

BRIAN BERKEY

Curriculum Vitae

Center for Ethics in Society
559 Nathan Abbott Way
Stanford University
Stanford, CA 94305

Phone: 216-832-5997
Email: bberkey@stanford.edu
Website: <http://sites.google.com/site/brianberkey>

Academic Employment

Postdoctoral Fellow, Stanford University Center for Ethics in Society	September 2013 – Present
Lecturer, University of California-Berkeley	January – August 2013
Research Fellow, University of Melbourne (Project on “Egalitarianism and Climate Justice”)	May – October 2012

Education

University of California-Berkeley, Ph.D in Philosophy (2012)
New York University, M.A. in Humanities and Social Thought (2005)
New York University, B.A. in Philosophy with Honors (second major Politics), *summa cum laude* (2004)

Areas of Specialization

Moral and Political Philosophy, Environmental Ethics (esp. Climate Change)

Areas of Competence

Metaethics, Moral Psychology, Applied Ethics, Philosophy of Social Science

Dissertation

Against Moderate Morality: The Demands of Justice in an Unjust World

It is widely believed that we are not obligated to sacrifice our comfortable lifestyles in order to aid the poor. I argue against this view. But unlike others who challenge it, I do not question the moderate moral principles on which it is often based; I accept, for example, that we may assign special importance to our own lives and interests. Instead, I argue that widely accepted moderate premises commit us to requirements of justice that, in a world as unjust as ours, entail highly demanding obligations on those who are well off.

Committee: Niko Kolodny (co-chair), R. Jay Wallace (co-chair), Christopher Kutz (outside member, Law)

Publications

“Double Counting, Moral Rigorism, and Cohen’s Critique of Rawls: A Response to Alan Thomas,”
forthcoming in *Mind*.

“[Climate Change, Moral Intuitions, and Moral Demandingness](#),” *Philosophy and Public Issues* 4 (2014):
157-189.

“State Action, State Policy, and the Doing/Allowing Distinction,” *Ethics, Policy, & Environment* 17 (2014): 147-149.

Review of Andrew Mason, *Living Together as Equals: The Demands of Citizenship*, forthcoming in *Mind*.

Review of Patricia Illingworth, Thomas Pogge, and Leif Wenar (eds.), *Giving Well: The Ethics of Philanthropy*, *Mind* 123 (2014): 220-223.

Review of Robert Garner, *A Theory of Justice for Animals: Animal Rights in a Nonideal World*, *Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews*, March 2014.

Review of Gary E. Varner, *Personhood, Ethics, and Animal Cognition: Situating Animals in Hare’s Two-Level Utilitarianism*, *Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews*, December 2012.

Work in Progress

“The Demandingness of Morality: Toward a Reflective Equilibrium” (under review)

“Obligations of Productive Justice: Individual or Institutional?” (under review)

“Collective Obligations and Demandingness Complaints” (under review)

“Institutionalism about Justice: A Critique” (under review)

“Prospects for an Inclusive Theory of Justice: The Case of Non-Human Animals” (under review)

“Distributive Justice, Relative Disadvantage, and Individual Obligations” (in preparation)

“Terrorism and Moral Distinctiveness” (in preparation)

“Climate Change and Individual Obligations” (in preparation)

Selected Talks (*=refereed; #=invited)

“Obligations of Productive Justice: Individual or Institutional?”

- MANCEPT, University of Manchester, September 2014*
- Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress, University of Colorado-Boulder, August 2014*
- University of Nottingham, Department of Philosophy, May 2014[#]
- Stanford University, Political Theory Workshop, April 2014[#]
- Stanford University, Department of Philosophy, February 2014[#]
- University of Kent, Department of Philosophy, June 2013[#]

“Collective Obligations and Demandingness Complaints”

- American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division, April 2015*
- Collectivity Conference, University of Bristol, September 2014*

“Distributive Justice, Relative Disadvantage, and Individual Obligations”

- University of Maryland-Baltimore County, Department of Philosophy, February 2013[#]
- American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division, April 2012*

“Climate Change and Individual Obligations”

- University of Melbourne, Philosophy Café, September 2012[#]

“Institutionalism about Justice: A Critique”

- UC-Berkeley, Department of Philosophy, December 2011
- San Francisco State University Philosophy Club, October 2011

“What is the Moderate View of Morality?”

- Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress (poster session), University of Colorado-Boulder, August 2011*
- Berkeley-London Graduate Philosophy Conference, UC-Berkeley, May 2011*

“Institutionalism, Distributive Justice, and State Coercion”

- Stephen L. Weber Graduate Conference in Ethics, San Diego State University, April 2011*
- Berkeley-Stanford-Davis Graduate Philosophy Conference, UC-Davis, April 2011*

“The Permissibility of Aborting Persons: Revisiting ‘A Defense of Abortion’” (with Katie Mantoan)

- Richard Wollheim Society, Department of Philosophy, UC-Berkeley, October 2010

“Terrorism and Moral Distinctiveness”

- Berkeley-London Graduate Philosophy Conference, University of London, May 2010*

“The Significance of Innocent Attacker Cases” (with Julia Nefsky and Kirsten Pickering)

- Richard Wollheim Society, Department of Philosophy, UC-Berkeley, December 2009

“Violence and the Moral Distinctiveness of Terrorism”

- Moral Psychology Group, UC-Berkeley, September 2009

“On Achieving Justice: Partiality and the Problem of Transition”

- Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress (poster session), University of Colorado-Boulder, August 2009*
- Berkeley-Stanford-Davis Graduate Philosophy Conference, Stanford University, April 2009*

“The Demandingness of Morality and the Unity of the Normative Realm”

- Berkeley-Stanford-Davis Graduate Philosophy Conference, UC-Berkeley, April 2007*

Comments

Comment on Sophia Moreau, “In Defense of a Liberty-Based Account of Discrimination”

- Stanford Political Theory Workshop, April 2014

Comment on Cami Koepke, “Libertarian Paternalism and the Authority of the Autonomous Person”

- American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division, April 2014

Comment on Richard Chappell, “Satisficing by Effort: From Scalar to Satisficing Consequentialism”

- Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress, University of Colorado-Boulder, August 2013

Comment on Susanne Burri, “The Fair Distribution of Bad Luck”

- Berkeley-London Graduate Philosophy Conference, University of London, May 2012

Comment on S. Matthew Liao, “The Prospect of a Causal Structure Theory of Nonconsequentialism”

- Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress, University of Colorado-Boulder, August 2011

Comment on Aaron Elliott, “Incentives and a Rawlsian Ethos of Justice”

- Stephen L. Weber Graduate Conference in Ethics, San Diego State University, April 2011

Comment on Luke Gelin, “Consequentialist Virtue”

- American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division, April 2011

Comment on Jussi Suikkanen, “Act-Consequentialism and Options”

- Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress, University of Colorado-Boulder, August 2009

Comment on Michael Campbell, “Moral Psychology Beyond the Space of Reasons”

- Berkeley-London Graduate Philosophy Conference, UC-Berkeley, May 2009

Comment on Han van Wietmarschen, “Redistribution, the Corporation, and Poverty in Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*”

- Berkeley-Stanford-Davis Graduate Philosophy Conference, UC-Davis, April 2008

UC-Berkeley Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award	2008-09
UC-Berkeley Philosophy Department Stipend	Summer 2006
UC-Berkeley Ralph W. Church Fellowship	2005-06
Phi Beta Kappa at New York University	2004
New York University Founders Day Award	2004
New York University Trustee Scholarship	2001-04
National Merit Scholarship at New York University	2001-04

Qualifying Exam Topics

The Demandingness of Morality	R. Jay Wallace
The Value of Equality	Samuel Scheffler
Marx's Theory of History	Hans Sluga

Graduate Coursework (*=audited)

