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# HYPOCRISY, STANDING TO BLAME AND SECOND-PERSONAL AUTHORITY

BY

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**Abstract:** This paper identifies why hypocrites lack the standing to blame others for certain wrongs. By identifying problems with thinking of hypocritical blame as inappropriate and examining how the concept of standing is used in other contexts, I argue that we should think of standing to blame as a status that grants agents a normative power. Using Darwall's account of second-personal obligations, I argue that hypocrites lack the standing to blame because they lack the authority to blame. Hypocrites lack this authority because they fail to accept other people's second-personal authority to make similar demands on them.

## 1. *Introduction*

Philosophers writing on moral responsibility have spent much time examining what conditions wrongdoers must meet to count as appropriate targets of blame. Recently, attention has shifted to whether blamers must also meet certain conditions before their blame is appropriate. The idea is that would-be blamers must first meet certain conditions in order to possess *standing* to blame.

Multiple philosophers have recently argued that hypocrites lack the standing to blame wrongdoers for certain wrongs (Coates and Tognazzini, 2013; Duff, 2010; Friedman, 2013; Fritz and Miller, 2018; Isserow and Klein, 2017; Roadevin, 2018; Todd, 2019; Wallace, 2010). Hypocritical blaming is often thought to evince some kind of moral fault, even if the person being blamed is indeed culpable. If Shaun and Katia both cheat on

their spouses, Shaun can judge that Katia has done something wrong. Shaun can think that Katia has a callous character, and he can inform Katia there are strong moral reasons to feel remorse. Blame, however, is off the table. If Shaun were to openly rebuke Katia, Katia—as morally flawed as she is—is within her rights to say, ‘Who are *you* to blame *me*?’ or ‘Look who’s talking!’ This response acknowledges the speaker has committed a wrong and that certain responses from the moral community are appropriate, but denies that the hypocrite is in any position to blame.

The problem is that we currently lack any account of hypocrisy that both provides a plausible explanation for why hypocrites lack the standing to blame, and avoids generating unintuitive assessments regarding key thought experiments. In trying to identify why hypocrites lack the standing to blame, existing accounts take a similar approach. They proceed by first investigating what is objectionable about hypocrisy, and they try to use this to thereby explain why hypocrites lack the standing to blame. In this paper, I want to take a different approach. I want to start by examining *standing* and from there work towards an account of why hypocrites lack the standing to blame. I believe this is necessary, because much of the existing literature seems to be appealing to a vague notion of standing. Because ‘hypocrites losing their standing to blame’ is our *explanandum*, having a mistaken conception of ‘standing’ risks setting philosophers on the wrong path in their search for an explanation.

Let me briefly note that when I say that hypocrites lack the standing to blame, this does not mean that they lack the standing to blame all wrongdoers for any wrong whatsoever. An adulterer clearly retains his standing to blame murderers. However, it is reasonable to ask what kinds of wrongs hypocrites lack the standing to blame others for committing and how hypocrites can regain their standing to blame. For now, it will suffice to focus on intuitively paradigmatic cases of hypocritical blame. These are cases where an agent culpably commits a wrong, does not atone or is not apologetic for this and blames a second agent for committing a relevantly similar wrong for relevantly similar reasons. Such agents usually lack the standing to blame similar wrongdoers and are open to pejorative charges of hypocrisy if they blame.

This paper proceeds as follows. In Section 2, I examine how the term ‘standing’ is used in a variety of contexts, noting that most philosophers writing on hypocrisy have taken standing to be a kind of moral entitlement. I argue that thinking of standing to blame as a moral entitlement faces problems, and these cannot be remedied by making reference to other, better understood concepts such as appropriateness, desert or fairness. The mistake is caused by thinking of standing in exclusively moral terms, and we should instead think of standing as a status that grants agents the *ability* to do certain things. Using Darwall’s (2006) account of second-personal obligations, in Section 3, I argue that we should think of blame as expressing

second-personal demands. For these demands to in fact impose obligations on others, however, it must be the case that we have the authority to make these demands. Agents who lack standing to blame lack the authority and thus ability to exercise the normative power that we normally exercise in making these demands. Hypocrites in particular lack this authority because they do not accept other people's second-personal authority to make similar demands on them. In Sections 4 and 5, I show that this account is able to avoid a number of problems other accounts of hypocrisy face, while retaining their strengths.

## 2. *What is standing?*

To get clearer about different senses of standing, let us briefly look at how the concept has been used in a range of contexts.

### 2.1. STANDING AND ENTITLEMENTS TO BLAME

'Standing' was originally understood as a legal notion, referring to a status granted to certain citizens. Citizens who wish to bring a lawsuit to court must have the 'standing' to do so, which means that they (or someone they are representing) have been (or are at risk of being) negatively affected by the events in the case (*Lujan v. Defenders of Wildlife*, 1992). In short, one has standing if one is *entitled* to bring a case to court, with this entitlement being granted by the legal system. One retains this standing even if they choose not to bring the case to court.

This language was then picked up in the forgiveness literature, in discussions over who is entitled to forgive. A key question for philosophers in this domain concerns under what conditions forgiveness has actually taken place. Many philosophers argue that only victims have the standing to forgive (Murphy and Hampton, 1990; Zaragoza, 2012; cf. Pettigrove, 2009; Radzik, 2010). These philosophers argue that if I am not the victim (or at least closely related), even if I forswear my resentment and declare I have forgiven the perpetrator, forgiveness will not have taken place. Forgiveness is simply not something I am able to do. Notice that in each of these contexts, the conception of standing at issue is *metaphysical* standing. Agents are entitled to forgive or sue, in the sense that they are *able* to forgive or bring a case to court if they so choose. They have been granted an ability to do something in virtue of meeting certain conditions. It seems that this sense of standing cannot be what we are investigating when examining hypocrisy, because hypocrites clearly can blame.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, there are important differences between the legal and moral cases. For example, third parties who are not direct victims cannot bring cases to court, but third parties are often entitled to blame, as Friedman (2013) points out.

The language of entitlements then gets used in the moral domain, and this is where some lack of clarity with our terms risks occurring. When  $\phi$ -ing is morally impermissible, we say that agents are not entitled to  $\phi$ , even though they are physically or metaphysically capable of  $\phi$ -ing. To say  $\phi$ -ing is morally impermissible is to say an agent is not entitled to  $\phi$  *by morality* or that they are unable to  $\phi$  in such a way that conforms with the requirements of morality.

