

Appendices

13.1 Appendix I: An Overview of Some Influential Accounts of Agent-Relativity

McNaughton and Rawling (1991, [b] 1995, [a] 1995, 1998, 2005): (x) (xS [...]). »x« stands for an agent and »S« stands for »should ensure, to the best of her abilities, and insofar as there is no conflicting duty of greater weight, that« (compare *McNaughton and Rawling* 1995b, 34). If the formulation of the relevant requirement (that is, that which the agent should ensure) contains a free agent-variable x not bound by the initial quantifier, the requirement is relative; otherwise it is neutral.

Nagel (1970): (x, A) (If R is true of A, then x has reason to promote A). To every reason corresponds a reason predicate R. The reason predicate R might or might not contain a »free agent-variable« x. If, and only if, it does contain a free agent-variable, it will be relative. A reason is relative just in case there is no corresponding neutral reason-predicate.

Portmore (2013b): »We can let » $x\varphi cEp$ « stand for »x's φ -ing in circumstances c would ensure that p' and formulate the distinction as follows

(x)(φ)(c)(p)(if the fact that $x\varphi cEp$ constitutes a reason for x to φ in c, then this fact constitutes an agent-relative reason for x to φ in c if and only if p contains an essential reference to x, and any reason for x to φ in c that doesn't constitute an agent-relative reason for x to φ in c constitutes an agent-neutral reason for x to φ in c.)

The statement p contains an essential reference to x if and only if there is no non-x-referring statement q such that, for all x, the world in which x ensures that q is identical to the world in which x ensures that p. [...] [O]n this account, all reasons for action are facts about what agents can ensure [yet] this does not commit advocates of the account to a teleological conception of reasons, where reasons for action are all a function of what it would be good for agents to bring about. [For instance,] the fact that x's φ -ing in c would ensure that x abides by the Categorical Imperative can constitute a reason to [sic!] x to φ in c even if x's abiding by the Categorical Imperative would produce bad consequences.« (*Portmore* 2013b, 165 and 166.)

Ridge (2011): For every reason there is some default principle such as

(P) For all possible agents (x), all possible actions (φ) and all facts (F) If F is a fact to the effect that x 's φ -ing would promote pleasure and no other feature of the situation explains why F is not a reason to φ then F is a reason to φ .

Then: »The default principle corresponding to a given reason will either include a *non-trivial* free-agent variable in the statement of the reason or not. If it does then the reason is agent-relative; otherwise it is agent-neutral. The idea is that the use of a free-agent variable to indicate that the action is one available to the agent for whom the fact is a reason is trivial in the sense that it must be included in the statement of any reason whatsoever. So the reasons associated with the default principle (P) are agent-neutral, as the only use of the free-agent variable (x) is the trivial one that indicates that φ is a possible action of p 's.« (Ridge 2011, 20f.) Note: on Ridge's account all reasons are facts about something's being true of some agent's action.¹⁵⁹

Rønnow-Rasmussen (2009): »If P states a reason for x to φ , then: P states an agent-relative reason for x if and only if P contains an essential reference to x , otherwise P states an agent-neutral reason for x to φ . Moreover, P contains an essential reference to x if and only if P is not logically equivalent with any other statement Q that does not refer to x .« (229f.)

Skorupski (1995): $P\varphi -> x$ has reason to φ . P is the reason predicate, φ is an action (or inaction) open to the agent, x is the agent. Again, if P contains a free occurrence of x (and if it cannot be expressed by a neutral predicate without change in content), then the corresponding reason is relative.

13.2 Appendix II: On Mark Schroeder's Objection to Accounting for Deontic Restrictions against the Backdrop of a Fitting-Attitude Analysis of Agent-Relative Value

Mark Schroeder (2007) attributes the following claims to a fitting-attitude analysis of relative and neutral value (or, as he calls it, good-relative-to and good simpliciter):

a is better simpliciter than b if, and only if, it is fitting for everyone to prefer a over b .
 a is better-relative-to x than b if, and only if, it is fitting for x to prefer a over b .

¹⁵⁹ About his account's compatibility with particularism Ridge says: »(P) is compatible with the particularist's holistic conception of reasons. For in those cases in which the status of a fact about pleasure as a reason is defeated by sadism (e.g.) the »no other feature of the situation explains why F is not a reason ...« clause is not satisfied.« (Ridge 2011, 19.)