

# Contents

<i>Notes on Contributors</i>	vi
Introduction	1
1 'Our Natural Guide . . .': Conscience, 'Nature', and Moral Experience <i>John Cottingham</i>	11
2 Basic Goods, Practical Insight, and External Reasons <i>Christopher Tollefsen</i>	32
3 The Fact/Value Distinction <i>Christopher Martin</i>	52
4 Incommensurability and Basic Goods: A Tension in the New Natural Law Theory <i>Henry S. Richardson</i>	70
5 The Polymorphy of Practical Reason <i>Timothy Chappell</i>	102
6 The Structure and Content of the Good <i>David S. Oderberg</i>	127
7 Harming and Wronging: The Importance of Normative Context <i>Suzanne Uniacke</i>	166
8 Law, Liberalism, and the Common Good <i>Jacqueline A. Laing</i>	184
9 'Double Effect' or Practical Wisdom? <i>Gerard J. Hughes</i>	217
10 Beyond Double Effect: Side-Effects and Bodily Harm <i>Helen Watt</i>	236
11 Intention, Foresight, and Success <i>Mark C. Murphy</i>	252
<i>Index</i>	269

# 1

## ‘Our Natural Guide...’: Conscience, ‘Nature’, and Moral Experience

*John Cottingham*

### **1 Introduction: The empiricist appropriation of the ‘natural’**

The term ‘natural’, together with its cognates, is among the most problematic in the philosophical vocabulary, and in any discussion involving the term it is very important to be aware of the way in which its traditional meaning has been all but erased in current philosophical usage. In contemporary philosophical debate, the word ‘natural’ is most frequently associated with the programme known as ‘naturalism’, which has become something of a default agenda in modern analytic philosophy. Though it is often not precisely defined, it signals, very roughly, a determination to account for everything there is without any appeal to supernatural (often pejoratively called ‘spooky’) or other metaphysically charged explanations. In the sphere of moral philosophy, the programme aims to explain the realm of the normative (including the domain of moral obligation) in broadly empirical terms – as somehow part of, continuous with, or in some sense derivable from, the ordinary natural phenomenal world around us.

This ‘empirical naturalist’ programme, to use a phrase coined by Stephen Darwall, has origins that stretch back to the early-modern period: in the sphere of moral philosophy it includes such figures as Hobbes, Cumberland, Hutcheson, and Hume, all of whom were, as Darwall puts it, ‘driven primarily by the desire to account for normativity in a way consistent with an empiricist epistemology and naturalist metaphysics’.<sup>1</sup> One strand in this early-modern or Enlightenment agenda was the attempt to reduce ethics to psychology – for example, to explain the obligations we are under, or feel ourselves to be under, by reference to internal sentiments, drives, impulses, motives, or propensities.

David Hume perhaps represents the summit of this psychologising agenda (partly anticipating what Kant was later to call his Copernican revolution – the relocating of supposedly objective realities as properties or preconditions of subjective experience). Just as causal necessity (at least on one standard interpretation of Hume<sup>2</sup>) dissolves away as an objective power and boils down to no more than a habituated internal expectation in the observer, so in the same way Hume tells us that if we examine wilful murder ‘in all lights’, we will be unable to detect anything in the action itself that can be called *vice*: ‘the vice entirely escapes you as long as you consider the object. You can never find it, till you turn your reflexion into your own breast, and find a sentiment of disapprobation, which arises in you...’<sup>3</sup> The supposed advantage of such a programme, for many of these early naturalisers, as for their modern successors, was that it purportedly allowed morality to be explained in terms of perfectly ordinary occurrences – the sentiments and inclinations we find arising naturally within us. Hence the domain of morality was in principle no more ‘special’ or discontinuous with ordinary natural phenomena than any other psychological state we experience, such as a feeling of fear or an appetite for food. Of course, a supplementary ‘error theory’ was needed to explain why so many people had hitherto mistakenly viewed morality as something objective and supra-personal. Here again one could try to play the ‘Copernican’ or projectivist card, citing the mind’s propensity (as Hume graphically put it) to ‘spread itself on external objects’.<sup>4</sup>

Although by no means all the empirical-naturalist moralists took so radical a line as Hume, the general tendency of this movement was to attempt to make moral philosophy into a branch of natural science; in the words of Richard Cumberland, writing at the end of the seventeenth century, the aim was to ‘resolve [t]he Whole of *moral Philosophy* into *natural Observations* known by the Experience of all men, or into Conclusions of true *Natural Philosophy*’.<sup>5</sup> Hunger and thirst were natural phenomena – in principle, perfectly proper subjects for experiential science. Very well, in the same way your feeling that you should return the money you borrowed yesterday, or your abhorrence for cruelty, or your willingness on occasion to sacrifice selfish gain for the common good – all, it was supposed, could in principle be traced to the natural impulses arising within the human breast. (Incidentally, though many of the naturalisers stressed the importance of internal feelings or sentiments, this did not commit them to saying there was no place for reason in ethics. Nevertheless, they tended to relegate reason to the essentially instrumental role of calculating what means were conducive

to furthering the ends that our *natural* impulses motivated us to pursue.)<sup>6</sup>

In this kind of climate, Joseph Butler, one of the more reflective moral thinkers of the eighteenth century, deserves the credit for putting some serious philosophical pressure on the slippery concepts of 'nature' and 'the natural'. For Butler was one of the first to realise just how easily these terms, which may seem harmless enough in ordinary parlance, can become infected with systematic ambiguity. The 'nature' that the Stoics appealed to, when they told us to 'live in accordance with nature',<sup>7</sup> was very different from the 'nature' that was the focus of the new, empirically inspired moral theorists.

My first task in this chapter (in section 2) will be to examine some of these ambiguities, taking my cue in part from Butler's insightful analysis. Getting clear about the ambiguities will clear the way for recovering the traditional normative notion of the 'natural' – the one that held sway before the term was appropriated by the empirical 'naturalisers'. This will in turn set the stage (in section 3) for a possible rehabilitation of the ancient notion of *conscience* – a notion that the naturalising tendencies (in the modern sense) have tended to squeeze out. Although the idea of conscience is a distinctly unfashionable one in contemporary moral philosophy, I hope it will emerge that it is a notion that resonates with many aspects of our human experience. But I shall go on to suggest (in section 4) that our understanding of conscience as a 'natural' (in one sense) guide to action needs to be considerably enriched, beyond what most philosophers have been prepared to provide, if we are to achieve a proper grasp of its role in our moral development. Finally, in the fifth and last section, I shall relate the concept of conscience as 'natural guide' to the traditional theory of 'natural law', and suggest that the metaphysics underpinning this theory may well offer a sounder basis than its naturalistic modern rival for providing a satisfying account of human moral experience.

## 2 Two senses of 'natural'

In the second of his *Fifteen Sermons* (1726), Butler at first appears to be taking an empirical psychologising approach, talking of various 'natural principles' in man. 'Principles', in this sense, were simply motives or springs of action, such as, for example, impulses towards friendship or self-love. And alongside these there is, Butler observes, another natural principle, namely that whereby 'man approves or disapproves his heart, temper and actions': this is *conscience*. But now comes the crucial

distinction. 'By nature', Butler observes, 'is often meant no more than some principle in man without regard either to the kind or degree of it. Thus the passion of anger and the affection of parents to their children, would be called equally *natural*.'<sup>8</sup> This is, if you like, the straightforward empirical sense of the term. And different in degree, but still firmly empirical, Butler goes on to note, is the sense that allowed St Paul to suggest (in the letter to the Ephesians) that mankind is vicious by nature – 'we are by nature the children of wrath'<sup>9</sup> – here meaning no more than that certain human impulses, for example, the impulse to anger, are often extremely powerful and tend to predominate.