The language of moral entitlement is used by numerous philosophers when they briefly reference standing to blame. For example, Coates and Tognazzini (2012, 2013) describe standing as concerning whether a wrong is within the blamer's 'jurisdiction' (2012, p. 203) or whether certain 'propriety conditions' obtain (2013, p. 17). Friedman (2013) takes the concept to refer to whether a blamer is 'entitled' to have their blame taken seriously by the moral community (p. 278). King (2015) writes that standing 'enables one to blame with license or justification', and without it, blame is 'morally problematic' (pp. 1–2). Scanlon (2008) describes hypocrites as being 'not in a position' to blame (p. 137). However, none of these philosophers specify how to understand these terms in sufficient detail, and Smith (2007) does not use any other descriptors to explain what standing to blame is at all.

Thinking of standing to blame as an entitlement to blame seems very intuitive. But this sort of terminology comes with a risk. Because we are already not entitled to act in morally impermissible ways, thinking of standing as an entitlement risks not doing any work when we try to explain why hypocrites lack the standing to blame. If we ask, 'Is it permissible for Shaun to blame Katia?' the answer, 'Shaun's blame would be morally impermissible because he is a hypocrite, and therefore lacks standing to blame' may be equivalent to 'Shaun's blame would be morally impermissible because he is a hypocrite, and his blame is therefore morally impermissible'. We thus need some further story about how saying an agent lacks standing to blame is different to saying it is simply all-things-considered morally impermissible for that agent to blame. Without such a story, we would lack the standing to blame whenever blaming would result in terrible consequences overall. We would also still lack an answer to why hypocrites lack the standing to blame, which was our initial task.

## 2.2. STANDING AND APPROPRIATE BLAME

If we want our concept of standing do some explanatory work, our understanding of this 'entitlement' to blame must refer to something other than all-things-considered moral impermissibility. A natural alternative answer is to think about *appropriateness*. Questions over whether an agent has standing *qua* entitlement to blame would thus refer to questions about whether an agent's blame is appropriate. In favour of this approach, we could point to the fact that it does seem apt to describe hypocritical blame

as inappropriate and that following Wallace (1994) much of the philosophical literature on moral responsibility has centred around when blame and the reactive attitudes are appropriate.

Thinking of standingless blame as a kind of inappropriate blame is initially promising, in that this would successfully distinguish it from blame which is all-things-considered morally impermissible. Almost all philosophers writing on moral responsibility accept that whether we should blame someone, all-things-considered, is a different question to whether blame is appropriate. In particular, consequentialist considerations can make blaming someone wrong, even if that person is an appropriate target of blame. If blaming someone innocent was the only way to avoid some terrible outcome, then you ought to blame them. Blame here would be inappropriate, but all-things-considered justified. Conversely, if someone culpably commits a minor wrong, but blaming them would make them suicidal, then blame would be appropriate, but not all-things-considered justified.

However, another problem arises here. In investigating what it means for blame to be appropriate, philosophers have generally focused on the conditions under which someone is an appropriate target of blame *in virtue of their wrongdoing*. Here, then, is a challenge to the proposal that questions about standing to blame concern whether it is appropriate for an agent to blame: what reason do we have to think that blaming when one lacks standing is inappropriate *in the same way* that blaming the innocent is inappropriate? What relevant feature does these differing cases share that makes blame inappropriate in both instances? The fact that an agent lacks standing to blame does not seem like the general kinds of consequentialist considerations identified above that can make blame unjustified. But we cannot conclude from this fact alone that blaming when one lacks standing is therefore inappropriate in the way that blaming the innocent is inappropriate.

For example, Pereboom (2014) and Nelkin (2016) interpret the claim that S is an appropriate target of blame to mean that S is a *deserving* target of blame. This does not seem to generate any obvious explanation for how hypocrites could lack the standing to blame, because hypocritical blame still gives wrongdoers what they deserve.<sup>2</sup> Wallace (1994) interprets the claim that S is an appropriate target of blame to mean that it would be *fair* to blame S. This has some appeal, because it does seem like hypocrites treat the people they blame unfairly. But there are a number of ways to unfairly blame, without this undermining one's standing to blame. Suppose I blame you but fail to blame another colleague for a similar wrong. I treat you unfairly in blaming you, but I have not thereby lost my entitlement to blame you altogether.<sup>3</sup>

One might be motivated to interpret 'appropriateness' as concerning the ethics of *expressing* blame, after it has already been determined that an agent is blameworthy.<sup>4</sup> Blame often seems 'inappropriate' if it is disproportionately strong compared with the wrong committed, expressed when one lacks

sufficient evidence of wrongdoing, applied inconsistently (Friedman, 2013), targets a minor wrong that is 'none of your business' (Smith, 2007), or expressed when the wrongdoer has suffered enough already. Numerous factors seem to make expressing blaming inappropriate in some sense, and it could be that hypocritical blame is another factor on this list.

A few considerations count against thinking of hypocrisy as being inappropriate in the same way that blaming too strongly or on insufficient evidence is inappropriate. First, taking such an approach does not by itself answer why hypocritical blame is inappropriate. We still need some further story, and it is not clear we can find one by looking for some shared property with these other conditions that putatively undermine standing. This is because the inappropriateness of blame in these other conditions seems to be explained by more general *pro tanto* obligations that we have to each other. We generally ought to respect people's privacy, treat people fairly and take reasonable precautions against imposing costs on the undeserving.

Second, this approach makes it puzzling why existing philosophical work on standing to blame focuses so much on hypocrisy, and why these other putative means of losing standing to blame are not receiving more attention. This seems conspicuously tied to the fact that our moral practices treat hypocrisy as far more significant than other ways in which people blame objectionably. We have religious and cultural admonitions against 'throwing stones in glass houses', 'casting the first stone' and 'ignoring the mote in one's eye while pointing out the speck in others' eyes' (Marvin, 1922). People who blame without sufficient evidence display a moral fault, but only hypocrites were given a special place in Dante's eighth circle of hell (Alighieri, 2003).

Finally, this approach leaves us wondering why hypocritical blame gives its targets a distinct complaint that other kinds of objectionable blame do not. If Katia accuses Shaun of cheating when she lacks sufficient evidence of this, perhaps she is open to a charge of having given insufficient consideration to Shaun's interests, because her evidence suggests that she will be blaming someone innocent. But Shaun gains an additional kind of complaint against Katia's blame if Katia has also been cheating. Blaming when one lacks sufficient evidence is a fault, but it is a very different fault to that displayed by hypocrites, which we react to in a particular way. As noted earlier, philosophers investigating hypocrisy take the 'Who are *you* to blame *me*?' and 'Look who's talking!' responses to be central to our inquiry (Bell, 2013; Friedman, 2013; Fritz and Miller, 2018). Todd (2019, p. 349) notes that there seems to be 'something further' at issue when it comes to hypocritical blame, which is absent when we tell people to (say) 'mind your own business'. The upshot of all this is that hypocritical blame seems to be objectionable in a distinctive kind of way, and simply pointing to other ways in which blame can be inappropriate is not a satisfying explanation for why hypocrisy undermines standing to blame.

