since Luce's view is certainly worth revisiting, especially with the care and rigour that Fogelin adds to it, and many people teach the interpretation of Berkeley that follows. Unfortunately, the long summary of Locke, and the lack of any suggestion that Berkeley might have been in sympathy on some points with rationalists like Malebranche, means that the book does nothing to correct the bad habit of teaching Berkeley as a stepping stone on the route from Locke to Hume. Generally the standards of scholarship are excellent, though the copy-editor has been let loose on Berkeley's text (without acknowledgement of the changes), and there is the odd slip, such as the anachronistic appeal to a Humean thesis about causation on p. 58 and the failure to note Locke's careful distinction between generality and plurality on p. 108.

I admire anyone who can write as lucidly and concisely as Fogelin has done here. I do not think the account of Berkeley he gives is right, or even heading in the right direction, but that matters little in a book like this. Undergraduates will like the book, though I fear too many will read it instead of reading the *Principles*, and lecturers will find that there is enough of substance in it to provoke discussions of important philosophical and interpretive issues.

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Natural Goodness, by Philippa Foot. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001. Pp. 121. H/b £47.00, $19.95.

Virtue, Vice, and Value, by Thomas Hurka. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001. Pp. ix + 272. H/b £47.00, $24.95.

In recent years there has been a strong resurgence of philosophical interest in the topic of virtue and/or the virtues. Early on, there were articles calling for renewed systematic attention to (the) virtue(s), but books on this topic have now begun to appear in substantial numbers, and the works of Hurka and Foot here under review are notable examples of this development. However (and roughly following Roger Crisp), it is important to distinguish virtue ethics from theories of (or theorizing about) virtue. Kant, Rawls, and even some utilitarians have theories of virtue; they have substantial and systematic things to say about virtue and/or the virtues. But it doesn't follow that they are virtue ethicists in the sense of making virtue central to the understanding of other ethical concepts or of the significance of morality itself. By that criterion, Rawls and the utilitarians are definitely not virtue ethicists, and Kant is at most only a controversial example of one.

This distinction is worth keeping in mind in relation to the present two books. For Thomas Hurka offers only a general theory of (the) virtue(s) and in

fact argues strongly against what goes under the name of virtue ethics. And Foot, while she has had a significant influence on recent virtue ethics and has a great deal to say about (the) virtue(s) in her book, has indicated in a personal communication that she prefers that she herself not be described as a virtue ethicist.

Both of the books under review here are rich and systematic, though Foot's style is incredibly terse and Hurka's more relaxed and expansive. There is also a striking contrast between the formal apparatus (including graphs) that Hurka makes use of in putting forward his account of virtue and the closely argued, but non-technical and somewhat Wittgensteinian style of Foot's book. I shall review the two *seriatim*.

Philippa Foot's *Natural Goodness* has been long awaited. It is her first book, and it comes after a long and distinguished career in ethics. In the late 1950s and subsequently, Foot, Peter Geach, Elizabeth Anscombe, and others disputed the non-cognitivist assumption that there is a radical divide between description and evaluation and that (as a result) there are no content restrictions on what can count as a system of morality. Their arguments were widely accepted and have had an enormous (though sometimes merely implicit) impact on subsequent moral and political thought. To be sure, many prominent ethicists are or remain unconvinced by what these philosophers had to say, but when Foot herself speaks of the 'apparently unquestionable distinction between "descriptive" and "evaluative" language' as being 'more of less taken for granted in much of contemporary ethics' (p. 7), I think she overmodestly underestimates the extent of her own influence.

Foot's earlier work was primarily metaethical, but subsequent writings focused also on virtue and the virtues, and in recent years work having to do with the relation between virtue and happiness and other topics of the present book began to be circulated and (in some instances) to be published. *Natural Goodness* turns out to have been well worth waiting for. It offers a fairly systematic account of morality, virtue, happiness, practical rationality, and human good within a mere 116 pages, but Foot's earlier writings were also notable for their compactness. In the end, however, *Natural Goodness* turns out to be less ambitious and less unified than might initially appear, but I think the reviewer's first task must be to briefly summarize the main themes of its argument.

Foot begins by indicating that she wishes to call into question the 'subjectivism' that has dominated moral philosophy for the past sixty years. Here she is referring not only to non-cognitivism about moral sentences, but also to the desire-based model of reasons for action and human rationality that she herself subscribed to while earlier combating moral non-cognitivism. She proposes, instead, to view 'moral evil as "a kind of natural defect"' and to treat rationality as tied to an understanding of virtue based in facts about the life of our species. The approach clearly has much in common with Aristotle's and is clearly quite far from any sort of subjectivism.

