

Relational Autonomy Feminist Perspectives On Autonomy Agency And The Social Self

Recent legal developments challenge how valid the concept of mental capacity is in determining whether individuals with impairments can make decisions about their care and treatment. Kong defends a concept of mental capacity but argues that such assessments must consider how relationships and dialogue can enable or disable the decision-making abilities of these individuals. This is thoroughly investigated using an interdisciplinary approach that combines philosophy and legal analysis of the law in England and Wales, the European Court of Human Rights, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. By exploring key concepts underlying mental capacity, the investigation concludes that both primary relationships and capacity assessments themselves must display key competencies to ensure that autonomy skills are promoted and encouraged. This ultimately provides scope for justifiable interventions into disabling relationships and articulates the dialogical practices that help better situate, interpret, and understand the choices and actions of individuals with impairments.

We encounter autonomy in virtually every area of philosophy: in its relation with rationality, personality, self-identity, authenticity, freedom, moral values and motivations, and forms of government, legal, and social institutions. At the same time, the notion of autonomy has been the subject of significant criticism. Some argue that autonomy outweighs or even endangers interpersonal or collective values, while others believe it alienates subjects who don't possess a strong form of autonomy. These marginalized subjects and communities include persons with physical or psychological disabilities, those in dire economic conditions, LGBTI persons, ethnic and religious minorities, and women in traditional communities or households. This volume illuminates possible patterns in these criticisms of autonomy by bringing to light and critically assessing the contribution of women throughout the history of philosophy on this important subject. The essays in this collection cover a wide range of historical periods and influential female philosophers and thinkers, from medieval philosophy through to contemporary debates. Important authors whose work is considered, among many others, include Hildegard of Bingen, Margaret Cavendish, Anne Conway, Mary Wollstonecraft, Susan Moller Okin, Hélène Cixous, Iris Marion Young, and Judith Jarvis Thomson. *Women Philosophers on Autonomy* will enlighten and inform contemporary debates on autonomy by bringing into the conversation previously neglected female perspectives from throughout history.

On July 4, 1990, while on a morning walk in southern France, Susan Brison was attacked from behind, severely beaten, sexually assaulted, strangled to unconsciousness, and left for dead. She survived, but her world was destroyed. Her training as a philosopher could not help her make sense of things, and many of her fundamental assumptions about the nature of the self and the world it inhabits were shattered. At once a personal narrative of recovery and a philosophical exploration of trauma, this book examines the undoing and remaking of a self in the aftermath of violence. It explores, from an interdisciplinary perspective, memory and truth, identity and self, autonomy and community. It offers imaginative access to the experience of a rape survivor as well as a reflective critique of a society in which women routinely fear and suffer sexual violence. As Brison observes, trauma disrupts memory, severs past from present, and incapacitates the ability to envision a future. Yet the act of bearing witness, she argues, facilitates recovery by integrating the experience into the survivor's life's story. She also argues for the importance, as well as the hazards, of using first-person narratives in understanding not only trauma, but also larger philosophical questions about what we can know and how we should live. Bravely and beautifully written, *Aftermath* is that rare book that is an illustration of

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its own arguments.

Decolonizing Universalism argues that feminism can respect cultural and religious differences and acknowledge the legacy of imperialism without surrendering its core ethical commitments. Transcending relativism/ universalism debates that reduce feminism to a Western notion, Serene J. Khader proposes a feminist vision that is sensitive to postcolonial and antiracist concerns. Khader criticizes the false universalism of what she calls 'Enlightenment liberalism,' a worldview according to which the West is the one true exemplar of gender justice and moral progress is best achieved through economic independence and the abandonment of tradition. She argues that anti-imperialist feminists must rediscover the normative core of feminism and rethink the role of moral ideals in transnational feminist praxis. What emerges is a nonideal universalism that rejects missionary feminisms that treat Western intervention and the spread of Enlightenment liberalism as the path to global gender injustice. The book draws on evidence from transnational women's movements and development practice in addition to arguments from political philosophy and postcolonial and decolonial theory, offering a rich moral vision for twenty-first century feminism.