## 2.3. STANDING AND PERMISSION TO EXCLUDE REASONS

One last attempt at outlining the nature of standing to blame begins by examining reasons for action. Herstein (2017) argues that to say an agent lacks standing is to say that we can *permissibly exclude* the reasons the agent gives us with their directives. For example, imagine an adult woman being asked by her parents to stop smoking. Given their relationship, this request is a valid directive. The request is itself a source of a reason to stop smoking, in addition to those reasons she already possessed. But if her parents are also smokers, Herstein argues that it is permissible for the daughter to exclude this reason from her deliberations, in a way that it would not be permissible were the parents not smokers. Directive-based reasons can be permissibly excluded when the directing agent has committed a similar wrong, lacks a stake in the matter or lacks a certain status.<sup>5</sup>

There are a few reasons this account of hypocrisy and standing is unsatisfying for our task. Herstein is only attempting to describe the general structure of permissible exclusion and has no account of when directives are valid or invalid (i.e. when directives actually create reasons). He also has no explanation for why someone's prior wrongdoing is the sort of thing that makes it permissible to exclude the reasons that their directives give us.

These questions aside, an important problem is that the account of directives and reason-excluding has difficulty generalising to instances of hypocritical *blame*. Herstein argues that when we permissibly exclude a directive-based reason, in many cases, we still incur derivative obligations to do the next best thing. For example, even if the daughter can permissibly exclude the reasons that her parent's request to stop smoking gives her, she still gains reasons to smoke less unhealthy cigarettes or to not smoke in front of her parents. It seems unclear how such a 'trace' of a reason remains in paradigmatic instances of hypocritical blame. If it is permissible for me to dismiss a hypocrite's blame, what exactly is the 'next best thing' that I morally ought to do in response to their blame instead? Additionally, a permissible exclusion account leaves us wondering why hypocritical blame is objectionable. If the reasons created by hypocritical blame can be permissibly excluded, and the recipient of the blame can simply ignore these, then it is unclear what exactly the hypocrite has done that is objectionable. Even if the recipient does act on the reason given to them by the hypocrite's directive, the directive is not thereby made unobjectionable, because it would remain appropriate for third parties to object to the hypocrite's blaming.

Allow me to summarise my argument so far and the puzzle we currently face. Agents who lack the standing to blame due to hypocrisy lack an entitlement to blame in some sense. But they seem to lack this entitlement in a way that is different to the way that agents lack an entitlement to blame the innocent, the way they lack an entitlement to blame when consequentialist considerations make blaming all-things-considered unjustified, *and* the

way that they lack an entitlement to blame in the absence of sufficient evidence, or when they do not have a stake in the matter. If standingless blame is simply all-things-considered unjustified blame, then our concept of 'standing' does not do any explanatory work. If standingless blame is thought to be a kind of inappropriate blame, this needs further explanation, because the appropriateness of blame is traditionally thought to depend on whether a wrongdoer is *blameworthy*, that is, a culpable wrongdoer. If we instead interpret the appropriateness at issue to concern the *expression* of blame to culpable wrongdoers, we still lack any explanation for why hypocritical blame is inappropriate. We also seem unable to account for why expressing hypocritical blame seems distinctly objectionable as compared with other kinds of objectionable expressed blame. And without any answer for why hypocrites lack the standing to blame, we may have to conclude that standingless blame is, in fact, not objectionable at all. This would mean that our 'Who are *you* to blame *me*?' responses are not tracking anything particularly morally significant.<sup>6</sup>

#### 2.4. STANDING AND NORMATIVE POWERS

Trying to explain why hypocrites lack the standing to blame by thinking about the nature of standing has been unsuccessful. Because of this, I believe we should take a different approach. I think that the lack of a solution thus far stems from the fact that all parties to this debate are thinking of standing to blame *qua* entitlement to blame in exclusively moral terms. Recall that it seemed like standing to blame could not be thought of similarly to how we use the term 'standing' in other domains, because these other domains concerned an ability (e.g. to sue and to forgive), and hypocrites clearly do have the ability to blame. I believe a promising account can be found by reconsidering this reasoning, and thinking of standing to blame in the same way we think of other kinds of standing: as a status that gives agents certain *abilities*.

My proposed answer comes from noticing two things in the previous discussion. First, notice that talk about metaphysical standing to  $\phi$  readily lends itself to discussions regarding certain kinds of actions, namely, consenting, ordering, promising, sentencing and pardoning. It sounds intelligible to say that I lack the standing to promise or consent on behalf of other agents. A notable exception is parents, who are able to consent on behalf of their children, having this entitlement in virtue of their relationship and because we typically take parents to be best placed to act in their children's interests (Buchanan and Brock, 1989). Parents have the standing to consent to their child being treated in certain ways (within limits) and strangers lack such standing. Parents are also able to order and impose duties on their children. Again, notice that the standing here is an ability that agents can exercise. Strangers simply are not *able* to consent to having someone else's child



receive invasive surgical treatment if they are not suitably related to that child.

The second thing worth noting is that these abilities that lend themselves to talk of metaphysical standing all seem to be *normative powers*. Pardoning, consenting, ordering, promising, forgiving and sentencing are all things we do that change others' normative situation in particular ways. When one has been pardoned, one no longer has any obligation to atone, and others no longer have the right to punish. When one consents, one waives or removes certain duties other agents have. When one orders, one imposes obligations on others. When one promises, one imposes obligations on one's self and makes it appropriate for others to blame them for violating those obligations. When one sentences, one makes certain forms of institutional treatment legal. Each of these actions is a normative power that agents can possess or acquire.<sup>7</sup> The stranger who cannot consent on my behalf is simply not able to remove other people's duties to not treat me in certain ways.

This neat and unified picture of standing across a number of domains suggests that the standing at issue regarding hypocrisy could also concern normative powers. To say that hypocrites lack the 'standing to blame' would thus be a bit misleading. Although hypocrites are able to blame, they cannot exercise the normative power that agents ordinarily exercise in blaming.

What might this normative power be? A common refrain among philosophers is that blame expresses demands, and that in blaming we are holding wrongdoers answerable to us. I believe the answer comes from realising that demands are things that require *authority* to be made, and this is what previous attempts to explain why hypocrites lack the standing to blame have been circling around. By using Darwall's (2006) account of second-personal authority, I believe we can develop a neat and unified answer to why hypocrites lack the standing to blame.