In particular, Foot argues that 'moral defect is a form of natural defect not as different as is generally supposed from defect in sub-rational living things' (p. 27), and she proceeds to examine the value judgements we make about plants and non-human animals. We consider facts about how creatures of a given kind live as the basis for judgements about how they should be and what counts in them as a weakness, disease, or (more generally) defect, and she further says that such judgements have to do, directly or indirectly, with what is necessary or useful to self-maintenance or to reproduction. This makes our evaluation of plants and animals in some sense teleological, but Foot distinguishes what has been evolutionarily adaptive from what plays a part or has a function in the life of the individuals that belong to a given species at a given time (p. 32 n.). Only the latter is immediately relevant to judgements of defectiveness. 'It *matters* in the reproductive life of the peacock that the tail should be brightly coloured', and that is why the absence of such a tail counts as a defect in an individual peacock (p. 33).

Foot goes on to argue that there is no change in the meaning of 'good' when we switch from the subhuman to the human context: whether we are speaking of a tree's 'good roots' or of the moral goodness of dispositions of the human will, we are referring to forms of 'natural goodness'. She points out that the utilitarian insistence on what produces good 'states of affairs' has no place in this conception because natural goodness is based in what is good *for* certain life forms and in no way presupposes that it is an objectively good thing if certain plants or animals live or flourish. (In all fairness, some forms of utilitarianism speak only of what is good for individuals and do not require any reference to good states of affairs.)

The issue then arises whether it is rational (for creatures like us who act on reasons) to do what virtue or natural goodness requires. Foot questions whether there is any independent concept of rationality 'with which the requirements of moral goodness must somehow be shown to be consonant' (pp. 62 f.). If we can question the rationality of actions based in 'present desires' on grounds of their imprudence, why can't we also question the rationality of actions that run contrary to other virtues like justice and compassion? And we can indeed correctly do this, she thinks, if practical rationality is the kind of 'master virtue' so many philosophers believe it to be.

Foot then (we are now in chapter five) goes on to discuss the supposed difference between the moral and the non-moral. She quotes Mill on the distinction between self-regarding faults or follies and immoralities properly so-called and agrees that this 'fits in with much of our everyday usage' of the term 'moral'. But she points to a number of common features of self-regarding and moral faults/virtues, and she concludes that there is no real 'substance' to (nothing fundamentally important about) the distinction between the moral and the non-moral. The discussion then turns to the relation between happiness as (the ultimate) human good and virtue, and Foot considers whether the wicked can be really happy. Pointing out that adult happiness involves more

than a contented psychological state and presupposes a connection between our beliefs and objective factors in the world, she claims that our thought that it must not be possible for the wicked to be genuinely happy reflects a conceptual truth (as opposed to wishful religious thinking). A decent person, for example, will think that she couldn't be happy collaborating with the Nazis, but rather than claim that this indicates a univocal strong connection between happiness and virtue, Foot rather mildly (and in somewhat Wittgensteinian fashion) concludes that 'happiness isolated from virtue *is not the only way* in which the concept is to be found in our thoughts' (p. 96, emphasis mine).

Next and finally, Foot discusses immoralism, starting with Plato in *The Republic* and going on to Nietzsche, who treats justice and compassion as psychological defects and thereby (as she perceptively points out) offers a direct challenge to Plato's attempt to justify moral virtue as a healthy and desirable state of the soul. The discussion of Nietzsche's actual views is masterfully wrought, but in relation to her own views, she says that Nietzsche's glorification of oppression and exploitation as essentially involved in all of life 'depends on an illicit identification of features of the plant and animal worlds with *human* acts of injury or oppression' (p. 110). The book's postscript reaffirms what has gradually emerged in the course of the book itself: that moral philosophy, as Foot conceives it, has to do with 'the conceptual form of certain judgements about human beings' rather than with the elaboration or defence of some systematic single *theory* of morality (or justice).