Yet alongside these empirical senses, Butler insists, is a quite different sense of 'natural'. St Paul observed in the second chapter of his letter to the Romans that the Gentiles, though not possessing the Law, 'do *by nature (physei)* the things contained in the law ... which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness'.<sup>10</sup> Now, if this use of 'nature' were just the same as the previously noted ones, Butler acutely points out, in no way would it license talk of a *law* written in the heart:

[S]ince other passions ... which lead us ... astray, are themselves in a degree *equally natural*, and often most prevalent ... it is plain the former [good impulses] considered merely as natural, good and right as they are, can no more be a law to us than the latter ... But there is a superior principle of reflection or conscience in every man ... which pronounces some actions to be in themselves just, right, good; others to be in themselves evil, wrong, unjust ... It is by this faculty, *natural to man*, that he is a moral agent ...: by this faculty, I say, not to be considered merely as a principle in his heart, which is to have some influence as well as others; but considered as a faculty in kind and in nature supreme over all others, and which *bears its own authority* of being so.<sup>11</sup>

So the 'natural' can have two quite distinct senses as applied to our species: it can refer to the properties (inclinations, dispositions) that we as a matter of fact happen to possess; or it can refer to authoritative principles that are 'inscribed in our hearts'. In some sense the latter are just as 'natural' as the former – that is, they are a characteristic part of what it is to be a human being. But only the latter possess what Butler calls 'natural authority', or what current philosophical fashion calls 'normativity'.

The distinction that Butler is teasing out here is sorely needed, since the use of the term 'nature' has a long record of causing trouble in the history of philosophy. *Physis* in Aristotle is the world of physical nature, which in some respects can be explained in purely factual, mechanical terms: Aristotle never denies the importance of the raw material and efficient causality on which his empiricist predecessors such as Democritus had entirely relied. But *physis* is more often, indeed most often in Aristotle, an inescapably normative term, one which links into his teleological vision of the cosmos: nature, in this sense, 'does nothing in vain', as Aristotle frequently and famously asserts.<sup>12</sup> Or as Leibniz put it, reviving and indeed radically updating Aristotelian naturalism to fit a Christian context, the 'divine and infinitely marvellous artifice of the Author of nature [ensures] ... there is nothing waste, nothing sterile, nothing dead in the universe; no chaos, no confusions, save in appearance'.<sup>13</sup>

To take another important example, Descartes, normally thought of as poles apart from Aristotle and Leibniz in taking a distinctly non-normative and mechanistic view of the natural world, often uses 'nature' in just such a strongly normative sense. The closing section of his *Meditations* contains three successive paragraphs all beginning with the magisterial phrase, *Natura docet* – 'nature teaches'.<sup>14</sup> The things that nature teaches us turn out *not* to be the things we are often spontaneously inclined to believe – such as that the stars are very small, or that the earth is immobile and flat; these, Descartes insists, are only the *apparent* teachings of nature, rash beliefs that were acquired by the 'natural' (in one sense) human habit of jumping to conclusions. But the teachings of nature invoked at the close of the *Meditations* refer to Nature in a much grander sense: 'I understand by the term none other than God himself, or the order and disposition established by God in created things, ... [or, in the case of my own nature] the totality of things bestowed on me by God.'<sup>15</sup> What we are 'naturally' inclined to believe, in the mundane empirical sense of 'natural', has no authority at all – indeed it is a major purpose of the Cartesian programme to rid ourselves of the preconceived opinions to which the weakness of our human nature so often inclines us. But what we are inclined, indeed impelled, to believe when the 'light of nature', the *lumen naturale*, illumines our minds is none other than the deliverances of the divinely bestowed faculty of reason, the *lux rationis*. Descartes's conception of nature here is as normative as could be; to parody Alexander Pope, he is proclaiming, in effect, 'God said: "Let Nature be!" and all was light.'<sup>16</sup>

Though Descartes, when he talks of the natural light, is thinking primarily of the clearly and distinctly perceived truths of logic and mathematics, he does also include moral principles: when the mind is irradiated with 'reasons of truth *or of goodness*' (note the inclusion of the second disjunct), then we are made irresistibly aware of what we should believe (in the case of theoretical truths), or of what we should choose to do (in the case of practical principles).<sup>17</sup> The visual metaphor of light, and its application to moral as well as purely theoretical ideas, is of course an ancient notion with roots going back to Augustine and through him right back to Plato.<sup>18</sup> The natural light, one might say, puts us in touch with the two principal domains of normativity – logico-mathematical necessity on the one hand, and moral obligatoriness on the other. And what was 'natural' for Descartes, in this strong normative sense, is 'natural' for Butler in just the same way; the faculty of conscience, which Butler describes as 'natural to man', has precisely the function of Descartes' natural light – that of revealing what is right and so providing an authoritative guide to right action.

### 3 The natural and the normative: two problems

The picture so far presented puts Butler's views on conscience in line with a long tradition, running from Classical times through the Christian fathers of the Middle Ages and right down to the early-modern period – a tradition that invokes the concept of the natural in a resoundingly authoritative and normative way. But what we also see in Butler is what happens when this long tradition collides with the more sceptical and empiricist elements of the Enlightenment worldview. Although Butler had carefully distinguished his normative sense of 'natural' from the more factual and empirical one, he was all too aware that in the latter sense 'man has dispositions and principles within, which lead him to do evil... as well as good', and that many of his philosophical critics were likely to insist that 'the nature of man is... to be judged... by what appears in the common world, in the bulk of mankind'.<sup>19</sup> Underlying these remarks is a certain implied anxiety about whether the traditional concept of conscience would be able to hold its ground in an increasingly 'naturalistic' philosophical climate. Despite Butler's valiant efforts, the onslaught he feared is one whose aftershock is still with us today – so much so that the great bulk of current work in moral theory now avoids the term 'conscience' altogether. It would be a very bold philosopher today who invoked the idea that we are endowed by

'nature' (in the traditional normative sense) with a faculty that guides us to right action.

The first serious obstacle to talking this way nowadays has to do with what Bernard Williams called the 'radical contingency of the ethical'.<sup>20</sup> Granted that many people have strong intuitions that cruelty, say, or rampant selfishness, is wrong, the dire history of the last hundred years (to look no further) nevertheless suggests that many others apparently have such feelings only weakly or not at all. And, at a more general and even more disorienting level, it seems quite possible that, had the evolution or the socio-historical development of the human race taken a slightly different path, then the powerful ethical intuitions to which traditional moralists have so confidently appealed might have been altogether different. Once we raise the thought that the structure of the ethical beliefs and practices we happen to have could so easily have been otherwise, then (so runs this line of argument) talk of eternal laws of morality grafted in all human hearts begins to look like something of a fantasy.