### 3. *Second-personal authority*

To understand Darwall's account of authority, we first need to understand his broader account of second-personal reasons and obligations. Darwall argues that there are two different kinds of moral obligations or moral reasons for action. Suppose you are standing on my foot, hurting me. I could try to give you a reason to remove your foot by getting you to feel sympathy, to see my being in pain as bad. But importantly, on this approach, I would not be so much addressing the reason to you as merely pointing out that it already existed. The reason I give you by making this kind of address is not primarily about you *qua* the agent causing me pain. It would only be a general sort of reason, which could be pointed out to anyone in a position to reduce the amount of pain in the world by anyone aware of that pain.

The second way that I can get you to take your foot off mine is by addressing to you a (purportedly valid) demand. I can demand this as the person whose foot you are stepping on, or as a member of the moral community, and this demand would concern your relations to me *qua* the person you are hurting. In making this demand, I am giving you a second-personal reason, a reason 'whose validity depends on presupposed authority and accountability relations between persons and, therefore, on the possibility of the reason's being addressed person-to-person' (2006, p. 8). According to Darwall, these second-personal reasons are at the heart of our moral responsibility practices. When we blame people, we blame them by making second-personal demands of them. Additionally, because we blame people for failing to treat us in certain ways we have a right to expect, the obligations that wrongdoers violate are also second-personal in nature. They are obligations *to us*.

In directing agents to comply with our second-personal demands, we want them to act for certain reasons. We do not want them to merely act out of fear of punishment. Instead, we want the agent to recognise the legitimacy of the demand and to direct their will to comply with that demand because they respect that our demand is legitimate. Respecting these demands is the way in which the agent treats us as one of Rawls's (1985) 'self-originating sources of valid claims' (p. 242). My status as a being with dignity is what grounds my authority to make demands of you to treat me in certain ways. And in demanding that you treat me a certain way, I am demanding that you do so precisely *because* I am a being with dignity.

Darwall argues that having the authority to make moral demands is a 'normative felicity condition' on such demands being legitimate, analogous to the felicity conditions that Austin (1962) argued a speech act needs to succeed. Normative felicity conditions must be met in order for the demands to be successful, that is, for those demands to *in fact* create reasons or obligations for addressee of those demands. That the blamer has the authority to make these demands is the main condition needed for such demands to be successful. Note that this authority is not a *de facto* authority granted by convention but a *de jure* authority granted by morality. If I demand that you, a stranger, give me ten push ups for instance, then my demand is infelicitous because I do not have the authority to make such a demand. If I demand for you to take your foot off mine, my demand is successful because I do possess such an authority and so you have no right to object to my demand.<sup>8</sup>

Additional normative felicity conditions also exist. A key insight from Darwall is that when we hold someone accountable by making second-personal demands, we presuppose and are thereby committed to a number of things. First, we presuppose that the other person is free and rational, that they have the capacity to recognise and comply with such demands *qua* demands. We presuppose that they have the capacity to direct

their will in the required way and to hold themselves responsible for wrongdoing through self-blame. In blaming, we also presuppose that these demands are the kinds of demands that we have the authority to make, because we are beings with dignity. Note that we make these presuppositions and are committed to them being the case even if we never actually have explicit thoughts like ‘this person can direct their will in response to my demands’.

These presuppositions are not merely things the addresser is committed to. They are normative felicity conditions that need to be met in order for demands to be genuinely second-personal and in fact create reasons for the addressee. One simply cannot make a second-personal demand to someone if they do not believe that person is capable of understanding and complying with that demand. One also cannot make *this* kind of demand if they are aiming to coerce the other person, or if one does not see themselves as a source of self-originating claims.

However, in presupposing that the other person has the capacity to freely and rationally direct their will in recognition of my second-personal demands, I have thereby presupposed that they a kind of being with dignity too. I presuppose that they are a source of self-originating claims that I need to respect, and who can make demands on me. Second-personal claims presuppose ‘a common competence, authority, and, therefore, responsibility as free and rational, a mutual second-personality that addresser and addressee share and that is appropriately recognized reciprocally’ (p. 21).

In presupposing that both of us are beings with dignity that needs to be respected, and that both of us are members of the moral community who can hold others morally accountable, we are also committed to there being certain standards that we can hold each other morally responsible for failing to meet. We are committed to there being standards that can be accepted by us *qua* free and rational beings *among equals*. What those standards amount to depends on which account of morality is correct. Darwall thinks that this account naturally lends itself to contractualism. Specifically, what actions are right or wrong largely depend on what sort of principles agents could not reasonably reject, with morality’s content deriving itself (at least partly) from our equal dignity. Watson (2007) and Wallace (2007) dispute whether Darwall succeeds in arguing from the structure of second-personal reasons to the structure of morality, but we can set this particular debate aside. What matters for my account is that our commitment to there being shared normative standards is also a normative felicity condition. In order to succeed in making a second-personal demand to you, I must presuppose that we have a shared authority *qua* members of the moral community, and that I as a free and rational being among equals am able to hold you to account for failing to meet those standards, while you have the authority to hold me to the same. In short, successfully making a second-personal demand

requires that I recognise shared standards are in place and accept these standards as authoritative for me.

Recall that we are investigating why hypocrites lack the standing to blame. Here is what happens when we put all of the pieces of Darwall's account together and examine hypocritical blame. In blaming, the hypocrite makes a second-personal demand. They make a demand as a member of the moral community. The hypocrite thereby holds the wrongdoer accountable *to them*, calling on the wrongdoer to answer to them and comply with their moral demands. The hypocrite necessarily purports to have the authority to make this demand and presupposes that the wrongdoer too is an authoritative source of second-personal demands. The hypocrite is thus purporting to address the wrongdoer from the shared normative perspective of the moral community. And they expect the wrongdoer to accept that second-personal demand from that standpoint too, thereby accepting the authority of the hypocrite to make this demand.

However, the hypocrite is someone who has themselves committed wrongdoing similar to what they are blaming the other person for committing. They have done something that is inconsistent with the shared normative standards they are purportedly committed to when blaming the wrongdoer. Of course, mere inconsistency with the moral demands that we make of others does not make one a hypocrite or prevent such demands from being genuinely second-personal. But the kind of inconsistency evinced by hypocrites is notable, because it demonstrates that they do not *accept* certain kinds of obligations as authoritative on them. The hypocrite is someone *who tries to make a second-personal demand on others, while failing to accept the authority of others to make the same kind of second-personal demand on them*. Agents who blame purport to have an authority to issue certain kinds of second-personal demands. But agents who lack standing to blame lack this authority because their prior wrongdoing shows that they violate the normative felicity conditions needed to make such second-personal demands. Wrongdoers cannot be expected to accept this demand, because doing so would accept the hypocrite's authority to make this demand, which is to accept that the hypocrite has an authority to make demands on others that others cannot make on them. In short, the hypocrite is not relating to the wrongdoer as an equal.<sup>9</sup>

On this account, inconsistency between one's second-personal demands and behaviour does not undermine standing when the source of the inconsistency is not proof of a failure to accept others' second-personal authority. If I fail to comply with others' demands because I am coerced, or have an irresistible desire or a reduced capacity to comply with those demands, then we do not have any evidence that I fail to accept others' demands on me. If, on the other hand, I have the capacity to easily comply with those demands but simply choose not to, then I likely do not treat those demands as authoritative.