My own critical reaction to *Natural Goodness* involves, to begin with, some disappointment that Foot has retreated from asserting the kind of univocal connection between virtue and happiness that earlier (circulated) work sought to establish. Also disappointment that she (to my mind) so quickly derogates the importance of the (other-regarding) concept/form of morality. For Foot, what is most important is what we should do considering all relevant reasons, and moral considerations are not overriding in relation to such decisions. Following John Taurek, she points out that we don't generally believe that a person 'should incur the certainty of losing a limb even to save another from injury more serious than that' (p. 79). But even if this is true, most of us think there is something supererogatorily praiseworthy about someone who is willing to sacrifice a limb to prevent greater injury to someone else. Here moral praiseworthiness may tug against what one (rationally?) 'should' do, but if such willingness to sacrifice is significant enough to deserve the strongly honorific term 'praiseworthy', doesn't that show that the distinct category of the moral is more important (to our ethical understanding of the world, even if not in 'action-guiding' terms) than Foot allows? Like Aristotle, Foot seems to leave no room for the category of supererogation and is unable to account for our deep-seated ethical *ambivalence* about someone who would sacrifice a limb to prevent greater injury to some other person.

Foot's argument for the rationality of acting virtuously also seems less than convincing. She asks why prudence should be thought to be more closely tied

to practical rationality than other-regarding virtues like compassion, but in fact someone who lacks compassion doesn't immediately or intuitively strike us as irrational in the way that a lack of prudence evokes such a judgement. To be sure, philosophers tend to think that practical rationality is a kind of master virtue (involved in all of virtue), but such rationalism about the (basis of the) virtues doesn't automatically appeal to non-philosophers: the idea that indifference to the pain of strangers is *irrational* is far from obvious to ordinary people who consider the matter for the first time (and perhaps that is why moral sentimentalism is not, at least on the face of it, implausible as a theoretical approach to the moral virtues). The assumption that practical rationality governs all the virtues is either lacking in intuitive force or opposed by another intuition about the difference, from the standpoint of rationality, between imprudence and, for example, lack of compassion. This stand-off, as it appears to me, then seems to leave us without the (univocal) argument for the rationality of being moral that Foot is looking for.

However, what strikes me as most problematic about the general line of argument in *Natural Goodness* is the connection Foot attempts to draw between natural defects in plants and lower animals and moral deficiencies. Foot traces natural defect(iveness) to the different forms of life of different species, and she speaks in this connection of ways in which a plant or animal 'develops, sustains itself, defends itself, and reproduces' (p. 29). But the way of life of some species involves some subgroups of the species aggressing against other subgroups of the same species—this is a pervasive feature of human life, but one that Foot herself never mentions as such. She chides Nietzsche for illicitly identifying features of the plant and animal world with human acts of aggression, but if the (natural or typical) way of life of a species defines what counts as defective, then the analogy between, or identity of, human and natural goodness implies that Nietzsche may well be right to think of the aggression of human group against group (and perhaps more generally) as in no way defective or unvirtuous. Contrary to what Foot says, Nietzschean aggression and 'injustice' may not be 'contrary to the principles of natural normativity' (p. 113).

This is obviously a conclusion that Foot wants to avoid, and one way she might avoid it would be to point to what is good for individuals of a given species as setting a standard for evaluation both in the non-human and the human realm. Eugenic Social Darwinism aside, it is difficult to argue that group aggressiveness is good for human beings taken individually or as a species. But if what is good for people or other living things allows us to condemn group aggression, then we have emerged with a criterion of virtue that is distinct from, and in important cases at odds with, the criterion based on what occurs (naturally) in the life of a species. Thus the idea of natural goodness may have to be rejected as a basis for morality because it leads to Nietzschean conclusions that Foot and the rest of us find so unpalatable, and what one would then end up with is a moral criterion based on species or individual

flourishing that is far less distinctive (and anti-utilitarian) than what Foot has aimed for. So I do not think *Natural Goodness* succeeds in its major aims, but its richness and the depth of its awareness of philosophical issues would repay the reading of anyone seriously interested in ethics.

In contrast with Foot's book, Thomas Hurka's *Virtue, Vice, and Value* defends a systematic *theory* of virtue(s) and explicitly rejects virtue ethics. Hurka starts with the assumption that moral theory seeks to understand the interrelationships among the fundamental moral properties of goodness, rightness and virtue. Recent virtue ethics tends to treat virtue as primary or central and to understand goodness and rightness by reference to it; whereas most forms of consequentialism and deontology regard virtue merely as a means to (way of ensuring) goodness and/or rightness. Hurka wants 'to develop an account of virtue intermediate between these extremes' (p. 3), one that understands virtue in terms of the good, but treats it as having intrinsic value of its own.