The second worry, threatening to be no less subversive of traditional ideas of conscience, comes from a more theoretical quarter, namely from the famous Humean thesis about the impossibility of bridging the gap from *is* to *ought*. The faculty of conscience, as we have seen, is for Butler not just one of the (empirical) 'principles' or springs of action within us, but is 'in kind and in principle supreme over all others'. Whence this supremacy? Indeed, Butler himself raises this question: 'allowing that mankind hath the rule of right within himself, yet it may be asked, What obligations are we under to attend to and follow it?'<sup>21</sup> Some of Butler's phrases suggest that conscience is somehow 'self-authorizing': it 'bears its own authority of being [supreme]'. Well, perhaps anyone troubled by the pangs of conscience is automatically, as it were, disposed to grant it a certain normative authority. But this simply raises the question of what it is that *gives* conscience this supposed authority. As a typical modern critic puts it:

Perhaps we cannot have conscience without some tendency to believe that it has authority, but we may still query this very belief; we may ask whether it has the authority it claims, and, if so, what that authority derives from.<sup>22</sup>

What might Butler's own answer to this challenge have been? The commentator to whom I have already referred more than once, Stephen Darwall, ends up attributing to Butler a proto-Kantian position, which

he calls 'autonomous internalism', namely that the authority of conscience is a condition of the very possibility of an agent's having reasons to act at all, since only a being who has the capacity for maintaining a self-regulated constitutional order can have reasons for acting, and this capacity depends on the agent's taking her conscience to be authoritative.<sup>23</sup> Whether or not such a view can plausibly be laid at Butler's door, it does not seem to me a particularly attractive one. For the notion of conscience implies not just that I am in touch with certain reasons for acting, but that these reasons have a peculiar conclusive or binding force; and it is not clear (to me at any rate) how the mere possibility of autonomous rational agency presupposes this kind of conclusiveness.<sup>24</sup>

Butler's own position, however, seems to me likely to have been far less complex than this contorted Kantian line, and much more overtly theistic. In the Third Sermon he argues very straightforwardly as follows:

But allowing that mankind hath the rule of right within himself, yet it may be asked 'What obligations are we under to attend to and follow it?' I answer: ... Conscience does not only offer itself to show us the way we should walk in, but it likewise carries its own authority with it, that it is our *natural guide*; the *guide assigned us by the Author of our nature*: it therefore belongs to our condition of being, it is our duty, to walk in that path and follow this guide without looking about to see whether we may not possibly forsake [it] with impunity.<sup>25</sup>

Conscience is our 'natural', that is to say, God-given, guide. The theological metaphysics presupposed may (to say the least) now be more disputed than it was in Butler's day, but the idea itself is very simple, and fits in with many other aspects of the theistic worldview. Descartes' theory of clear and distinct perception was premised on the idea that (as he put it to a questioner) 'a reliable mind was God's gift to me'.<sup>26</sup> Just as God bestows on man the faculty of intellectual vision, so that the human mind becomes in a sense a mirror (albeit a finite one) of the divine, giving us limited but accurate access to the domain of logic and mathematics, so, on what I take to be Butler's picture, the conscience is a divinely bestowed faculty of moral judgement, giving us access to the domain of the moral law.<sup>27</sup>

For reasons which stem from what philosophers know as the 'Euthyphro dilemma', the principles of this moral law 'written in our hearts' cannot be a series of *arbitrary* divine commands.<sup>28</sup> The law written in our hearts

is that provided by a *providential* 'author of nature', that is, a God who cares for the welfare of his creatures. Virtue, or obeying the moral law (and this is a theme shared by Butler and many of his contemporaries) is 'beyond all contradiction... naturally the interest, and vice the misery of such a creature as man, placed in the circumstances which we are in this world'.<sup>29</sup> As Butler puts it:

man cannot be considered as a creature *left by his maker* to act at random, and live at large up to the extent of his natural power, as passion, humour, wilfulness happen to carry him; which is the condition brute creatures are in... He hath the rule of right within: what is wanting is only that he honestly attend to it.<sup>30</sup>

This seems to give the basis for an answer to those who complain (like Stephen Darwall) that 'no facts about providence can solve the is/ought gap, or give conscience the right kind of normative supremacy'.<sup>31</sup> Of course, one may question the existence of a providential order – in which case the Bernard Williams worry about radical contingency will come into play. Ethical rules will simply turn out to be a contingent set of evolving social codes, and there will be no warrant for allowing the 'morality system', as Williams calls it, its pretensions to command our allegiance. But if a theistic worldview is adopted, and if conscience is, like Descartes' light of reason, a God-given gift, then the normativity becomes about as manifest as can be. Finite creatures are necessarily going to be imperfect in many respects, and if they also have genuine two-way freedom, they will necessarily have the power to go astray (to turn away from the deliverances of the natural light).<sup>32</sup> But if there are objective reasons, grounded in the possibility of our ultimate human fulfilment, for us to take a certain path, and if we have a natural, divinely bestowed faculty guiding us towards that path, then the deliverances of conscience will have as much normative authority as could be desired. There may be epistemic worries about how we could know that any of the elements of this theistic worldview are correct, or about how we can know that a given insight represents the authentic voice of conscience; but these are quite different kinds of worry – quite different from claiming there are logical or conceptual difficulties about how the necessary normativity can obtain. The 'natural law' inscribed in our hearts embodies reasons that are to be respected by humans because they direct us along the path towards the ultimate fulfilment of our nature – the goal that a being of the utmost benevolence and compassion has created us to achieve.

#### 4 Nature as guide

To shed a little more light on this notion of 'nature as guide', it may be helpful to draw some comparisons with the work of a later eighteenth-century writer for whom the idea of a 'natural guide' for mankind had a considerable fascination – the poet William Wordsworth. Nature, for Wordsworth, meant in the first place external nature – the 'meadows and... woods and mountains' that he loved,<sup>33</sup> and which his poetry so splendidly celebrates. But although a common caricature portrays Wordsworth as a kind of cheery pantheistic pagan, the vision which nature inspires in him is a deeply moral one: significantly, he describes nature as 'The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul / *Of all my moral being.*'<sup>34</sup> The natural world is for Wordsworth one that calls forth in us vital responses, both aesthetic ones (to use a rather inadequate term) – responses of exaltation and joy – and also moral ones – responses of human sympathy and fellow-feeling. In the *Lines written a few miles above Tintern Abbey* (composed in 1798, some seventy years after Butler penned his *Sermons*), the notion of nature as a leader or guide is particularly prominent:

Nature never did betray  
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege  
Through all the years of this our life, to lead  
From joy to joy...<sup>35</sup>

Nature here has a specific role – to guide us throughout the allotted span of our mortal lives to experiences which will put us in touch with a deeper moral and aesthetic reality that infuses the world around us. To say that this is Nature's 'privilege' is a remarkable idea, and one which I think has to be taken seriously. Wordsworth is not just referring to an effect that, at the purely empirical level, the natural environment has upon us; rather, this is a role that is *assigned* to nature in the overall providential scheme of things. The language here is inescapably teleological: though Wordsworth does not make it explicit, Nature is in this sense the 'handmaid' of the Author of Nature – she has been given a privileged job to do, to attend to the development of the moral sensibility of humankind.<sup>36</sup> And the results of nature's guidance are vividly expressed by Wordsworth in some famous lines earlier on in *Tintern Abbey*:

I have learned  
To look on nature not as in the hour

Of thoughtless youth, but hearing oftentimes  
 The still, sad music of humanity,  
 Nor harsh, nor grating, though of ample power  
 To chasten and subdue. And I have felt  
 A presence that disturbs me with the sense  
 Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime  
 Of something far more deeply interfused  
 Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,  
 And the round ocean, and the living air  
 And the blue sky, and in the mind of man...<sup>37</sup>

It is probably fruitless to raise the question of whether we should give an 'immanent' or a 'transcendent' interpretation to the divine presence with which the poet here feels himself in touch. The key point is that the language is unmistakably theistic – that is to say, it does not merely, in pantheistic fashion, acknowledge a multitude of vibrant suprahuman forces in nature, nor in deistic fashion merely invoke a vast impersonal power behind the universe, but clearly recognises the goodness and beauty of the cosmos in a way that intimately relates it to human concerns. The vision, once glimpsed, says Wordsworth a few lines later, gives us something that no subsequent pain or distress can entirely erase, a 'cheerful faith that all which we behold/Is full of *blessings*'.<sup>38</sup>

An obvious point of contrast between Butler's and Wordsworth's conceptions of 'nature as guide' is that Butler is thinking of an internal voice within us, while Wordsworth is talking about the natural world around us. But despite this superficial difference there is, I think, a clear underlying similarity. For what Wordsworth feels himself to be guided by is not simply an ensemble of external objects, but the inner response that they evoke in his heart. So both thinkers have a picture in which what we are 'guided by' has a dual aspect – an objective created order, and a human faculty that is naturally responsive to that order. Conscience for Butler, the poetic vision for Wordsworth, are sure natural guides that put us in touch with objective domains of beauty and goodness.