#### 4. *Advantages*

This account improves on previously offered explanations for why hypocrisy undermines standing to blame. Let me briefly examine these accounts and note some objections. I will then identify how my account avoids these objections, which will also help clarify some details.

Fritz and Miller (2018) argue that standing to blame requires that agents be disposed to blame consistently, and hypocrites lack standing to blame because they have a ‘differential blaming disposition’. In blaming people for norm violations for which they do not blame themselves, the hypocrite implicitly denies the equality of persons. Fritz and Miller take it to be a plausible assumption that our right to blame others is grounded in the equality of persons, so anyone who rejects the equality of persons thereby loses their standing to blame. Todd (2019) points out that on this account, agents who blame inconsistently lose their standing to blame *anyone* for similar wrongs altogether.<sup>10</sup> This makes the account unacceptably restrictive regarding who possesses standing to blame. For example, the account entails that when citizens of Western nations blame terrorists for an attack in France, such blame will be inappropriate if those citizens failed to blame similar terrorists for an attack in Turkey some months earlier. The account also has the consequence that the Western citizens lose their standing to blame the terrorists in France in *the same way* that the terrorists in Turkey would. It seems implausible that a terrorist’s objection to being blamed by an office worker’s inconsistent blaming of terrorists is similar in kind to their objection to being blamed by another actual terrorist.

Fritz and Miller were right that paradigmatic hypocrites implicitly deny the equality of persons (or at least, do not relate to the targets of their blame as equals), and our account preserves this insight without thereby being committed to saying that inconsistent blamers also lack the standing to blame. Because accepting others’ authority to make second-personal demands does not require having a perfectly consistent blaming disposition, some merely inconsistent wrongdoers can retain their standing to blame, although they might still be criticisable on other grounds, and may lack the standing to blame other inconsistent blamers for blaming inconsistently. Thinking about second-personal authority also allows us to build on Fritz and Miller’s idea that our right to blame is grounded in the equality of persons. Second-personal demands necessarily presuppose that the other person can freely and rationally accept the demand given to them as authoritative. In order for such a demand to succeed (or in order to not forfeit our right to blame, in Fritz and Miller’s language), we must in fact have that authority, which requires us to accept others’ authority to make the same demands on us (not implicitly deny their equal moral status). This in turn allows us to explain in more detail how hypocrites implicitly deny the equality of persons: they address a demand while not accepting others’ authority to address the

same kind of demand on them, which inherently presupposes that they have a kind of authority that the rest of us lack.

Another recent and convincing account of hypocrisy comes from Todd (2019). Through careful consideration of a number of thought experiments, Todd argues that agents lack the standing to blame a wrongdoer when they are not sufficiently committed to the values that would condemn the wrongdoer's actions. For Todd, commitment to a value requires endorsement of that value and a certain level of motivation to comply with that value. Here are the cases he uses to motivate this account:

*Diet:* Charlie knows that Linus, who has a weakness for sweets, is trying to lose weight. Nevertheless, he takes Linus to a place for dinner that he knows is located next to an incredible ice cream shop. Quite predictably, after dinner Linus visits the shop next door and has some ice cream. Charlie blames Linus.

*Nazis:* Jonas and Thomas are Nazi commanders in a WWII death camp. Jonas orders Thomas to investigate the fence and sound the alarm if anyone is trying to escape. Thomas investigates, sees someone escaping and sounds the alarm. However, Jonas is actually a double agent, working to sabotage the camp. He only gave that order to keep up appearances, and he picked Thomas to investigate because he thought Thomas would be the most likely to have mercy and not sound the alarm, allowing the prisoners to escape. Jonas blames Thomas.

*Abandoned:* Paul, when he is 25, abandons his wife and newborn infant to go touring around the world and 'find himself'. His wife and child suffer terribly as a result. Later in life, at the age of 45, he comes to realize the virtues and obligations of fidelity and becomes a committed husband and father to his wife and child, with whom he is somehow reconciled. He now holds values, very deeply, which condemn his past actions. Paul hears of another 25-year-old, Peter, who has abandoned his wife and child to explore the world just as he once did, and blames him.

*Mistaken Blame:* Samuel is a shop owner who has himself never tried to shoplift – but not for want of wishing to do so. Samuel simply lacks the means to try – a fact he regrets. He simply has no vehicle to travel to other stores, and there are no suitable targets within walking distance. If there were, he would try to shoplift from those stores. One day, Samuel gets a call: someone has been shoplifting from his own store. On

hearing this, Samuel burns with rage and incredulity and a desire to confront the criminal. However, in fact the call has been made to the wrong number, and no-one has stolen anything from Samuel's store.

Todd (2019, pp. 344–362)

Intuitively, Samuel and Charlie lack the standing to blame, whereas Paul and Jonas possess standing to blame. Todd argues that these intuitions can be rendered consistent by accepting that agents lack the standing to blame when they are not sufficiently committed to the kinds of moral values that would condemn the wrongdoing under consideration. On his account, an agent blaming someone for a wrong similar to a wrong that the agent has themselves previously committed does not itself undermine their standing to blame. Instead, the agent's wrongdoing is strong evidence that they are not sufficiently committed to the relevant values.

The strengths of Todd's account are that it is simple and seemingly delivers the correct verdicts for a number of cases. But a crucial weakness is that Todd does not have any answer to why commitment to the relevant values is necessary for standing to blame, something he acknowledges (p. 371). Because my Darwallian account can explain why hypocrites lack standing to blame, if it were to also deliver identical assessments of the agents' standing to blame in these thought experiments, then it would have all the strengths of Todd's account without the main weakness.

It seems that Jonas does treat his second-personal obligations to Thomas as authoritative. While he is causally involved in Thomas' wrongdoing, Jonas's actions were all-things-considered permissible given he had no other options likely to save more prisoners, and so Thomas cannot justifiably blame Jonas. Jonas has not violated any second-personal demands that Thomas or the prisoners could reasonably make of him.