Moral and Political Philosophy

Marx*	Debra Satz	Fall 2013
Regulation of Intimacy: The Politics of Sex*	Véronique Munoz-Dardé	Fall 2011
Democratic Authority*	Niko Kolodny	Spring 2011
Law and Order*	Kinch Hoekstra & Eric Rakowski	Spring 2011
Hegel's <i>Philosophy of Right</i> *	Hans Sluga	Fall 2010
A Society of Equals?*	Véronique Munoz-Dardé	Fall 2010
Humanistic and Empirical Studies in Moral Psychology*	Kathryn Abrams, Alison Gopnik, Christopher Kutz, Anthony Long, Robert MacCoun & R. Jay Wallace	Spring 2010
Contractualism and its Critics*	Véronique Munoz-Dardé	Fall 2009
Valuing Future Persons*	R. Jay Wallace	Spring 2009
War and Peace*	Kinch Hoekstra & Christopher Kutz	Fall 2008
Permissibility and Meaning*	Niko Kolodny & R. Jay Wallace	Spring 2008
Global Justice*	Samuel Scheffler	Fall 2007
Genealogy of Morals*	Hans Sluga	Spring 2007
Recent Work in Ethics: Darwall's <i>The Second Person Standpoint</i> and Parfit's <i>On What Matters</i> *	R. Jay Wallace	Spring 2007
Aristotle's Ethics	Dorothea Frede	Fall 2006
Workshop in Law, Philosophy, & Political Theory	Eric Rakowski & Samuel Scheffler	Spring 2006
Practical Necessities	R. Jay Wallace	Spring 2006
Liberty and Need	Véronique Munoz-Dardé	Fall 2005
Life and Death (NYU)	William Ruddick	Spring 2005
Communism (NYU)	Bertell Ollman	Fall 2004

Other

Science and Religion*	Lara Buchak	Spring 2011
Decision Theory*	Lara Buchak	Fall 2008
Consciousness and Collective Internationality*	John Searle	Spring 2007
Reasons and Rationality*	Niko Kolodny	Fall 2006
Plato	Dorothea Frede	Fall 2006
Philosophy of Science	Paul Skokowski	Spring 2006

Causation and Causal Learning	John Campbell & Alison Gopnik	Fall 2005
Hume	Barry Stroud	Fall 2005
First-Year Seminar	Hannah Ginsborg & Barry Stroud	Fall 2005
Nietzsche's Impact on 20 th Century Thought (NYU)	Friedrich Ulfers	Spring 2005
Advanced Introduction to Philosophy of Science (NYU)	Roger White	Spring 2005
17 th Century Rationalism (NYU)	Don Garrett	Fall 2004

Departmental and Professional Service

Refereeing

- *Social Theory and Practice* (2014 and 2012)
- *Journal of Applied Philosophy* (2014)
- *Encyclopedia of Political Thought* (2013)
- New Crop Undergraduate Philosophy Prize (UC-Berkeley Department of Philosophy, 2011)
- Berkeley-Stanford-Davis Graduate Philosophy Conference (2006-11)

Chairing

- Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress (2014, 2013, 2011, and 2009)
- American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division (2013, 2010, and 2007)

Other

- Assistant for Incoming Philosophy Major Orientations (UC-Berkeley, 2007-13)
- Volunteer Instructor for Ethics (with Katie Mantoan, Derin McLeod, and Kirsten Pickering), Patten University at San Quentin State Prison, Summer 2011
- Organizer of Berkeley-Stanford-Davis Graduate Philosophy Conference (2007-10)
- Colloquium Organizing Committee (UC-Berkeley Department of Philosophy, 2006-07)

References

Lara Buchak (teaching reference)
Department of Philosophy
University of California-Berkeley
buchak@berkeley.edu

Niko Kolodny
Department of Philosophy
University of California-Berkeley
kolodny@berkeley.edu

Véronique Munoz-Dardé
Departments of Philosophy
University College London and
University of California-Berkeley
v.munoz@ucl.ac.uk