This book develops an intersectional feminist approach to moral responsibility. It accomplishes four main goals. First, it outlines a concise list of the main principles of intersectional feminism. Second, it uses these principles to critique prevailing philosophical theories of moral responsibility. Third, it offers an account of moral responsibility that is compatible with the ethos of intersectional feminism. And fourth, it uses intersectional feminist principles to critique culturally normative responsibility practices. This is the first book to provide an explicitly intersectional feminist approach to moral responsibility. After identifying the five principles central to intersectional feminism, the author demonstrates how influential theories of responsibility are incompatible with these principles. She argues that a normatively adequate theory of blame should not be preoccupied with the agency or traits of wrongdoers; it should instead underscore, and seek to ameliorate, oppression and adversity as experienced by the marginalized. Apt blame and praise, according to her intersectional feminist account, is both communicative and functionalist. The book concludes with an extensive discussion of culturally embedded responsibility practices, including asymmetrically structured conversations and gender- and racially biased social spaces. *An Intersectional Feminist Approach to Moral Responsibility* presents a sophisticated and original philosophical account of moral responsibility. It will be of interest to philosophers working at the crossroads of moral responsibility, feminist philosophy, critical race theory, queer theory, critical disability studies, and intersectionality theory.

These new essays examine philosophical issues at the intersection of feminism and autonomy studies. Are autonomy and independence useful goals for women and subordinate persons? Is autonomy possible in contexts of social subordination and oppression? Is the pursuit of desires that issue from patriarchal norms consistent with autonomous agency? How should we understand the concepts of relational autonomy and adaptive preferences? How do emotions and caring relate to autonomous deliberation? Contributors to this collection answer these and related questions.

Examines the real world of women's health status and health-care delivery in different countries, and the assumptions behind the dominant medical model of solving problems without regard to social conditions. This book asks what feminist health-care ethics looks like if we start with women's experiences and concerns.

In his work on metaphysics, Spinoza associates reasons with causes or explanations. He contends that there is a reason for whatever exists and whatever does not exist. In his account of the human mind, Spinoza makes reason a peculiarly powerful kind of idea and the only source of our knowledge of objects in experience. In his moral theory, Spinoza introduces dictates of reason, which are action-guiding prescriptions. In politics, Spinoza suggests that

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reason, with religion, motivates cooperation in society. Reason shapes Spinoza's philosophy, and central debates about Spinoza-including his place in the history of philosophy and in the European Enlightenment-turn upon our understanding of these claims. Spinoza on Reason starts with striking claims in each of these areas, which Michael LeBuffe draws from Spinoza's two great works, the Ethics and the Theological Political Treatise. The book takes each characterization of reason on its own terms, explaining the claims and their historical context. While acknowledging the striking variety of reason's roles, LeBuffe emphasizes the extent to which these different doctrines build upon one another. The result is a rich understanding of the meaning and function of each claim and, in the book's conclusion, an overview of the contribution of reason to the systematic coherence of Spinoza's philosophy.

This exciting new Handbook offers a comprehensive overview of the contemporary state of the field in feminist philosophy. The editors' introduction and forty-five essays cover feminist critical engagements with philosophy and adjacent scholarly fields, as well as feminist approaches to current debates and crises across the world. Authors cover topics ranging from the ways in which feminist philosophy attends to other systems of oppression, and the gendered, racialized, and classed assumptions embedded in philosophical concepts, to feminist perspectives on prominent subfields of philosophy. The first section contains chapters that explore feminist philosophical engagement with mainstream and marginalized histories and traditions, while the second section parses feminist philosophy's contributions to numerous philosophical subfields, for example metaphysics and bioethics. A third section explores what feminist philosophy can illuminate about crucial moral and political issues of identity, gender, the body, autonomy, prisons, among numerous others. The Handbook concludes with the field's engagement with other theories and movements, including trans studies, queer theory, critical race, theory, postcolonial theory, and decolonial theory. The volume provides a rigorous but accessible resource for students and scholars who are interested in feminist philosophy, and how feminist philosophers situate their work in relation to the philosophical mainstream and other disciplines. Above all it aims to showcase the rich diversity of subject matter, approach, and method among feminist philosophers.

