinga, *Warrant and Proper Function* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 41.

²⁷ Tamlar Somers and Alex Rosenberg, "Darwin's Nihilistic Idea," p. 667. One wonders why this account of warrant and undercutting defeaters should be regarded as a *scientific* principle.

²⁸ Gilbert Harman, *The Nature of Morality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977).

²⁹ *Ibid.* p. 6.

³⁰ "Moral Explanations," p. 239.

³¹ "Moral Explanations," p. 249.

³² Richmond Campbell considers the connections between naturalized epistemology and wide reflective equilibrium in "Moral Epistemology," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/moral-epistemology/>.

³³ Stephen Darwal, Allan Gibbard and Peter Railton identify Sturgeon's method (as well as that of other "nonreductionist" naturalists) as reflective equilibrium in "Toward Fin de siecle Ethics: Some Trends," *Philosophical Review*, Vol. 101, No. 1 (January 1992), p. 169ff. Sturgeon explicitly endorses the method of reflective equilibrium by name in "Nonmoral Explanations," *Philosophical Perspectives*, Vol. 6 (1992), p. 101.

³⁴ The strategy is generally seen as committed to a coherentist theory of justification, which is internalist in nature. Whereas proponents of wide reflective equilibrium begin with certain "considered beliefs," these are revisable as a result of the give-and-take between such beliefs, their systemizing principles, and other

background theories. Foundationalists, on the other hand, are said to begin with a set of “privileged” beliefs, homage to which is justified by some “little story” (as Daniels puts it) about their credentials as properly basic. Systemizing principles are then sought and, in turn, applied to more difficult cases. Sturgeon’s *apparent* endorsement of a causal theory of justification may be thought to provide one of these “little stories.” (However, certain varieties of foundationalism—those of a Reidian bent, for instance—may regard even basic beliefs as in principle revisable in light of potential defeaters.) See Norman Daniels, “Wide Reflective Equilibrium and Theory Acceptance in Ethics,” *Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 76, No. 5 (May 1979): 256-282. See also Nicholas Sturgeon, “Brandt’s Moral Empiricism,” *Philosophical Review* 91 (1982), p. 394, n. 9. Sturgeon suggests there that, whereas Brandt refers to reflective equilibrium as a kind of “intuitionism,” that term should be reserved for foundationalism in ethics.

³⁵ Sturgeon, “Nonmoral Explanations,” p. 101.

³⁶ “Moral Explanations,” p. 251.

³⁷ I would believe myself to be working on a notebook computer in a coffee shop if my experiences were identical but were the virtual reality projections of the *Matrix*. But this possibility is no temptation to question the veridicality of my present experiences.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ “We have replaced competing egoists with competing fanatics,” p. 107.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.* p. 106.

⁴⁴ “There are cases in which we are at least provisionally more confident of the truth of a moral explanation than we are of any precise view about which nonmoral facts the explanatory moral fact supervenes on or consists in; and we appeal to nonmoral explanations of the same explanandum to help settle the question. This can happen when it is central to our idea of a moral quality—as it is, I believe, to our idea of the virtues, individual and social—that it play a certain causal role. If we expect social justice to be a condition that will stabilize a society in normal circumstances, and without undue reliance on deceit or coercion, then we can test competing conceptions of justice by investigating the (nonmoral) question of which conditions

will have this effect, and amplify our provisional moral explanation accordingly” (Ibid. p. 98).

⁴⁵ Ibid. p. 112.

⁴⁶ Utilitarians often criticize the appeal to moral “intuitions” on the grounds that such may merely be due to the potentially corrupting influences of culture, etc. But Norman Daniels observes that utilitarians themselves must invoke such considered judgments at some juncture if they are to justify their theories of ethics and of value. Indeed, such appear to be inescapable for any realist theory. See Norman Daniels, “Reflective Equilibrium” Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, “<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/reflective-equilibrium/#4.1>. Sturgeon suggests that those moral philosophers who challenge the method on metaethical grounds should consider the implications of their issuing the same challenge against its use in *metaethics*--as it appears indispensable there as well. See his “Nonmoral Explanations,” p. 101.

⁴⁷ Mary Midgley, “Duties Concerning Islands” in Donald Vandaveer and Christine Pierce, *People, Penguins and Plastic Trees* 1st edition (Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1986), p. 157.

⁴⁸ Street, “Darwinian Dilemma,” p. 125.

⁴⁹ *Taking Darwin Seriously*, p. 253.