Debra Satz
Department of Philosophy
Stanford University
dsatz@stanford.edu

Samuel Scheffler
Department of Philosophy
New York University
samuel.scheffler@nyu.edu

R. Jay Wallace
Department of Philosophy
University of California-Berkeley
rjw@berkeley.edu

BRIAN BERKEY

Dissertation Abstract: *Against Moderate Morality: The Demands of Justice in an Unjust World*

Extremism about Demands is the view that morality is significantly more demanding than prevailing common-sense morality acknowledges. This view is not widely held, despite the powerful advocacy on its behalf by philosophers such as Peter Singer, Shelly Kagan, Peter Unger, and G.A. Cohen. Most philosophers have remained attracted to some version of *Moderation about Demands*, which holds that the behavior of typical well-off people is permissible, including the ways that such people tend to employ their economic and other resources. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that proponents of Extremism have not taken sufficiently seriously the central convictions that motivate the Moderate view.

My dissertation offers an improved defense of Extremism about Demands. At its center is an argument that appeals to requirements of justice that Moderates themselves already accept. Specifically, I claim that any plausible set of Moderate moral principles will, when applied to a world like ours, yield demands that far exceed the demands of common-sense morality.

My argument has two cruxes. The first is the idea that our concern for justice is at least partially grounded in a concern for individuals' interests, broadly construed. The other is an appeal to a Transitional Imperative, which holds that we are collectively subject to requirements of justice that, if fully complied with, would ensure the transition from current injustice to a just state of affairs. Any view that is compatible with both the interest-based view of (part of) our concern for justice and the Transitional Imperative will, I argue, require sacrifices that substantially exceed what prevailing common-sense morality requires.

Moderates typically emphasize the idea that each person has an important interest in pursuing the projects, plans, relationships, and commitments that are most important to her. But they also believe that acceptable Moderate principles will balance this idea with the idea that from a properly impartial perspective everyone, and everyone's interests, are equally morally important. Because Moderates accept the latter idea, they are already committed to thinking that in a just world, everyone would have a sufficient minimum share of society's resources. Drawing in part on recent work by economists on the distribution of income and wealth in the United States, I argue that *even if* we limit our focus to distributive justice in a single society (such as the United States), and *even if* we assume that distributive justice requires only a sufficient minimum, the extent to which the status quo must be transformed in order for justice to be achieved is still too great to be compatible with Moderate demands on typical well-off people.

There are a number of ways to try to argue that Moderate principles and the Transitional Imperative are compatible with Moderation about Demands. For instance, it might be argued that all or nearly all of the demands to sacrifice in order to promote justice can be assigned to the super-rich, rather than to typical well-off people. Or it might be argued that the sacrifices of a single well-off person cannot be required because they amount to a mere "drop in the bucket" relative to what needs to be done in order to fully achieve justice. I show that such arguments fail.

The argument that I consider in greatest detail derives from John Rawls's view that the principles of justice apply to the institutions of the "basic structure of society," and do not apply directly to the conduct of individuals. If this "Institutionalism" is right, then it cannot be the case that individuals are obligated to promote justice directly in the way that I suggest they are. Furthermore, it might seem that a view that assigns all of the burdens of promoting justice to the basic structure satisfies the imperative to transition from injustice to justice, since if the relevant institutions were to begin doing everything that the Rawlsian view says they ought to be doing, the requirements of justice would be met. I argue, however, that there is no understanding of Institutionalism on which it is itself consistent with all of the following: 1) Moderate principles, and the associated interest-based view of (part of) the ground of our concern for justice; 2) the Transitional Imperative; and 3) Moderate demands. So, Institutionalism cannot make Moderate principles and the Transitional Imperative compatible with Moderate demands.

Moderate principles and the Transitional Imperative, then, remain incompatible with Moderation about Demands. Since there are compelling reasons to accept both Moderate principles and the Transitional Imperative, I conclude that we must reject Moderation about Demands. The obligations that justice places on typical well-off people are substantially more extensive than is acknowledged by prevailing common-sense morality.