Since the end of the Second World War, increasing numbers of women have decided to become mothers without intending the biological father or a partner to participate in parenting. Many conceive via donor insemination or adopt; others become pregnant after a brief sexual relationship and decide to parent alone. Using a feminist socio-legal framework, *Autonomous Motherhood?* probes fundamental assumptions within the law about the nature of family and parenting. Drawing on a range of empirical evidence, including legislative history, case studies, and interviews with single mothers, the authors conclude that while women may now have the economic and social freedom to parent alone, they must still negotiate a socio-legal framework that suggests their choice goes against the interests of society, fatherhood, and children.

The essays collected here explore the relation of feminist bioethics to mainstream bioethical thought and practice. From publisher description.

The present volume is an exciting new collection of original essays by outstanding feminist theorists including Sally Haslanger, Marilyn Frye and Linda Alcoff. *Feminist Metaphysics* is the first collection of articles addressing metaphysical issues from a feminist perspective. The essays cover central feminist topics including: the ontology of sex and gender, persons, identity and subjectivity, and the relations among experience,

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ideology and reality. Many of the papers combine cutting-edge feminist theory with contemporary metaphysics and the philosophy of language. The volume is also distinctive in including articles representing both analytic and continental perspectives on metaphysics. The essays are philosophically sophisticated and are primarily intended for a professional audience of philosophers and feminist theorists.

The Routledge Companion to Feminist Philosophy is an outstanding guide and reference source to the key topics, subjects, thinkers, and debates in feminist philosophy. Fifty-six chapters, written by an international team of contributors specifically for the Companion, are organized into five sections: (1) Engaging the Past; (2) Mind, Body, and World; (3) Knowledge, Language, and Science; (4) Intersections; (5) Ethics, Politics, and Aesthetics. The volume provides a mutually enriching representation of the several philosophical traditions that contribute to feminist philosophy. It also foregrounds issues of global concern and scope; shows how feminist theory meshes with rich theoretical approaches that start from transgender identities, race and ethnicity, sexuality, disabilities, and other axes of identity and oppression; and highlights the interdisciplinarity of feminist philosophy and the ways that it both critiques and contributes to the whole range of subfields within philosophy.

This book breaks new theoretical ground by constructing a framework of 'relational vulnerability' through which it analyses the disadvantaged position of those who undertake unpaid caregiving, or 'dependency-work', in the context of the private family. Expanding on existing socio-legal scholarship on vulnerability and resilience, it charts how the state seeks to conceal the embodied and temporal reality of vulnerability and dependency within the private family, while promoting an artificial concept of autonomous personhood that exposes dependency-workers work to a range of harms. The book argues that the legal framework governing the married and unmarried family reinforces principles of individualism and rationality, while labelling dependency-work as a private, gendered, and sentimental endeavor, lacking value beyond the family. It also considers how the state can respond to relational vulnerability and foster resilience. It seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of resilience, theorising its normative goals and applying these to different hypothetical state responses.

This anthology explores the many and varied connections between pacifism, politics, and feminism. Each topic is often thought about in academic isolation; however, when we consider how they intersect and interact, it opens up new areas for discussion and analysis.

People are socially situated amid complex relations with other people and are bound by interpersonal frameworks having significant influence upon their lives. These facts have implications for their autonomy. Challenging many of the currently accepted conceptions of autonomy and of how autonomy is valued, Oshana develops a 'social-relational' account of autonomy, or self-governance, as a condition of persons that is largely constituted by a person's relations with other people and by the absence of certain social relations. She denies that command over one's motives and the freedom to realize one's will are sufficient to secure the kind of command over one's life that autonomy requires, and argues against psychological, procedural, and content neutral accounts of autonomy. Oshana embraces the idea that her account is 'perfectionist' in a sense, and argues that ultimately our commitment to autonomy is defeasible, but she maintains that a social-relational account best captures what we value about autonomy

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and best serves the various ends for which the concept of autonomy is employed. Jennifer Nedelsky claims that we must rethink our notion of autonomy, rejecting the usual vocabulary of control, boundaries and individual rights. If we understand that we are fundamentally in relation to others, she argues, we will recognize that we become autonomous with others.