Paul also treats his second-personal obligations to Peter as authoritative. Peter is a culpable wrongdoer and thus blameworthy. The fact that Paul committed similar wrongdoing decades earlier says nothing about how he treats his obligations to his family or Peter now. It also seems like Samuel fails to treat the second-personal obligations of other shop-owners as authoritative on him. The fact that he wants to shoplift, and would do so given the chance, shows that he does not respect the demands from other shop-owners. He thus lacks the standing to blame others for shoplifting from him.

*Diet* seems under-described for our purposes. King's (2015) original presentation of the case describes Charlie's action as permissible and not ill-intentioned. King also says it is possible that Charlie has a reasonable belief Linus will resist the treats. My intuition is that when described this way, Charlie does have the standing to blame Linus. Todd too admits any blame Charlie would be entitled to would be 'extremely mild' (p. 356), so I do not think this case is particularly supportive of either my account or Todd's.

My Darwallian account of second-personal demands thus provides an equally acceptable explanation of our intuitions in these thought experiments as Todd's account. It could very well be that the class of agents who lack sufficient commitment to the moral values that condemn a certain wrong just is the class of agents who do not treat others' second-personal demands as authoritative, but I will leave this possibility aside.

That my account retains the intuitiveness of Todd's account may seem *prima facie* surprising, because each takes standing to blame to be granted by different things, and we arrived at our conclusions by very different routes. But on reflection, there is a good explanation for why they seem to deliver such similar assessments: both take an agents' motivations to play an important role in whether that agent has the standing to blame.

In the discussion thus far, most of our focus has been on interactions between wrongdoers after they have committed wrongdoing. And when thinking about second-personal authority in the context of understanding hypocrisy, it is very natural to focus on the demands that get addressed in blaming after someone has committed wrongdoing. It is easy to think that if we blame someone for a wrong that we have committed ourselves, but accept their authority to blame us for our wrongdoing, then we are not being hypocritical. If we believe they have the authority to blame us and we accept their blame, it seems like we accept their second-personal authority. This line of thought is supported by a number of philosophers. Duff (2010) argues that being ready to answer for wrongdoing gives one the standing to blame others, Roadevin (2018) argues that blamers are not hypocritical if they apologise for their own wrongdoing, and Friedman (2013) holds that agents who have acknowledged and rectified their wrongdoing regain their standing to blame.

I propose that this reasoning goes too quick and that Todd had something right in taking an agent's standing to blame to depend in some way on their motivations. To see why standing to blame seems to depend on more than whether a wrongdoer has apologised or is ready to answer for their wrongdoing, consider a number of ways in which agents can count as hypocrites. Take, for example, the subjunctive hypocrite, who has not committed any wrong similar to that which they are blaming others for committing but only due to a lack of opportunity. It is unreasonable to expect such a person to apologise or to be ready to answer for their wrongs—they have not committed any—but this person seems to lack the standing to blame others for those wrongs. Consider also the complacent hypocrite, who does apologise or answer to others for his wrongs but continues to keep committing similar wrongs. This person understands that in performing these wrongs they are an appropriate target of blame from others, but still makes little effort to reform their character, despite having the capacity and opportunity to do so. Finally, consider the exception-seeking hypocrite, who honestly, but unjustifiably, believes that their wrongdoing is different in kind to the wrong that



they are blaming others for committing. They answer to us, but the answers they provide are not acceptable.

To possess standing to blame, it is not enough to simply believe that one recognises others' second-personal authority, nor to simply agree one would be blameworthy for violating others' demands, nor even to comply with the demands others make when they blame us for culpable wrongdoing. The relevant sense in which we must accept others' second-personal authority is stronger than this. In order to accept a class of second-personal obligations, one must have a certain degree of motivation to comply with them. One must *treat* those demands as authoritative by regularly conforming one's behaviour to them, or at least trying sufficiently to do so.<sup>11</sup> On my account, the fact that an agent treats their own wrongdoing consistently with how they treat others' wrongdoing is not always enough to demonstrate that these agents possess standing to blame. An agent's disposition towards wrongdoing itself can sometimes suggest that they do not treat certain second-personal obligations as authoritative, even if the agent is also disposed to blame themselves and accept blame from others.

The subjunctive hypocrite lacks standing to blame despite not having committed any wrongdoing because the fact that they *would* commit wrongdoing, given the chance, can show that they do not accept others' moral authority to demand they not perform that wrong. Actual wrongdoing is not necessary for one to lack the standing to blame; merely failing to accept the authority of others' second-personal authority is sufficient. Someone who has not cheated on their partner only because they lack the chance to do so does not possess the standing to blame adulterers. Of course, it is difficult to know whether any blamer, given the chance, really would have done the same thing as the person they are blaming, which explains why objections to subjunctive hypocrisy are not all that common (Piovarchy, 2020).

Similarly, the exception-seeking hypocrite does not accept others' authority to hold them accountable for violating shared normative standards that could be accepted by a free and rational person among equals. They may profess to accept those shared standards, and they may believe that their actions are consistent with a reasonable interpretation of what those standards are, but more often than not their belief is the product of motivated reasoning. What they have to gain from blaming others while escaping blame for their own wrongdoing motivates them to believe that others' legitimate demands are in fact not authoritative.<sup>12</sup>

Taking an agent's standing to blame to be determined by whether they accept others' second-personal authority also allows us to explain why there seems to be some relationship between the seriousness of a wrong under consideration, and the number of transgressions an agent must commit before they lose their standing to blame others for similar transgressions. It also explains why we are sometimes uncertain whether agents possess standing to blame when their wrongdoing is the result of weakness of will. The

vegetarian who refrains from eating meat because of its contribution to global warming, but eats steak one time, seems to retain their standing to blame regular meat eaters. But a single instance of infidelity can cause one to lack the standing to blame adulterers. Although the vegetarian and adulterer both commit a single transgression, the difference in their standing to blame is a product of the seriousness of their wrongs, and the ease with which they can avoid wrongdoing. Cheating on one's partner is typically taken to be more serious than eating meat on one occasion, and much easier to avoid, given we all need to eat regularly and vegetarian options are not always available. Because of this, we take the adulterer's actions to be strong evidence that they do not accept their partner's authority to demand they not cheat, while the vegetarian's actions do not necessarily show they fail to accept others' second-personal demands that they not contribute to global warming.