⁵⁰ Alvin Plantinga’s reply to the Freudian *de jure* objection to theistic belief bears interesting similarities to Sturgeon’s reply to Harman. On the assumption that theism is false, Freud is correct in his assertion that wish-fulfillment is not truth-aimed. And, as Sturgeon has argued, on the assumption that our moral theories are false, Harman’s non-moral explanations for moral belief serve as undercutting defeaters. But neither is entitled to the assumption without some *de facto* argument for the improbability or falseness of the respective beliefs.

⁵¹ Norman Daniels, “Wide Reflective Equilibrium and Theory Acceptance in Ethics,” p. 265.

⁵² W.V. Quine, “Natural Kinds,” in *Ontological Relativity and Other Essays* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), p. 126.

⁵³ See Alvin Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 218-240. See also Plantinga, “Reply to Beilby’s Cohorts,” in James K. Beilby, ed., *Naturalism Defeated?* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2002), pp. 204-275.

⁵⁴Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man* in Mortimer Adler, ed., *The Great Books of the Western World*, vol. 49 (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1952), p. 305. E. O. Wilson muses similarly regarding termites. A termite queen's "State-of-the-Colony" address extols the virtues of the love of darkness, the mutual eating of feces from nest mates, and cannibalism ("it is more blessed to be eaten than to eat"), while excoriating the evil of personal rights. See Edward O. Wilson, *Consilience* (New York: Vintage Books, 1999), p. 161.

⁵⁵*Moral Relativism and Moral Objectivity*, p. 135.

⁵⁶Russ Shafer-Landau, *Whatever Happened to Good and Evil?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 77.

⁵⁷It is, I think, with such considerations in mind that Horgan and Timmons speak of "conceptual chauvinism"—a position akin to Thomson's *metaphysical* imperialism—and warn of "the mistaken attempt to tether the meaning and reference of the relevant terms too tightly to a theory that has some special connection to human beings." See Terence Horgan and Mark Timmons, "From Moral Realism to Moral Relativism in One Easy Step," *Critica* XXVIII, No. 83 (August 1996): 3-39.

⁵⁸Of course, another option is to suggest that such beliefs are *neither* true nor false. But it would be difficult to quarantine this implication so that it holds only in those Darwinian worlds.

⁵⁹The set of natural properties that form the supervenience base might, after all, be rather complex, taking into account more than a bare description of an action, but the action performed under varying sets of circumstances.

⁶⁰See note 54.

⁶¹One unhappy result here is that those more determinate natural properties that are favored by reflective equilibrium would prove to be merely accidental and coextensive features of morality. If there is some natural property N that is common to both equitable and inequitable bargaining outcomes, and upon which justice supervenes, then N, and not equity, defines the essence of justice. This would appear to be the moral equivalent of the suggestion that *water* is *whatever fills a world's oceans*, so that earthly H₂O and Twin-Earthly XYZ both qualify as water. But then H₂O is not the essence of the stuff that we call "water." (Note that N *could* be conduciveness to reproductive fitness, so that our two suggestions above would seem

to converge.)

⁶² And, if God's existence is necessary and he is essentially perfect, the Darwinian counterfactuals themselves are suspect. We then have reason for denying that moral agents might have been created with native moral beliefs that are systematically mistaken.

⁶³ Indeed, Adams speaks of the "morally horrible" which typically involves a violation of the "sanctity of human life," which, in turn, is grounded in the excellence of the personhood of God. See *Finite and Infinite Goods*, pp. 104-121. Hitler's depravity is thus partly understood in terms of his failure to regard human life as sacred.

⁶⁴ Robert Adams, *Finite and Infinite Goods: A Framework for Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 70.

⁶⁵ I allude, of course, to Thomas Reid's language in his *Inquiry* (VI. XX. 5). There, he maintains that memory, the senses, and reason are the work of the same artificer. Elsewhere, he maintains that "it is not more evident, that there is a real distinction between true and false, in matters of speculation, than that there is a real distinction between right and wrong in matters of conduct." See Thomas Reid, *Inquiry and Essays* ed. By Ronald E. Beanblossom and Keith Lehrer (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1983), p. 317.

⁶⁶ I wish to thank Peter Byrne, Paul Copan, William Lane Craig, James Sennett and David Werther for their comments on criticisms of earlier drafts of this paper. Thanks, also, to anonymous referees for *Faith and Philosophy*, as well as to members of the British Society for Philosophy of Religion for substantial and helpful comments and suggestions.