The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Theory provides a rich overview of the analytical frameworks and theoretical concepts that feminist theorists have developed to analyze the known world. Featuring leading feminist theorists from diverse regions of the globe, this collection delves into forty-nine subject areas, demonstrating the complexity of feminist challenges to established knowledge, while also engaging areas of contestation within feminist theory. Demonstrating the interdisciplinary nature of feminist theory, the chapters offer innovative analyses of topics central to social and political science, cultural studies and humanities, discourses associated with medicine and science, and issues in contemporary critical theory that have been transformed through feminist theorization. The handbook identifies limitations of key epistemic assumptions that inform traditional scholarship and shows how theorizing from women's and men's lives has profound effects on the conceptualization of central categories, whether the field of analysis is aesthetics, biology, cultural studies, development, economics, film studies, health, history, literature, politics, religion, science studies, sexualities, violence, or war.

This collection of original essays explores the social and relational dimensions of individual autonomy. Rejecting the feminist charge that autonomy is inherently masculinist, the contributors draw on feminist critiques of autonomy to challenge and enrich contemporary philosophical debates about agency, identity, and moral responsibility. The essays analyze the complex ways in which oppression can impair an agent's capacity for autonomy, and investigate connections, neglected by standard accounts, between autonomy and other aspects of the agent, including self-conception, self-worth, memory, and the imagination.

Intimate and medicalized, natural and technological, reproduction poses some of the most challenging ethical dilemmas of our time. This volume brings together scholars from multiple perspectives to address both traditional and novel questions about the rights and responsibilities of human reproducers, their caregivers, and the societies in which they live.

Women have historically been prevented from living autonomously by systematic injustice, subordination, and oppression. The lingering effects of these practices have prompted many feminists to view autonomy with suspicion. Here, Marilyn Friedman defends the ideal of feminist autonomy. In her eyes, behavior is autonomous if it accords with the wants, cares, values, or commitments that the actor has reaffirmed and is able to sustain in the face of opposition. By her account, autonomy is socially grounded yet also individualizing and sometimes socially disruptive, qualities that can be ultimately advantageous for women. Friedman applies the concept of autonomy to domains of special interest to women. She defends the importance of autonomy in romantic love, considers how social institutions should respond to women who choose to remain in abusive relationships, and argues that liberal societies should tolerate minority cultural practices that violate women's rights so long as the women in question have chosen autonomously to live according to those practices.

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Personal Autonomy and Social Oppression addresses the impact of social conditions, especially subordinating conditions, on personal autonomy. The essays in this volume are concerned with the philosophical concept of autonomy or self-governance and with the impact on relational autonomy of the oppressive circumstances persons must navigate. They address on the one hand questions of the theoretical structure of personal autonomy given various kinds of social oppression, and on the other, how contexts of social oppression make autonomy difficult or impossible.

This book draws connections and explores important questions at the intersection of the debates about relational autonomy and relational equality. Although these two research areas share several common assumptions and concerns, their connections have not been systematically explored. The essays in this volume address theoretical questions at the intersection of relational theories of autonomy and equality and also consider how these theoretical considerations play out in real-world contexts. Several chapters explore possible conceptual links between relational autonomy and equality by considering the role of values—such as agency, non-domination, and self-respect—to which both relational autonomy theorists and relational egalitarians are committed. Others reflect on how debates about autonomy and equality can clarify our thinking about oppression based on race and gender, and how such oppression affects interpersonal relationships. *Autonomy and Equality: Relational Approaches* is the first book to specifically address the relationship between these two research areas. It will be of interest to scholars and graduate students working in social and political philosophy, moral philosophy, and feminist philosophy.

Ancients and moderns alike have constructed arguments and assessed theories on the basis of common sense and intuitive judgments. Yet, despite the important role intuitions play in philosophy, there has been little reflection on fundamental questions concerning the sort of data intuitions provide, how they are supposed to lead us to the truth, and why we should treat them as important. In addition, recent psychological research seems to pose serious challenges to traditional intuition-driven philosophical inquiry. *Rethinking Intuition* brings together a distinguished group of philosophers and psychologists to discuss these important issues. Students and scholars in both fields will find this book to be of great value.