In contrast, a 'vegetarian' who knows they should avoid eating meat and accepts blame for eating meat, but who eats meat daily, lacks the standing to blame people who eat meat. This is because their continued meat eating is evidence that they do not truly accept others' second-personal demands to not contribute to global warming as authoritative. An agent who is ready to self-blame and accept criticism for their wrongs, but who keeps doing the wrong thing despite having the means to reform their habits, is too complacent with their moral failings. They lack the standing to blame agents who commit similar wrongs, because given their capacity and opportunity to avoid wrongdoing, their decision to not exercise this capacity expresses a lack of sufficient concern with the wrongness of their actions. Arguing that such agents retain the standing to blame simply because they accept blame from others for similar wrongs risks treating blame like a cost of admission to wrongdoing, rather than an authoritative demand that ought to be respected. Of course, some agents' repeated failure to do the right thing is caused by factors that do not express a failure to accept others' second-personal demands as authoritative (e.g. addiction and mental illness), and such agents could retain their standing to blame.

### 5. *Remaining questions*

One remaining worry regards how to limit the scope of what kinds of wrongs hypocrites lack the standing to blame others for. There is consensus that agents only count as hypocrites when they blame others for wrongs that are in some way relevantly similar to wrongs they themselves have committed (or would commit, given the chance). Adulterers retain the standing to blame murderers, for instance. In presenting my argument, thus far I have spoken about 'kinds of obligations' to mark this restriction but have not offered any justification for it.

This question is yet to be answered within the literature. For example, Fritz and Miller (2018) argue that an agent lacks the standing to blame when that agent has a differential blaming disposition ‘with respect to violations of [some norm] *N*’ (p. 9) but do not offer any justification for taking norms to be the relevant reference class. We need some principled answer for why Sebastian, who blames some adulterers but not others, lacks the standing to blame anyone for being unfaithful, but James, who blames shoplifters, but not adulterers, retains his standing to blame both, despite his failure to blame adulterers having no justifiable basis. Because both shoplifters and adulterers violate moral obligations, it seems open for the shoplifters to argue that James’s arbitrary failure to blame some kinds of wrongdoers, but not others, implicitly denies the equality of persons.

Likewise, Todd (2019) argues that agents lack standing to blame when they are not sufficiently committed to the kind of values that would condemn the wrong under consideration, but offers no explanation for why values that condemn a wrong are the relevant reference class for identifying which wrongdoers retain standing to blame. Adulterers and shoplifters both violate moral obligations and both fail to respect the people they wrong, which arguably acts as evidence that they are both insufficiently committed to morality. Nevertheless, they seem to retain the standing to blame each other.

I believe a partial answer can be offered by my account because it takes demands to be important, and because our acceptance of others’ authority to make second-personal demands is not an all-or-nothing affair. The adulterer does not accept others’ authority to demand that he not have an affair. But if he refrains from stealing and murdering because he recognises that they are wrong, he seems to accept others’ second-personal authority to demand that he not do these things, even if he does not accept their authority to demand that he not cheat on his partner. The answer to why hypocrites lack the standing to blame agents for some wrongs, but not others, is that it is only in blaming agents for violating demands similar to those they have (or would have) also violated that hypocrites fail to respect others’ second-personal authority. There remains a further question of why our demands of one another tend to be made under certain reference classes and not others (e.g. why we demand that someone not cheat, not that they not-cheat-on-Tuesdays, nor that they just generally not wrong us), but answering this question is not pivotal to our current project. Instead, this seems to be more like the question of why our obligations tend to take to take certain forms and not others, which is something we can set aside.

One last worry concerns the claim that blame addresses demands. It is particularly hard to see how blame that is private addresses demands. Although Duff and Roadevin argue that hypocrites only lack the standing to express

blame towards wrongdoers, Todd, Fritz and Miller believe that even private hypocritical blame is objectionable. There is thus a question of whether my account applies to private hypocritical blame, or only to hypocritical blame that is expressed to the wrongdoer.

Philosophers have tried to argue that private blame expresses demands in a few ways. For example, Smith (2013) argues that even private blame 'implicitly seeks some kind of moral acknowledgment on the part of the blameworthy agent and/or on the part of others in the moral community' (p. 43). An alternative approach comes from McKenna (2013) and Fricker (2016), who both argue that our blaming practices are too disunified to hope for a theory of blame that can be spelled out in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions. They instead propose focusing on and trying to make sense of the most paradigmatic cases of blaming (i.e. expressed directed blames), treating other cases (i.e. private blame and blaming the dead) as derivative in some way.

When we speak of blame's demands, we tend to identify them as something expressed in response to a violation of an obligation. Darwall, however, understands demands a bit more broadly than this. When you stand on my foot and I demand that you get off it, it is not the case that you only gained this obligation after I told you to get off. In Strawsonian fashion, a demand to not tread on my foot was already in place, constituted by our proneness to respond with resentment and indignation.<sup>13</sup> Even if made privately, the reactive attitudes 'are incipiently forms of communication' (Watson, 1987, p. 230) and 'always implicitly second-personal' (Darwall, 2006, p. 67), coming 'with an implicit RSVP' (Darwall, 2006, p. 145). This broader conception of demands explains why, despite the fact that blaming the dead and blaming privately seem to not address anything, so many philosophers maintain that blame centrally involves the addressing of demands (Hieronymi, 2004; McGeer, 2012; Shoemaker, 2007, 2011; Strawson, 1962; Wallace, 1994, 2011; Watson, 2004). A demand-based explanation for why hypocrites lack standing to blame thus puts us in good company.

One problem for the claim that hypocrites lack the standing to even feel private blame is that while private hypocritical blame does seem somewhat criticisable, it also seems less criticisable than directly expressing hypocritical blame towards a wrongdoer. It especially seems less criticisable if the agent refrains from expressing this blame *because* they know they lack the standing to do so. If it turns out that private blame does not address anything, I am happy to restrict my argument to the claim that hypocrites only lack the standing to express blame towards wrongdoers, or to engage in what Wallace (2010) calls 'hypocritical moral address'. But for now, understanding demands in a broader sense seems to explain why private blame can be an appropriate target of the 'Who are *you* to blame *me*?' response.

## 6. Conclusion

This paper has examined why hypocrites lack the standing to blame. First, I argued that attempting to explain what standing to blame is by appealing to existing conceptions of entitlement or appropriateness does not generate any illuminating answers. I then argued that we should reject thinking of standing to blame in exclusively moral terms and instead think of it as the ability to exercise a normative power. Using Darwall's account of second-personal obligations, I argued that hypocrites lack the standing to blame because they lack the authority to make the kinds of demands agents normally make in blaming.

Thinking about hypocrisy in this way has a number of benefits. It describes how hypocrisy is distinctly objectionable in comparison to other ways in which blame can be inappropriate. It unites talk of standing to blame with how we think about standing in other contexts. It explains why some agents who blame others for wrongs they themselves have committed do not count as hypocrites. It delivers intuitively acceptable assessments regarding which agents have standing to blame across a variety of contexts. It is consistent with how blame is paradigmatically understood by philosophers researching moral responsibility. And it explains how hypocrites can regain their standing to blame: by becoming the kind of person who accepts others' second-personal demands as authoritative.<sup>14</sup>

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### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Cohen (2006) claims that hypocrites literally cannot perform the speech act of condemning, but he does not offer any sustained argument for this and seems to have not received any support from other philosophers. I argue below that we should not dismiss thinking of standing to blame in this way.