The Wordsworthian model, however, seems to me to provide us with further, and deeper, illumination about the nature of our moral and aesthetic experience. For what emerges in Wordsworth is that the very dichotomy between objective external reality and personal subjective response is in a certain sense misleading: what happens is that the perception of the poet responds to the guidance of nature in such a way that he is enabled to see it in a radically transformed way. There is

a natural harmony, an answering resonance, as the child of nature wanders through 'the meadows and the woods/And mountains and . . . all that we behold/From this green earth'.<sup>39</sup> He is made aware of 'all the mighty world/Of eye and ear, both what they half-create,/And what perceive'.<sup>40</sup> And the result is that what is experienced is not merely a certain kind of environment, but a morally significant world – a world that is 'full of blessings'.

This interpretative or transformative aspect to our human experience provides, it seems to me, an important supplement to what can seem the rather dry and over-intellectualistic accounts of moral awareness often provided by philosophers and theologians. The natural guide that thinkers like Samuel Clarke and Joseph Butler appeal to is an inner faculty that enables us to do something like what the geometers do in their study – to work out general principles and their application to particular cases (except that we are dealing with principles of right action rather than principles of abstract theoretical truth). This approach has antecedents that go right back to Aquinas, who asserts that we have the faculty of *synderesis*, which gives us knowledge of the first principles of moral action, and *conscientia*, which applies it to particular cases.<sup>41</sup> But if one turns instead to the way in which moral teaching is conveyed for example in the Gospels, the picture is very different. There the main emphasis is on what the Greeks called *metanoia* – a radical shift in our moral outlook; and what principally engenders such a shift is not exposure to particular moral assessments or general principles, but, above all, devices such as the parables – stories embedded in concrete experience with a specific emotional impact, which are designed to work a fundamental change in the way we perceive the world.

This connects, finally, with another significant element of the Wordsworthian picture, his stress on moral development and *learning*. The poet has '*learned*/to look on nature not as in the hour/of thoughtless youth, but hearing oftentimes/the still sad music of humanity'. The process of growth and transformation is a crucial part of what it is to be a developed human moral agent: our moral lives are a *journey* in a much deeper sense than applies to many parts of our intellectual lives (e.g. our accumulating knowledge of geography or natural history). Now philosophers such as Thomas Aquinas did not of course overlook the idea of *learning* in the moral sphere. Aquinas was well aware of the Aristotelian stress on the importance of training and habituation in ethics, and he himself spoke of habits of virtue, and described conscience in terms of habits of will, as well as of practical reasoning (albeit insisting

on an innate, divinely implanted component in all this).<sup>42</sup> But the human moral journey as described in the works of the great spiritual writers (Augustine is perhaps the paradigm case, though there are many others) is radically different in its outlines – radically different from what one might call the ‘classroom’ model, a model of careful, progressive moulding of habits based on innate capacities of practical intellect and will. All such ‘normal’ apparatus no doubt has its place, but, if anything like the religious worldview is correct, there is something more dynamic and more dramatic typically at work in the human spirit. As moral beings, we do not just start from a reliable innate deposit, and then accumulate information and become more skilled in processing it; rather, we gradually, laboriously, stimulated by examples, moved by parables, humbled by error, purged by suffering, begin to change. The faculty enabling us to respond in this way may be innate, and in that sense ‘natural’, but it also requires our being open to the possibility of transformation – in Pauline language, to putting off the old nature and taking on the new, or in the language of the fourth Gospel, to the possibility of rebirth.<sup>43</sup>

In this sense the ideas of conscience are very unlike the ‘innate ideas’ so crudely caricatured by Locke (as if they were lying in the open book of the mind waiting to be read); nor are they, as Locke’s own empiricist ideology would have us suppose, merely gradually accumulated and rearranged data of the senses, which simply have to be ‘received’ via observation. If the traditional idea of conscience stretching from Aquinas down to Butler and beyond is right, there must be an element of ‘natural’ innate inner guidance we can rely on. But if we add to this the crucial idea of a journey of growth and development, then the ‘ideas’ of conscience will be ‘natural’ or innate in humankind more in the fashion conceived by Leibniz – as veined or seamed shapes hidden within the marble, waiting for all the painful labour of the sculptor’s hammer blows to reveal them.<sup>44</sup>

The upshot, if this religious vision of our place in the cosmos is accepted, is that we humans are endowed with a natural power to see the moral and aesthetic significance of the world around us, to see the natural world as ‘charged with the grandeur of God’, as Gerard Manley Hopkins so memorably puts it;<sup>45</sup> and to see the suffering human world as calling for responses of compassion and love. Some elements of this experience will be available to us quite unproblematically and spontaneously, as simple delight and joy at the world’s beauty; other elements, the more complex moral responses, may require a deeper inner transformation; though both, on the theistic picture, will be seen as

dependent on something beyond ourselves, perhaps on something like what the theologians call 'grace'. To put it another way, nothing in the empirical facts dispassionately analysed can automatically yield the kind of interpretation that sees the natural world as 'full of blessings' or the suffering human world as having the power to 'chasten and subdue' our selfish impulses. Such a vision will be available only if we follow our 'natural guide' – where 'natural' is construed not of course in the empirical sense, but in the richer normative (and ultimately religious) sense I have been exploring.

## 5 Nature and natural law

Let us draw some threads together. One principal point that I hope has by now emerged is that how we interpret the concept of 'nature' turns out to be crucial for how we understand the domain of morality and how we locate it within the rest of our worldview. The 'empirical-naturalist' conception, which has been steadily gathering support since the Enlightenment, construes nature as, roughly, the sum total of empirically determinable contingent facts or states of affairs (including biological and psychological facts about human beings and their preferences), and then attempts to show how morality can be derived from, or in some sense shown to be continuous with, these facts. But such an approach (unless it is prepared to explain away all morality as an illusion arising from the projection outwards of purely subjective inclinations) will run into serious problems in explaining how some of our 'natural' preferences can be supposed to have normative force. How can the right kind of moral authority stem from mere contingent facts about the inclinations we happen to have evolved to possess? By contrast, there is an older (yet, I would argue, still viable) tradition that construes Nature very differently – as an inherently normative domain. On this view, it is from the way in which the natural world (including our own human nature) is divinely ordered that there arise those objective values which our moral judgements (if sound) reflect. So in making our moral judgements we are responding to something objective – the goals and constraints that determine the possibility of a worthwhile human life, independently of our transitory inclinations and preferences.

There is here a partial, but significant, parallel with aesthetic judgement. On the Wordsworthian picture that we have been looking at, the natural world is seen not as a mere collection of material particles in random motion, but as a *cosmos* – a harmonious, ordered whole, shot through with harmony and rhythm and symmetry; and our aesthetic

judgements about the beauty of the natural world are, when sound, responsive to these objective properties. In somewhat the same way, the human world – the world that consists of the unfolding of our lives – is seen not merely as a contingently evolving series of interactions between members of a certain species, but as a teleological story, the story of a struggle to achieve those objective goods that it is in our nature to reach after. And the moral judgements we make about our own lives and those of our fellow humans will, when they are sound, be responsive to those objective goods – the goods we need to be oriented towards if our lives are to have meaning and value.