This is an open access title available under the terms of a CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 International licence. It is free to read at Oxford Scholarship Online and offered as a free PDF download from OUP and selected open access locations. Personal autonomy is often lauded as a key value in contemporary Western bioethics. Though the claim that there is an important relationship between autonomy and rationality is often treated as uncontroversial in this sphere, there is also considerable disagreement about how we should cash out the relationship. In particular, it is unclear whether a rationalist view of autonomy can be compatible with legal judgments that enshrine a patient's right to refuse medical treatment, regardless of whether the reasons underpinning the choice are known and rational, or indeed whether they even exist. Jonathan Pugh brings recent philosophical work on the nature of rationality to bear on the question of how we should understand personal autonomy in contemporary bioethics. In doing so, he develops a new framework for thinking about the concept of autonomy, one that is grounded in an understanding of the different roles that rational beliefs and rational desires have to play in it. Pugh's account allows for a deeper understanding of the

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relationship between our freedom to act and our capacity to decide autonomously. His rationalist perspective is contrasted with other prominent accounts of autonomy in bioethics, and the revisionary implications it has for practical questions in biomedicine are also outlined.

To what extent are we responsible for our actions? Philosophical theorizing about this question has recently taken a social turn, marking a shift in focus from traditional metaphysical concerns about free will and determinism. Recent theories have attended to the interpersonal dynamics at the heart of moral responsibility practices and the role of the moral environment in scaffolding agency. Yet, the implications of social inequality and the role of social power for our moral responsibility practices remains a surprisingly neglected topic. The conception of agency involved in current approaches to moral responsibility is overly idealized, assuming that our practices involve interactions between equally empowered and situated agents. In twelve new essays and a substantial introduction, this volume systematically challenges this assumption, exploring the impact of social factors such as power relationships and hierarchies, paternalism, socially constructed identities, race, gender and class on moral responsibility. Social factors have bearing on the circumstances in which agents act as well as on the person or people in the position to hold that agent accountable for his or her action. Additionally, social factors bear on the parties who pass judgment on the agent. Leading theorists of moral responsibility, including Michael McKenna, Marina Oshana, and Manuel Vargas, consider the implications of oppression and structural inequality for their respective theories. Neil Levy urges the need to refocus our analyses of the epistemic and control conditions for moral responsibility from individual to socially extended agents. Leading theorists of relational autonomy, including Catriona Mackenzie, Natalie Stoljar and Andrea Westlund develop new insights into the topic of moral responsibility. Other contributors bring debates about moral responsibility into dialogue with recent work in feminist philosophy, social epistemology and social psychology on topics such as epistemic injustice and implicit bias. Collectively, the essays in this volume reorient philosophical debates about moral responsibility in important new directions.

The aim of this book is to show how feminist perspectives can extend and advance the field of nursing ethics. It engages in the broader nursing ethics project of critiquing existing ethical frameworks as well as constructing and developing alternative understandings, concepts, and methodologies. All of the contributors draw attention to the operations of power inherent in moral relationships at individual, institutional, cultural, and socio-political levels. The early essays chart the development of feminist perspectives in the field of nursing ethics from the late 19th century to the present day and consider the impact of gender roles and gendered understandings on the moral lives of nurses, patients and families. They also consider the transformative potential of feminist perspectives to widen the scope of nursing and midwifery practices to include the social, economic, cultural and political dimensions of moral decision-making in health care settings. The second half of the book draws on feminist insights to critically discuss the role of nurses and midwives in leadership, healthcare organisations, and research as well as the provision of particular forms of care e.g. care in the home and abortion care.