Of course, one might do this by adding individual virtues like courage or benevolence to a list of intrinsic goods that includes, say, pleasure, knowledge and achievement. But Hurka is more ambitious. He thinks that perfectionistic consequentialism (and Hurka is clearly our leading present-day perfectionist) ought to aspire to something more general and explanatory: it should attempt to explain why traits like benevolence count as intrinsically good and what distinguishes the intrinsic goods we call virtues from others like pleasure and knowledge. To this end, he proposes a 'recursive characterization of good and evil' that begins with a base clause specifying certain things as intrinsically good and adds a recursion clause about the intrinsic goodness of the attitude of *loving* what is intrinsically good (by which he means pursuing, desiring, and taking pleasure in what is intrinsically good for its own sake). Clauses specifying what is bad and stipulating the intrinsic goodness of hating the bad and the badness of hating the good and loving the bad are also essential to such a recursive account, and there are some further interesting complexities that we need not go into.

Hurka then characterizes the moral virtues as those 'attitudes' or 'responses' to goods and evils that are intrinsically good, and correspondingly with the moral vices. So if knowledge is an intrinsic good, loving knowledge in the sense of pursuing it for oneself or others and taking pleasure in its being attained also counts as an intrinsic good and therefore also as a virtue. But, given the recursive nature of the account, there is also virtue in loving the love of knowledge (seeking, for example, to create *that* in oneself or others), and so on via as many recursions as can be meaningfully exemplified in the psychology of humans or other intelligent beings.

There is something formally elegant and more generally appealing about Hurka's approach here; but in order to be fully successful, Hurka has to show that major virtues like benevolence, kindness, and courage can be regarded as involving intrinsically good attitudes toward intrinsically good states of affairs,

and this indeed he seeks to do. The attempt to do so forces him, not surprisingly, to refine and complicate the recursive account and ultimately, in certain ways, to go beyond it. But in the process of doing all this, Hurka also digs deep into the history of ethics to mention anticipations of his own view(s).

This is one of the most interesting features of *Virtue, Vice, and Value*. For example, Hurka discusses Aristotle's idea that pleasure proper to an unworthy activity is bad, and points out that although this 'affirms the core idea' of a recursive characterization of virtue, Aristotle doesn't have the kind of absolutely general recursive account that he himself is attempting to formulate. Similar points are made about Rashdall and Brentano, and the whole effort to show how earlier views anticipate his more generalized approach helps not only to justify what Hurka is doing, but also to make more sense of the earlier views. (However, one present-day approach to value, Nozick's, seems even more unified and ambitious than Hurka's; but Hurka's highly critical discussion of Nozick's views seems very effective, and represents, to my mind, one of the high points of *Virtue, Vice, and Value*.)

Hurka goes on to consider questions concerning 'degrees of virtue and vice' in rather elaborate, formal terms. Assuming, for example, that we have a fixed amount of love or positive concern to bestow, how is it most virtuous to divide that concern among good objects? Hurka considers variations on the idea that it is more virtuous to prefer (love more) what is better than to prefer (love more) what is less good, and he discusses mathematically specifiable versions and extensions of this notion, including the 'linear view' that entails that it is always, say, twice as good to love any good twice as much, and the 'proportionality view' that the most virtuous division of love between any two goods is proportional to their degrees of goodness. Hurka examines the implications of such formal, mathematicized views through the use of graphs and indicates many places where certain (formally) appealing general assumptions might need to be qualified and made more complicated, because the simpler formulas yield morally unintuitive conclusions. But he shows himself at least somewhat reluctant to make concessions of this kind, because of the strong emphasis he places on the desirability of generality and technical elaboration. (My own feeling is that he places more emphasis on such considerations than is entirely appropriate, or illuminating, for moral philosophy, but there is certainly something *impressive* in Hurka's formal work.)

One of the more controversial implications of Hurka's recursive approach concerns its assumption that pleasure in someone's pain is intrinsically bad as an attitude toward something intrinsically bad, but intrinsically good as an instance of (intrinsically good) pleasure. Many people would say that a state of affairs in which sadistic pleasure is enjoyed can never be on balance a good thing, but Hurka's discussion of this issue (in chapter five) indicates that he cannot easily accommodate this common intuition, and that may be a problem. Moreover, Hurka subsequently considers 'non-consequentialist virtues' like conscientiousness and shows that they too cannot be accommodated

within his recursive account.