<sup>2</sup> One could perhaps argue that certain agents are not entitled to mete out deserved responses, by making an analogy with how vigilantes are not entitled to punish lawbreakers. A difficulty with this approach concerns the differences between the legal and moral cases. Judges, police and lawmakers are granted entitlements in virtue of having gone through certain processes and conventions, and upholding the law serves a number of different functions to morality. In contrast, blaming wrongdoers is something that agents in the moral community seem to have a default entitlement to.

<sup>3</sup> One could perhaps argue that they were using 'fairness' in a non-interpersonal sense, that is, (i) an agent is an appropriate target of blame if and only if it is fair to blame them given only the agent's blameworthiness, not (ii) an agent is an appropriate target of blame if it is fair to blame

them given the agent's blameworthiness *and* the blameworthiness of other agents. Setting aside the worry that insofar as it's *fairness* we care about, (i)'s exclusion of other agents seems *ad hoc*, and Nelkin (2016) points out that (i) looks identical to the claim that agents are appropriate targets of blame if and only if they are deserving of blame.

<sup>4</sup> Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for this point. Presumably, on this approach, questions of whether an agent is blameworthy would instead be described as concerning whether the agent is a fitting target of blame (cf. Nelkin, 2016).

<sup>5</sup> It also seems unclear whether there is a difference between matters that one lacks a stake in and matters in which one lacks a certain status. Not having a stake in a matter just is a certain kind of status that agents can lack evidenced by the fact that Herstein describes both kinds of agents as 'outsiders' (pp. 3111–3112). Both seem to be instances of a single condition against blaming when a matter is 'none of our business'.

<sup>6</sup> Bell (2013) does argue that hypocritical blame is not inappropriate, but she takes 'appropriate' to simply mean fitting and serving one of blame's numerous aims (e.g. marking impairments in relationships). Because hypocritical blame does these things, she challenges others to explain why hypocrites lack the standing to blame. However, this account uses 'appropriate' in a way different to most other philosophers, as Fritz and Miller (2018) note.

<sup>7</sup> Although on Owens's (2012) account forgiveness is not strictly a 'power' because it may not occur through will alone, he accepts that agents have the capacity to forgive and thereby change others' normative situation (pp. 50–56). This is all that is needed for my account. Nelkin (2013) and Warmke (2015) argue that forgiving can release wrongdoers from certain kinds of personal obligations, and certain attitudes or treatments that were previously permissible (e.g. resentment) can become impermissible or inappropriate. While I think there are at least some cases where forgiving means it would be wrong to continue to treat perpetrators in certain ways, a number of philosophers have argued that one can forgive a wrongdoer while continuing to punish them (Allais, 2008; Garrad and McNaughton, 2011; Pettigrove, 2012; Russell, 2016).

<sup>8</sup> In an unpublished manuscript, Tognazzini (n.d.) takes hypocrites to lack the authority to address second-personal reasons but does not investigate where this authority comes from and thus does not explain how something about an agent's prior wrongdoing can undermine this authority. He tentatively suggests that because 'your blame only conveys a second-personal reason if I can take up your perspective and address the reason to myself' (p. 16), perhaps a coherent perspective that both parties can share is also required, and perhaps there is no such perspective we can take up with a hypocrite given their inconsistent standards. One worry with this proposal is that some exception-seeking hypocrites do have a coherent perspective that could, in principle, be shared by others. It is just a false and unjustified one in which could not be accepted by a free and rational being among equals. Another is that we will also lack any coherent perspective with arbitrarily inconsistent blamers, and so they will also lack standing to blame. Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for pointing me to this paper.

<sup>9</sup> Like Herstein (2017), I argue that recipients of hypocritical blame do not need to respond to reasons they would ordinarily be given in being blamed. But whereas I argue that hypocrites do not create genuinely second-personal demands, Herstein argues that hypocrites can give reasons through directives, but these reasons may be permissibly excluded. He argues that this is more plausible because otherwise agents who answer to hypocritical directives *because* of those directives would be acting irrationally, because hypocritical directives do not create any additional reason to answer. Responding to this worry would require an in-depth discussion of reasons for action, which is outside the scope of this paper. Briefly, I am not so sure that we can cleanly isolate (e.g.) 'because my parents asked' as a reason without implicitly also pointing to other considerations, so there are avenues for arguing that acting in response to such a demand is not irrational.

<sup>10</sup> Fritz and Miller try to downplay this kind of objection by noting that two kinds of inconsistent blamers will retain their standing to blame: the person whose blaming disposition varies with their mood and the person who finds themselves unable to blame one particularly charming

friend. They argue that in the first case, the inconsistency does not arise from a rejection of the impartiality of morality, and in the second, this person's disposition is masked by the wrongdoer's charm. However, they accept that inconsistent blaming of the kind in the terrorist case removes an agent's standing to blame.

<sup>11</sup> This is implied by Darwall in a few places; for example, 'One should not act in ways that one demands or expects (or would demand or expect) that others not act, or equivalently, in ways that one would resent or object to. *If I am going to object to others' stepping on my feet (and thus demand that they not do so), then I must not step on their feet either*' (2006, p. 117, emphasis added).

<sup>12</sup> It is possible that some agents who seek an exception for their actions could escape the charge of hypocrisy if they have fulfilled their procedural epistemic duties. Such agents are simply very unlucky in their moral beliefs. A useful test of whether an agent's exception-seeking is hypocritical or not will be how they would react upon realising that their exception-seeking was unjustified. If they experience guilt, surprise, quickly try to make amends and are now motivated to avoid performing similar wrongs in the future, their exception-seeking was probably not hypocritical.

<sup>13</sup> By 'our' proneness, he is referring to the moral community *qua* regulative ideal, not necessarily any actual community, because some communities might be, for example, apathetic towards wrongdoing. See Darwall (2007).

<sup>14</sup> Thanks to Luke Russell, Caroline West, Dana Nelkin, Isabelle Wentworth, Hannah Tierney, Daphne Brandenburg and David Shoemaker for helpful comments on earlier drafts. Thanks especially to two very helpful anonymous reviewers at Pacific Philosophical Quarterly who greatly helped flesh out and improve the arguments here. Thanks also to the audiences at the 2019 Australasian Association of Philosophy conference held at the University of Wollongong.

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