The picture just sketched is, of course, a highly metaphysical one: ‘nature’ sheds its modern pretensions to be a neutral scientific term, and reverts to its traditional role – the role it arguably has in Aristotle, and certainly has in Aquinas and Descartes and Leibniz and Butler – as the lynchpin of a theistic worldview. Together with this metaphysical picture of morality, moreover, goes a certain kind of moral epistemology – the theory of conscience as a ‘natural guide’ which, when properly cultivated, works within us to help us orient ourselves towards the objective goods that we are meant to pursue. But linking the metaphysical picture with the epistemic picture in this way brings us to a final question of some importance – a question whose relevance may be underlined by the fact that the name of Aquinas has surfaced several times in our discussion so far. How does the account of conscience as our ‘natural guide’ relate to the idea of morality as grounded in ‘natural law’ – perhaps the most famous legacy of the Thomistic system of ethics?

Aquinas’ notion of conscience, as already noted, can seem rather intellectualistic, in so far as he sees moral awareness as a matter of the intuition of moral axioms and their application to particular cases. The idea of natural law is introduced by Aquinas very much in this kind of context, so that natural law is seen in terms of the fundamental rational principles underlying all morality:

the precepts of natural law are to practical reasoning what the first principles of demonstrations are to theoretical reasoning... All things to be done or to be avoided pertain to the precepts of natural law, which practical reasoning apprehends naturally as being human goods.<sup>46</sup>

Rationality is crucially involved in all this: indeed, the ‘light of reason’, later famously invoked in Cartesian philosophy, is of course an idea

that Descartes would principally have been acquainted with, via his Jesuit teachers, from the writings of Aquinas.<sup>47</sup> According to Aquinas, human beings, in virtue of the faculty of reason, have a share in the eternal reason of God; but the way in which they participate in this eternal rational order is by an endowment of human nature, the 'light of reason' which enables us to perceive good and evil.<sup>48</sup>

This rationalistic picture is, however, modified to an important extent when Aquinas discusses the ways in which conformity to the eternal moral law actually occurs. One way is by knowledge – presumably this involves the deductive application of the rational principles of right action to individual cases. But there is another way, namely by means of an 'inward principle', which moves us to act.<sup>49</sup> In a subtle account of the psychology of moral action, Aquinas allows for a complex interplay of intellect and will at every level of attention, reflection, and conduct. To intuit something as good is only the first stage in a complex process leading to eventual right action, and in that process the mind must not just apprehend an object intellectually, but must dwell on it in such a way as to generate a firm appetitive disposition towards the object in question.<sup>50</sup> The upshot is that the Thomist story of the moral life is far more complex than the formal unravelling of a deductive process based on rational intuition. At every stage there is a co-operation between the intellect and the will, and the need to cultivate supporting habits of desire and inclination. So despite its rationalistic overtones, the natural law theory seems perfectly compatible with a 'Wordsworthian' stress on how certain kinds of experience open our minds and hearts so that we are morally responsive in the right way.<sup>51</sup> Indeed, Aquinas himself, in his account of divine grace, allows for just such an 'opening process', one that respects our human freedom, but at the same time enables the will to move from a state of resistance or quiescence to one of loving acceptance and co-operation, and hence allows for the possibility of our achieving goods that we could not attain by our own unaided efforts.<sup>52</sup> We are not superhuman beings whose intellects are permanently fixed on the good and whose wills are always diligently attentive; hence in any plausible account of human development, there will be an indispensable role for something 'not ourselves which makes for righteousness'.<sup>53</sup> To acknowledge this is to recognise what it is to be a creature of dependent and limited rationality, and of a nature that is good but corruptible.

Irrespective of any psychological appeal it may have, many philosophers of course will be disposed to reject this kind of metaphysical picture out of hand, on the grounds that any worldview that takes us beyond

the domain of the natural (empirical, phenomenal) world fails the standards for knowledge laid down by the Enlightenment. And this brings us back full circle to the theme with which we began, the ruling modern dogma of 'naturalism', with its insistence on the wholesale elimination of the 'spooky'. The prospects for contemporary naturalism (and whether it can provide a viable alternative account of normativity) cannot be evaluated here; but perhaps it is just worth noting that in its modern dogmatic form it goes considerably beyond the classic Enlightenment position. For Kant at least was clear that what lay beyond the reach of empirical knowledge could still be a proper object of faith – the 'cheerful faith' (as Wordsworth termed it) that is allowed to emerge when the limits of knowledge have been defined, and transcended.<sup>54</sup> Yet, whatever its epistemic status, there is one central element in the metaphysical picture running from Aquinas down to Butler and Wordsworth, and beyond, that I suspect few who honestly consult their experience would be comfortable about dismissing out of hand: that when we learn to listen attentively to the voice of that 'natural guide' within us, it becomes possible to glimpse the world (the world of our natural environment and the world of human existence) as irradiated with beauty and with value. We then experience the world not as an aggregate of 'natural facts', but as a cosmos, a natural *order* – that is to say, as something which, for all its flaws, reflects that good towards which, as Aristotle and Aquinas insisted, all things naturally tend.<sup>55</sup>

## Notes

1. Stephen Darwall, *The British Moralists and the Internal 'Ought' 1640–1740* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995): 14.
2. There is, however, a very plausible alternative view of Hume as not denying the existence of causal necessity but merely being sceptical about the possibility of our ever having knowledge of it. Cf. John Wright, *The Sceptical Realism of David Hume* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); followed by Galen Strawson in *The Secret Connexion* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989).
3. David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1739–40): Book III, Part 1, Section i, penultimate paragraph.
4. Hume, *Treatise*: Book I, Part 3, Section xiv.
5. Richard Cumberland, *A Treatise of the Laws of Nature (De Legibus Naturae Disquisitio Philosophica, 1672)*, trans. J. Maxwell (1727) (repr. New York: Garland, 1978): 41. Cited in Darwall, *British Moralists*: 15.
6. This at least is the line taken by Hume; cf. *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1739–40): Book II, Part iii, Section 3.
7. This slogan (*homologoumenôs tē physei zēn*), advanced by the followers of Zeno of Citium, the founder of Stoicism, is preserved in the compilations of the anthologist Stobaeus (early 5th century AD); see A.A. Long and D.N. Sedley

