

consent also generate puzzles about the scope of consent that is given, since there can be a gap between what the requestor of consent proposes to do and what the person giving consent takes themselves to be permitting. In the one example of a request that Dougherty discusses, this gap is large. Dougherty signs a consent form for a biopsy while believing that they are agreeing to an endoscopy that will just involve a camera. The rights involved in permitting someone to surgically remove tissues are quite different from those involved in allowing a tube to be put down one's throat, yet Dougherty is confident they gave valid consent, since, 'I had given the medical staff compelling evidence that I intended to authorise a biopsy when I signed the consent form' (p. 3). Likewise, they seem unconcerned about the permissions granted when people click through terms and conditions without reading them or sign contracts ignorant of their content (p. 86). It would have been nice to see *The Scope of Consent* address such cases of ignorant consent in more depth.

Dougherty's final view is intricate, precise, and has been carefully defended. It delivers the right verdicts on the cases they pose as counter-examples to alternative views. Yet the payoff from the view is not really spelled out. At the end of the book, Dougherty returns to a case in which someone claimed they did not give consent to sex because they did not realize that their partner was a Cuban spy. As Dougherty acknowledges, the same moral verdict is rendered by all three of the accounts discussed in the book. What then do we gain by adopting Dougherty's evidential account in particular?

These critical points notwithstanding, this is an excellent work of philosophy. It will be of interest to any scholar working on topics that relate to the nature and scope of consent.

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Agents of Change: Political Philosophy in Practice. BY BEN LAURENCE. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2021. Pp. 272. Price £28.95.)

From Williams's seminal political realist salvo against Rawlsian political liberalism to Estlund's strident defence of ideal theory, the first two decades of this century have seen a stream of novel work on the methodology of political

philosophy. Ben Laurence's *Agents of Change* makes an original and ambitious contribution to these debates by arguing that political philosophy is a form of practical reason concerned primarily with justice as a practical good for society to achieve. This involves arbitrating the debate between ideal and non-ideal theorists by developing an account of the structure of theories of justice that includes an ideal theory focused on the just relations to be realised and a non-ideal theory focused on agents of change who will combat injustice.

For Laurence, the appeal of political philosophy is its practical nature and the hope it provides to understand the injustices in our social world. But this is complicated by the way it requires us to consider the nature of particular injustices, the obstacles to overcoming them, and the feasible agents for such political action (pp. 2–3). These considerations detract from the systematicity and aspiration towards justice that austere philosophical reflection supposedly provides. But, Laurence argues that we can do political philosophy in a way that reconciles both methodological desiderata. The starting point for developing such an account begins with John Rawls's distinction between ideal theory and non-ideal theory and the priority of the former over the latter in political theorising. Laurence argues that Rawls, to his detriment, ran together two senses of the distinction: a teleological conception and compliance conception (pp. 27–36). (Note these are views about the role of a theory of justice in thought and action and not views about the content of a theory of justice which can be deontological.) On the teleological conception, ideal theory describes principles of justice that show us how to achieve the realistic utopia that realises justice as a practical end for society. This theory is prior to a non-ideal theory that describes the way society can confront injustice to transition towards the realistic utopia. On the compliance conception, ideal theory describes the just relations between people who strictly comply with the demands of justice and non-ideal theory describes the relations when the assumption of strict compliance is relaxed. The book is devoted to defending the teleological conception, which, for Laurence, is what shows how theorising in political philosophy can allow us to both confront actual injustices and provide a systematic view of justice.

Laurence provides a clear and persuasive defence of the teleological conception against what he dubs the 'antipracticalists' like Gerald Cohen, who argue that political philosophy is about investigating the content of fundamental principles regardless of whether they have any practical import (pp. 41–2). Laurence argues, with inspiration from Aristotle, that theorising in politics is an exercise of the practical intellect, meaning we think about politics for the sake of some practical end and not merely for the sake of contemplating it (pp. 52–3). We come to theorising about politics having a pre-philosophical connection to it in our everyday judgments about what is just or unjust and in taking part in political activity (pp. 55–63). It is in these connections that our 'sense of justice' provides us reasons for action and building theories oriented

towards an end to be achieved rather than merely contemplating justice as the antipracticalists would have us do.

Dispensing with the antipracticalists, Laurence then defends the teleological conception against the ‘practicalists’. Laurence contends that theorists like Charles Mills and Elizabeth Anderson object to the priority of ideal theory over non-ideal theory in the teleological conception because it either misses how we are jarred into theorising about justice by our confrontation with injustice or entrenches the experiences of the privileged in ideal theory, as opposed to the experiences of those facing injustice (pp. 47–9). Laurence defends the teleological conception by arguing that justice as a practical end in ideal theory has two features that demonstrate its explanatory priority (pp. 75–96). It allows us to identify injustices and weigh the severity of injustices in a systematic and non-comparative way. These two features provide the basis on which non-ideal theory can then identify the various routes that agents can take to change their society (non-ideal theory’s dynamic dimension) and explains why the confrontation with injustice is significant and how it can be a principled response (non-ideal theory’s immanent dimension) (pp. 96–101). The argument here is dense, interesting and on the whole persuasive.