Choice Magazine Outstanding Academic Titles 2005 Winner Amidst the vast array of

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literature on the First Amendment, it is rare to hear a fresh voice speak about the First Amendment, but in *Truth, Autonomy, and Speech*, Susan H. Williams presents a strikingly original interpretation and defense of the First Amendment, written from a feminist perspective. Drawing on work from several disciplines—including law, political theory, philosophy, and anthropology—the book develops alternative accounts of truth and autonomy as the foundations for freedom of expression. Building on feminist understandings of self and the social world, Williams argues that both truth and autonomy are fundamentally relational. With great clarity and insight, Williams demonstrates that speech is the means by which we create rather than discover truth and the primary mechanism through which we tell the stories that constitute our autonomy. She examines several controversial issues in the law of free speech—including campaign finance reform, the public forum doctrine, and symbolic speech—and concludes that the legal doctrine through which we interpret and apply the First Amendment should be organized to protect speech that serves the purposes of truth and autonomy.

A collection of essays representing diverse approaches to feminist ethical analysis of social policy. Subjects include the Family and Medical Leave Act, combat exclusion and the role of women in the military, unwed fathers' rights, mail-order brides, pornography, breast implants, and sex-selective abortion. Paper edition (unseen), \$17.95. Annotation copyrighted by Book News, Inc., Portland, OR

In relational theory, the self is seen as fundamentally constituted in terms of its relations to others: it not only lives in relationship with and to others, but also owes its very existence to such relationships. *Being Relational* explores core moral and metaphysical concepts through a relational-theory lens and analyzes how such considerations might apply to more practical areas of concern in health law and policy. Innovative and self-reflexive, this groundbreaking collection will appeal to a broad range of thinkers, especially those who seek to understand the complex ways in which power is created and sustained relationally.

This collection of 13 new essays shows what Baruch Spinoza can add to our understanding of the relational nature of autonomy. By offering a relational understanding of the nature of individuals centred on the role played by emotions, Spinoza offers not only historical roots for contemporary debates but also broadens the current discussion. At the same time, reading Spinoza as a theorist of relational autonomy underscores the consistency of his overall metaphysical, ethical and political project, which has been clouded by the standard rationalist interpretation of his works. These essays explore the social and relational dimensions of individual autonomy. Rejecting the feminist charge that autonomy is inherently masculinist, the contributors draw on feminist critiques of autonomy to challenge philosophical debates about agency, identity, and moral responsibility.

This volume addresses the complex interplay between the conditions of an agent's personal autonomy and the constitution of her self in light of two influential background assumptions: a libertarian thesis according to which it is essential for personal autonomy to be able to choose freely how one's self is shaped, on the one hand, and a line of thought following especially the seminal work of Harry Frankfurt according to which personal autonomy necessarily rests on an already sufficiently shaped self, on the other hand. Given this conceptual framework, a number of influential aspects within

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current debate can be addressed in a new and illuminating light: accordingly, the volume's contributions range from 1) discussing fundamental conceptual interconnections between personal autonomy and freedom of the will, 2) addressing the exact role and understanding of different personal traits, e.g. Frankfurt's notion of volitional necessities, commitments to norms and ideals, emotions, the phenomenon of weakness of will, and psychocorporeal aspects, 3) and finally taking into account social influences, which are discussed in terms of their ability to buttress, to weaken, or even to serve as necessary preconditions of personal autonomy and the forming of one's self. The volume thus provides readers with an extensive and most up-to-date discussion of various influential strands of current philosophical debate on the topic. It is of equal interest to all those already engaged in the debate as well as to readers trying to get an up-to-date overview or looking for a textbook to use in courses.

"Building on a feminist conception of individual autonomy, explores the obligation of the state to foster autonomy in its citizens, particularly the most vulnerable, through social service delivery. Draws on both successful and less successful examples of service delivery to generate a theoretical account of the autonomy-fostering state"--Provided by publisher.

This volume breaks new ground by investigating the ethics of vulnerability. Drawing on various ethical traditions, the contributors explore the nature of vulnerability, the responsibilities owed to the vulnerable, and by whom.

Autonomy has recently become one of the central concepts in contemporary moral philosophy and has generated much debate over its nature and value. This 2005 volume brings together essays that address the theoretical foundations of the concept of autonomy, as well as essays that investigate the relationship between autonomy and moral responsibility, freedom, political philosophy, and medical ethics. Written by some of the most prominent philosophers working in these areas, this book represents research on the nature and value of autonomy that will be essential reading for a broad swathe of philosophers as well as many psychologists.

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