- (eds), *The Hellenistic Philosopher* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), no. 63A and B.
8. Joseph Butler, *Fifteen Sermons* (1726): Sermon II, §5, in J.B. Schneewind (ed.), *Moral Philosophy from Montaigne to Kant* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), Vol. II: 531. Also in D.D. Raphael (ed.), *British Moralists 1650–1800* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1969): §398.
  9. Ephesians, 2:3.
  10. Butler, Sermon II, §5. The phrase within inverted commas is from the Authorized Version (1611), as quoted by Butler. The New Revised Standard Version (1989) horribly mangles the original Greek text: 'do *instinctively* what the law requires'.
  11. Butler, Sermon II, §8: Schneewind (ed.), *Moral Philosophy*: 532 and in Raphael (ed.), *British Moralists*: §399. Compare the following: 'If by following nature were meant only acting as we please, it would indeed be ridiculous to speak of nature as any guide in morals... [T]hat every man is naturally a law to himself, that every one may find within himself the rule of right, and obligations to follow it... this St Paul affirms in the words of the text [Romans 2:14]': Sermon II, Raphael (ed.): §397.
  12. For example in *de Caelo*: I, 4; *de Partibus Animalium*: II, 13. For more on this theme in Aristotle, see R.J. Hankinson, 'Philosophy of Science', in J. Barnes (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995): ch. 4.
  13. G.W. Leibniz, *Monadology* (1714): §§65, 69; trans. in G.H.R. Parkinson (ed.), *Leibniz: Philosophical Writings* (London: Dent, 1973): 190.
  14. For more on this, see J. Cottingham, 'Descartes' Sixth Meditation: The External World, "Nature" and Human Experience', *Philosophy*, Supp. Vol. 20 (1986): 73–89; repr. in V. Chappell (ed.), *Descartes's Meditations: Critical Essays* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997): ch. 10.
  15. *Meditationes* (1641), Sixth Meditation, AT VII, 80; CSM II, 56. 'AT' refers to the standard Franco-Latin edition of Descartes by C. Adam and P. Tannery, *Œuvres de Descartes* (12 vols, revised edn, Paris: Vrin/CNRS, 1964–76); 'CSM' refers to the English translation by J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff and D. Murdoch, *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, Vols I and II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), and 'CSMK' to Vol. III, *The Correspondence*, by the same translators plus A. Kenny (Cambridge University Press, 1991).
  16. The notion of the *lux rationis* or 'light of reason' found in the *Regulae* (c. 1628) (AT X, 368; CSM I, 14) becomes in the *Meditations* the *lumen naturale*, the 'natural light' (e.g. AT VII, 40; CSM II, 28).
  17. 'The more I incline [towards one of two alternatives] either because I clearly understand that reasons of truth and goodness point that way, or because of a divinely produced disposition of my inmost thoughts, the freer is my choice.' Fourth Meditation, AT VII, 57–8; CSM II, 40.
  18. Cf. Plato, *Republic* (c. 380 BC): 514–18; Augustine of Hippo, *De Trinitate* (c. 410): XII. xv. 24. There are complex links between Plato and Augustine, of which the most prominent is the Gospel according to John (c. AD 100), 1:9.
  19. Sermon I, in Raphael (ed.), *British Moralists*: §§392, 393.

20. See Bernard Williams, *Truth and Truthfulness* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002): 20.
21. Sermon III, 5; quoted in Darwall, *The British Moralists*: 254.
22. Darwall: 271.
23. *Ibid.*: 274–82. Darwall canvasses another view, namely a kind of argument from design – ‘that conscience gives us conclusive reasons because we are *designed* to be guided by its directives, and we function properly only when we are so’ (Darwall: 247). But he casts doubt on whether this argument can work: ‘Parts or principles of a functional system can have a kind of ordering, but not one of relative *authority* . . . There might be a well-designed system adapted to quite different purposes than those for which our design fits us, one whose makeup included conscience and appetites, but in which these played different functional roles – in which it was not part of the design that conscience, despite its (intrinsic) superintendent pretensions, should actually superintend’ (262).
24. Compare the following: ‘By saying that conscience has supreme authority, Butler means that we regard the pronouncements of conscience, not simply as interesting or uninteresting statements of fact, and not simply as reasons to be balanced against others but as *conclusive* reasons for or against doing the actions about which it pronounces’ (C.D. Broad, *Five Types of Ethical Theory* [1930], cited in Darwall: 247).
25. *Fifteen Sermons*: Sermon III, 5, in Raphael (ed.), §407; Schneewind (ed.): 536 (emphasis added).
26. ‘*Rectum ingenium a Deo accipi*’: Descartes, *Conversation with Burman* (1648), AT V, 148; CSMK: 334.
27. This puts Butler close to an intuitionist position similar to that of Samuel Clarke, who argued that the realm of ‘eternal and necessary relations’ included a ‘natural and unalterable difference between good and evil’ which our human reason unmistakably perceives. (Samuel Clarke, *A Discourse Concerning the Unchangeable Obligations of Natural Religion* [1706], in Raphael (ed.): §§225, 227.) Stephen Darwall insists on seeing Butler’s view as radically different from Clarke’s – though admitting the ‘puzzling’ fact that he did express approval of Clarke’s view (Darwall: 283n). Darwall lays great weight on Butler’s announcement in the Preface to his *Fifteen Sermons* that he does not propose to follow Clarke’s method, because rather than inquiring, *a priori*, into the ‘abstract relations of things’, he prefers to start from ‘matters of fact’, namely from ‘the particular nature of man, its several parts, their economy or constitution’ (Preface to *Sermons*: §7, in Raphael (ed.): §374). However, this appears to be a point about *heuristic methodology*, not metaphysics, and seems entirely compatible with the interpretation that the *Sermons* will *eventually* endorse the idea of a objective normative realm revealed by conscience. Butler himself makes it clear that the Clarkean *a priori* method and his own methodology in the *Sermons* ‘strengthen and support each other’ (Preface to *Sermons*: §7).
28. The dilemma (derived from a question raised by Socrates in Plato’s *Euthyphro* [c. 390 BC]) is whether things are right simply because they are commanded by God, or whether on the other hand they are commanded by God because they are right. Opting for the first horn of the dilemma seems morally unsatisfactory since it appears to make morality dependent on the arbitrary will of

- God (while the second option has been regarded as theologically unsatisfactory since it appears to allow that rightness is independent of or prior to God).
29. Shaftesbury's view, cited by Butler in the Preface to the *Sermons*: Raphael (ed.): §380.
  30. Sermon III, in Raphael (ed.): §405. Note that at the start of the passage quoted, Butler adds the qualifier 'Exclusive of revelation . . .', thereby allowing for direct intervention by the deity into human affairs, to supplement the ordinary operation of the divinely bestowed faculty of conscience. The concluding phrase about the need to attend to the deliverances of conscience follows a standard line in mainstream Christian theology, designed to safeguard the freedom of the human will; compare Descartes' Fourth Meditation, and see note 32.
  31. Darwall: 271.
  32. Compare J. Cottingham, 'Descartes and the Voluntariness of Belief', *The Monist*, 85 (2002): 343–60.
  33. *Lines written a few miles above Tintern Abbey* (1798), in S. Gill (ed.), *William Wordsworth: A Critical Edition of the Major Works* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984): lines 103–5.
  34. *Tintern Abbey*: lines 111–12 (emphasis added).
  35. *Ibid*: lines 123–6.
  36. It is interesting (though I would not venture to claim a Wordsworthian influence) to note that the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins on several occasions compares the Virgin Mary (the archetypal 'Handmaid of the Lord') to the natural world; see 'The Blessed Virgin compared to the Air we Breathe', from *Poems (1876–1889)*, no. 37, repr. in W.H. Gardner (ed.), *Poems and Prose of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1953): 54; and cf. also 'The May Magnificat', no. 19 (p. 37).
  37. *Tintern Abbey*: lines 89–100.
  38. *Ibid*: lines 135–6 (emphasis added).
  39. *Ibid*: lines 104–6.
  40. *Ibid*: lines 106–8.
  41. 'Synderesis' (also 'synteresis') appears to have come into philosophical terminology via a corruption of *syneidesis*, St Paul's word for conscience. Aquinas distinguishes, however, the general faculty of *synderesis* from *conscientia*, which latter involves applying principles to particular cases so as to evaluate what one should now do and what one has done in the past. See *Quaestiones Disputatae de Veritate* (1256–9): 17; cf. Eleonore Stump, *Aquinas* (London: Routledge, 2003): 89.
  42. Cf. *Summa Theologiae* (1266–73) Ia IIae, q. 94 aa. 3 and 6. See also Stump, *Aquinas*: 89.
  43. Cf. Ephesians, 4:20–4; John, 3:3.
  44. Cf. G.W. Leibniz, *Nouveaux essais sur l'entendement humain* (1704), Preface, in P. Remnant and J. Bennett (eds), *New Essays on Human Understanding* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981): 52. Contrast John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690): Book I, ch. 2, §5. Contrast also the more 'static' picture presented by Butler: see quotation flagged at note 30.
  45. Hopkins, 'God's Grandeur', from *Poems (1876–1889)*, no. 8 (ed. Gardner, p. 27).