Laurence’s next step in defending the teleological conception is to build on the explanation of the two dimensions of his non-ideal theory with an explanation of the agents that it addresses. Readers will likely find this to be the most original and thought provoking part of the book. However, with originality comes the prospect of error, and it is here, that I find some unfortunate lacunas in Laurence’s arguments. Laurence argues that a central feature of the teleological conception is that, pace John Rawls and David Miller, its non-ideal theory recognises the importance of specific agents of change and so addresses not ‘the public’ but those agents who are best placed to fight injustice (pp. 105–9). Laurence argues that since in cases of injustice one person is wronged by another, when a theory of justice commends us to confront injustice it must address normatively appropriate agents (e.g. those who are being oppressed or in intimate contact with the injustice) who can feasibly and intentionally do that (pp. 116–24). Although the overall argument is clear and coherent, I believe there are two lacunas that emerge in the argument itself and in Laurence’s anticipation of an objection. The first is that Rawls and Miller take as the primary subject of justice, the basic structure of a society which is the basic framework of institutions. As such, justice and injustice exist as properties of those institutions and in what they permit or obligate individuals to do and not in the particular actions or motives of individuals who live according to them. Confronting injustice in constitutional democracies then becomes the burden of any and all citizens. Laurence’s argument does not appear to account for this or see it as a contributing reason (along with the divisive conflict in democratic society which Laurence does acknowledge) for Rawls and Miller to focus on the public as the agents of change.

The second lucana emerges in Laurence's response to Gerald Gaus's objection that dynamic feasibility is an inappropriate metric for deciding on agents or actions of change because of its context-dependence. Laurence responds that of all of Gaus's objections, context-dependence is the most serious, but nothing can be said a priori of whether context-dependence shows non-ideal theory will be unstable in general (pp. 131–5). Rather we will have to defer to specific cases. In addition, Laurence says that non-ideal theory will most of the time be dealing with stable injustices and is inherently designed for confronting injustice in changing circumstances. However, this response does not deal with the core of Gaus's objection, which is that even if particular injustices are stable and we chart out the various different agents of change who could confront them, context change affects what is feasible for an agent to do and, in turn, what agents do changes the context. This double instability is what makes a theory which requires the identification of specific agents of change (as opposed to a theory which addresses the public as a whole) implausible.

Having defended the teleological conception against its critics, Laurence's final arguments are reserved for its competitors, namely the compliance conception and David Estlund's 'hopeless non-concessive' ideal theory. Against the compliance conception, Laurence argues that a central feature of justice is that its requirements are coercively enforceable; therefore, a theory of justice must consider what is to be done when people do not comply with the demands of justice (pp. 147–53). Strict compliance cannot be a feature of ideal theory since the end of a just society will involve institutions that deter and redress injustices. Although Laurence's argument here is clear and cogent, taking Rawls as the main target, I believe, rests on a misunderstanding. Rawls mentions strict and partial compliance as stipulations in the original position that restrict the 'scope of inquiry'. As such they are idealisations on the reasoning that justifies the principles of justice rather than assumptions within the principles themselves. Rawls readily concedes that ideal theory will involve an account of penal sanctions for injustices.

Laurence's final argument considers David Estlund's approach to justice. This approach involves the idea that a theory of justice does not aim at describing principles that serve as a guide for the practical end of a society. This is because a theory of justice aims at describing the truth about justice without concessions to people's unwillingness to enact it. Laurence here responds persuasively to Estlund's challenge. Estlund's primary example of people's unwillingness to work together to abide by justice need not commit us to any hopeless non-concessive theory because social coordination is a critical function of justice that arises out of practical life (pp. 185–9). In addition, Estlund's view risks ruling out the purpose of practical reason altogether.

The lacunas and slight misunderstandings notwithstanding, the final chapter of the book provides a helpful summary of the overall picture Laurence wishes to defend and adequately rebuts some objections. Overall, *Agents of*

Change is an engaging and original contribution to contemporary debate in the methodology of political philosophy. Although it may be slightly challenging for undergraduate readers given the breadth of issues and methodological debates operating in the background, the book should be suitable for graduate students in moral and political theory. For those interested in such debates, the book is well worth reading for its systematic exploration and defence of the teleological view of political philosophy.

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Locke on Persons and Personal Identity. BY RUTH BOEKER. (Oxford: OUP, 2021. Pp. xxi + 336. Price £65.)

I. SUMMARY

Ruth Boeker's *Locke on Persons and Personal Identity* is a profound treatment of Locke's views on the nature and identity of human persons. The book is divided roughly into two halves. The first half (Chapters 1–6 and 8) focuses on providing a philosophically sophisticated interpretation of Locke that engages with the most recent secondary literature. Chapter 3, for instance, includes an important contribution to scholarly debates about Locke's sortal-relative account of identity in the *Essay* II.xxvii. §7–8. Some (the coincidence theorists) have argued that Locke's claim that there are different persistence conditions for a 'man' (human animal) and the 'mass of matter' that occupies the same spatio-temporal location as the man entails that there are two, coincident material objects. Others (the relative identity theorists) argue that Locke holds that there is ontologically one and only one material object at any spatio-temporal location—a single object that can be attributed different identity conditions when considered under different sortals.

Boeker makes an important intervention here, arguing that Locke is non-committal about the number of material entities possibly present at any spatio-temporal location. Boeker's 'kind-dependent interpretation' insists that Locke's goal is clarity about the fact that a man, mass of matter, and person all