46. *Summa Theologiae*, Ia IIae, q. 94 a. 2. Note that the Thomist conception involves not just the idea of goods to be pursued but also the idea of constraints – ‘things to be avoided’. Both the *prosequenda* (the things to be pursued) and the *fugienda* (the things to be avoided) derive from ‘eternal laws’, or ‘the very nature of the governance of things on the part of God as ruler of the Universe’ (*Summa Theologiae*, Ia IIae, q. 91 a. 1). Cf. Stump, *Aquinas*: 26.
47. Descartes attended the Jesuit college at La Flèche in Anjou as a boarding pupil from around 1606 to 1614.
48. *Summa Theologiae*, Ia IIae, q. 91 a. 2. Cf. Stump, *Aquinas*: 88. Compare the following: ‘The natural law is nothing other than the light of understanding placed in us by God; through it we know what we must do and what we must avoid. God has given this light or law at the creation’ (*Collationes in Decem Praecepta* [1273], I).
49. *Summa Theologiae*, Ia IIae, q. 93 a. 6.
50. See further Ralph McInerny, ‘Ethics’, in N. Kretzmann and E. Stump (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas* (Cambridge: CUP, 1993): 206–7.
51. This fusion of intellect and emotions is clearly acknowledged in contemporary views of the doctrine of natural law that clearly follow the broad outlines of the Thomist tradition. Compare the following: ‘In the depths of his conscience, man detects a law which he does not impose upon himself, but which holds him to obedience. Always summoning him to love good and avoid evil, the voice of conscience when necessary *speaks to his heart*: do this, shun that’ (Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes* [1965]: 16; emphasis added).
52. For an excellent discussion of Aquinas’s account of grace, see Stump, *Aquinas*: 394.
53. ‘The real germ of religious consciousness, of out which sprang Israel’s name for God, to which the records of history adapted themselves, and which came to be clothed upon, in time, with a mighty growth of poetry and tradition, was a consciousness of *the not ourselves which makes for righteousness*.’ Matthew Arnold, *Literature and Dogma* (1873): ch. I, §5, repr. in Matthew Arnold, *Dissent and Dogma* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1968): 189.
54. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (*Kritik der Reinen Vernunft*, 1781, 1787), B xxx (trans. N. Kemp Smith [New York: St Martin’s Press, 1965]), p. 29: ‘I have found it necessary to deny knowledge in order to make room for faith’. Kant’s term (prefiguring Hegel) is *aufheben*, implying not so much that one has to ‘deny’ knowledge in order to make room for faith (as Kemp Smith’s translation misleadingly has it) as that one has to transcend it. Cf. H. Kaygill, *A Kant Dictionary* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), entry ‘faith’.
55. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (325 BC), I: 1. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 59 a. 1; cf. *Summa Contra Gentiles* (1259–65): II, 47.

# Index

- abortion, 9, 242–7  
  as relocation/withdrawal of support, 244–5  
  bodily invasion, 242–4  
  pregnancy relationship, 245–7  
action and responsibility, 231–3  
  *see also* practical wisdom and responsibility  
acts/omissions distinction (AOD), 118–19, 162  
agent-neutrality *versus* agent-relativity,  
  *see* good/goods (basic human goods, goods in general)  
Anscombe, G.E.M., 58, 108  
Aquinas, St Thomas/Thomism, 1, 8, 22, 25–6, 27, 70–6 *passim*, 83, 107, 128, 135–6, 193, 195–6, 217, 219, 220, 222, 226, 228–31, 237  
Aristotle/Aristotelianism, 1, 3, 5, 8, 15, 22, 25, 27, 36, 64, 70, 73, 107, 135–6, 161, 193, 194–5, 213, 225–6, 228–31, 264  
Augustine, St, 16, 23, 193, 196, 211  
  
Botros, S., 218  
Boyle, J., 46, 48  
Bratman, M., 224  
Brook, R., 93  
Buber, M., 45  
Butler, J., 2, chapter 1 *passim*  
  
Chappell, T., 5–6, 7, 74, 77–8, 129–32, 136, 138, 139, 142, 144–6, 218, 222, 224, 231  
Chisholm, R., 255–6  
Cicero, 193  
Clarke, S., 22  
common good, *see* Natural Law Theory (NLT); Principle of Modern Liberal Autonomy (MLA)  
conscience, 2, chapter 1 *passim*  
  
consequentialism, 48, 63, 70, 71, 75, 83, 102, 112–15, 118  
conversion, moral, 3, chapter 2 *passim*  
Cottingham, J., 1–2  
craniotomy, 119, 123, 243  
Crisp, R., 52, 54, 123  
Cumberland, R., 11, 12  
  
Darwall, S., 11, 17–18, 19  
Davidson, D., 106  
Descartes, R., 15, 16, 18, 19, 25–6  
Devlin, P., chapter 8 *passim*  
Dewey, J., 37  
double effect, *see* Principle of Double Effect (PDE)  
  
ectopic pregnancy, 244, 246–7  
empiricism, 11–13, 23  
Enlightenment, 11, 16, 24, 27  
eudaimonism, 2, 5, 49  
Euthyphro Dilemma, 5–6, 18–19  
evil, moral, 83–4  
  intending evil, moral significance of, 261–6  
  
fact/value distinction, 3, 6, 17, 19, chapter 3 *passim*, 70  
  argument from action-guiding force, 61–3  
  argument from disagreement, 56–9  
  argument from queerness, 59–61  
  attractions of (cultural, religious, quasi-legal, consequentialist), 63–7  
  ‘ghost of God’ in, 64  
Feinberg, J., 174  
Finnis, J., 5, 46, 48, 71, 76–7, 107, 113, 127, 129, 138–9, 147, 190  
flourishing, human, *see* human flourishing/fulfilment

- Foot, P., 60–3 *passim*  
 fulfilment, human, *see* human flourishing/fulfilment
- Garcia, J.L.A., 239
- Geach, P., 56, 58, 60, 63
- George, R., 147, 149, 150
- Gómez-Lobo, A., 5, 71, 76–7, 129, 137–8, 141, 147
- good/goods (basic human goods, goods in general)  
 agent-neutrality, impersonality, intelligibility of (*versus* agent-relativity), 44–5, 72, 77–8, 115–17  
 as sources of value/reasons, 74, 81, 88*ff.*  
 basic (human) goods, 2–3, 4–6, 32–3, 41–2, 70–1, 79*ff.*  
 basic goods not completable states of affairs, 37–8  
 breadth and depth of basic goods, 36*ff.*  
 defined, 79, 107–9  
 ‘good’ as attributive adjective, 60  
 hierarchy of goods, 6, 152–61 *passim*  
 identity of (basic goods) – various lists offered, 32, 107, 129  
 importance of metaphysics and ontology, 6, chapter 6 *passim*  
 importance of principles, 6, 152–61 *passim*  
 incommensurability of, *see* incommensurability  
 inner peace, happiness, achievements, whether basic goods, 132–7  
 integrity, rationality, practical reasonableness, excellence in agency, fairness  
 ontology of the goods, 107–9, chapter 6 *passim*  
 part-whole relationships and, 141*ff.*  
 pleasure not a basic good, 129–32  
 practical reason, 72*ff.*  
 reconciliation within a life, 42*ff.*  
 respecting, pursuing, promoting, violating goods, 5, 7, 8, 77–8, 103, 112–15, 117*ff.*  
 species–genus relationships, 141*ff.*  
 structure of, 6, 46–7, 152–61 *passim*  
 virtues, not to be confused with goods, 137*ff.*  
 whether basic goods, 137–40, 264  
 whether basic goods are infinite, 6, 144–7  
 whether list of basic goods short or long, 140–4  
 whether there is a superordinate/supreme good, 6, 147–52
- Griffin, J., 107
- Grisez, G., 5, 32, 33, 46, 47, 48, 71, 72, 75*ff.*, 83, 94, 113, 124, 127
- happiness, whether a basic good, 135–6
- Hare, R.M., 53
- harm, 7, 8–9, chapters 7–8 *passim*, chapter 10 *passim*  
 abortion, 242–7  
 bodily integrity, 241–2  
 deliberate bodily invasions, 238–9, 242–4  
 pregnancy relationship, 245–7  
 relocation and bodily invasion, 240–1
- harming and wronging, 7, chapter 7 *passim*  
*see also* retaliation
- Hart–Devlin debate on law and morality, chapter 8
- Hart, H.L.A., chapter 8 *passim*
- Hobbes, T., 11
- Holmes, O.W., 221, 222
- Hopkins, G.M., 23
- Hughes, G., 8
- human flourishing/fulfilment, 2, 5–6, 8, 46*ff.*, 70, 72, 74–5, 77, 107, chapter 6 *passim*
- human nature, 5, 6, 70, 71, chapter 6 *passim*
- Hume, D., 11, 12, 53, 59
- Hutcheson, F., 11
- Huxley, A., 197–8

- incommensurability, 5, chapter 4  
*passim*, esp. 82*ff.*, 110–12, 154
- intention, intention/foresight  
 distinction, 9, 254–7  
 integrity of agent, 263–5  
 intending evil, moral significance  
 of, 261–6  
 means–end relationship, 227–8,  
 261–3  
 moral conflict, 225–7  
 Principle of Double Effect (PDE),  
 119–24, 222–7, 265–6  
 success of action, 9, 257–61  
*see also* Principle of Double Effect  
 (PDE)
- internalism/externalism, 2–3, 33*ff.*  
 ‘is’-‘ought’ distinction, *see* fact/value  
 distinction
- Kant, I., 12, 27, 48, 72, 104  
 Kantianism, 1, 2–3, 17–18, 48–9, 264  
 Kuhn, T., 39–40
- Laing, J.A., 7–8  
 Leibniz, G., 15, 23, 25  
 Levinas, E., 45  
 Lewis, D., 61
- liberalism, 7–8, chapter 8 *passim*  
 self-destructive and totalitarian  
 aspects of, 208–12  
*see also* Principle of Modern Liberal  
 Autonomy (MLA)
- Locke, J., 23, 59
- McDowell, J., 3, 34, 35, 36, 39, 49  
 MacIntyre, A., 38  
 Mackie, J.L., 6, chapter 3 *passim*,  
 108–9, 174–5  
 McNaughton, D., 115–17  
 Martin, C., 4, 6  
 maximization, 5, 75, 102–3, 104–6  
 metaphysics and ontology  
 natural law, 6, 13, 25–6, chapter 6  
*passim*  
*see also* good/goods (basic human  
 goods, goods in general)
- Mill, J.S., 104, 174, 185–7 *passim*  
 Millgram, E., 34, 35, 36, 38, 39  
 Moore, G.E., 4, 52–4
- motivation, 2–3, 61–3
- Murphy, M., 5, 9, 71–8 *passim*, 83–6,  
 120, 128, 129, 132–6, 139, 147–8,  
 151–2
- Nagel, T., 37, 262–3
- Natural Law Theory (NLT)  
 agent- vs world-centred approaches,  
 127–8  
 as mean between extremes of  
 individualism and  
 totalitarianism, 184–5, 213  
 as mean between modern liberalism  
 and totalitarianism, 7–8  
 basic human goods, *see* good/goods  
 (basic human goods, goods in  
 general)  
 defined, 1, 2, 32, chapter 4 *passim*,  
 102–4  
 idea of natural order and, 24*ff.*, 158  
 importance of acts/omissions  
 distinction and Principle of  
 Double Effect (PDE), 118–19  
 importance of metaphysics, *see*  
 good/goods (basic human  
 goods, goods in general),  
 metaphysics and ontology  
 importance of principles,  
*see* good/goods (basic human  
 goods, goods in general)  
 liberalism contrasted, 192–7  
 in Plato, Aristotle, Augustine  
 and Aquinas, 193–7  
 relation to conscience and nature,  
 summarized, 24–7  
 sexual morality, chapter 8 *passim*,  
 197–203, 212–14  
 the common good, 192–7  
 welfarism, 72
- naturalism, ethical, chapter 1  
*passim*
- nature, chapter 1 *passim*
- nature, human, *see* human  
 nature
- Nietzsche, F., 107
- normative context, importance of,  
 178–81, chapter 7 *passim*
- normativity, 14
- Nussbaum, M., 190

- Oderberg, D.S., 5, 6  
 'ought'-statements and use of pronouns, 61–3
- Parfit, D., 132
- Pascal, B., 217, 224
- Paul, St, 14
- Pauline Principle (not to do evil for the sake of good), 70, 71, 75, 93–4
- Pettit, P., 114–17 *passim*
- Plato/Platonism, 1, 5, 16, 56, 107, 108, 193–4, 213
- Pollock, J., 105–6
- practical reason, first principle of (do good and avoid evil), 46, 75–8, 86
- practical reasonableness (principles of), 77
- practical reasoning, 3, 6, 97, 100  
*see also* good/goods (basic human goods, goods in general)
- practical wisdom and responsibility, 228–31
- Price, R., 59
- Principle of Double Effect (PDE), 7, 8–9, 118, 119–24, 162, chapters 9–11 *passim*  
 action and consequences, problem of distinguishing, 221–2, 224–5  
 statement of, 218, 265–6  
 the 'action in itself', problem of identifying, 219–22  
*see also* intention, intention/foresight distinction
- Principle of Modern Liberal Autonomy (MLA), 7–8, chapter 8 *passim*  
 conflict with the common good, 204–8  
 sexual morality, artificial reproduction (cloning etc.), 197–203, 212–14  
*see also* liberalism
- Principle of Subsidiarity, 157
- Principle of Totality, 154
- psychologism in ethics, 11–12
- Quinn, W., 237–8, 240
- Railton, P., 107
- Rawling, P., 115–17  
 reasons (for action), 33*ff.*, 74, 79*ff.*, 87*ff.*, 109–10, 253
- retaliation  
 ethics of, 7, 169–74  
 harming, wronging and, 174–8
- Richardson, H., 4–5, 6
- rights  
 alienability/inalienability, 160  
 collision (apparent conflict) of, 158–60  
 constraints, 166–9
- Scanlon, T.M., 172
- Sceffler, S., 93–4
- Sidgwick, H., 48, 254
- Sorensen, R., 105–6
- Stevenson, C.L., 53
- Stoicism, 13, 72
- supererogation, 55
- the natural, 2, chapter 1 *passim*
- Thomson, J.J., 245
- Tollefsen, C., 2–3, 5, 6
- Uniacke, S., 7
- Urmson, J.O., 55
- utilitarianism, 1, 49, 264
- virtue ethics, 1, 264
- Watt, H., 8–9
- Williams, B., 2–3, 17, 19, 33, 34, 35, 36, 49
- Wojtyla, K., 45
- Wolfenden Report on homosexuality (1957), 186, 187, chapter 8 *passim*
- Wordsworth, W., 20–2, 27