The final chapter contains a sustained critical attack on (mostly recent) virtue ethics. For someone less attracted to formal approaches, and even for someone who favours virtue ethics, this may be the most worthwhile or useful part of Hurka's book. He rather systematically discusses different forms of virtue ethics, indicating what he takes to be their comparative strengths and weaknesses, and it seems to me to be extremely valuable to have someone outside the virtue ethics movement take such a good, hard look at what has been developing in virtue ethics over the past couple of decades. No student of virtue ethics can afford to neglect this part of Hurka's book, but having said as much, let me register one personal complaint about his treatment of virtue ethics and then go on to underscore another, much more far-reaching problem with the perfectionism of *Virtue, Vice, and Value*.

Hurka makes a number of important distinctions and critical remarks about different kinds of virtue ethics, but his somewhat lengthy discussion of my own views is inaccurate in places, and I want to take this opportunity to say briefly how. Hurka suggests (p. 226) that my 'agent-based' view violates the principle that 'ought' implies 'can' by claiming that a prosecutor who cannot prosecute a given defendant except out of personal malice acts wrongly, and that such a prosecutor also acts wrongly if he *does not* prosecute. He cites a given page in an article of mine as committing me to this conclusion, but ignores a footnote that starts on the previous page in which it is asserted that there may be at least one possible way for the prosecutor to avoid wrongdoing, even if he feels overwhelming malice toward a defendant, namely, by *recusing himself* from the prosecution. To be sure, a truly malicious prosecutor will not be *motivated* to recuse himself, but that doesn't entail that it isn't in his *power* to do so, so I don't believe my view violates the principle that 'ought' implies 'can' in the circumstances I described.

Hurka also says that my agent-based caring approach directs the attention of the person who wants to act rightly self-indulgently inward. This difficulty certainly characterizes the earlier work of mine that Hurka cites, but he also cites my more recent *Morals from Motives* (in another connection), and this later work does, I believe, show how my approach avoids inward-looking self-indulgence (a whole chapter is devoted to this, actually). Finally, Hurka asserts (p. 226) that my view entails that one acts rightly only if one acts on a required or good motive, whereas my recent book argues in several places that acting permissibly only requires one to avoid acting from a bad or deficient motive. I am not, however, aware of any similar misinterpretations of other virtue ethicists on Hurka's part.

I have reserved to this point my largest criticism of Hurka's views, one that I believe puts his whole approach somewhat in the shade. Hurka claims it as an advantage of his recursive perfectionist account that it can illuminate the nature of virtue and vice in general and of important particular virtues and vices. And his account of certain less familiar vices (such as smugness, ped-

antry, and cynicism) and of major virtues and vices like compassion, selfishness, and malice is often insightful. But I think the usefulness and/or accuracy of his whole approach is compromised by the foundational/primary ethical concepts he has chosen, exclusively, to rely on.

For Hurka, it is the goodness of states of affairs that forms the basis for introducing other ethical notions and for making claims about (the) virtue(s) in particular. But, as Kant taught us, the intrinsic goodness of a state of affairs is not at all the same, conceptually, as the idea of what makes an (intrinsic) contribution to someone's well-being/good/welfare (alternatively, of what is intrinsically *good for* someone). The Nazi who sells jewellery stolen from Jews he has killed may be said to benefit (gain something good for himself or avoid something bad for himself like starvation) by doing so, but at the same time we may not think that a state of affairs in which he succeeds in doing this is at all a good one.

But then to the extent that our understanding of virtues requires us to make use of the notion of human well-being and not just that of a good state of affairs, Hurka's form of perfectionism misses out on something very important. Nor does it help here to bring in an agent-relative notion of the (intrinsic) goodness of states of affairs (one familiar to readers, perhaps, from the work of Amartya Sen). It is indeed possible for a state of affairs or situation to be good from my point of view but not in any impartially determined or objective way, and when someone has to be fired at a given firm and one employee, hearing that his workmate rather than himself is the one to be let go, says 'Better him than me!', that exclamation typically expresses the agent-relative, not the agent-neutral or objective, notion of what counts as a good state of affairs.

But even this agent-relative notion (which Hurka himself introduces late in his book as a means of clarifying partialist values) cannot help us with various major virtues and vices. Thus self-sacrifice and generosity are among the virtues Hurka discusses and wants to account for. But sacrifice, for example, involves doing what is good for another and *less good for oneself*, even though the resultant *state of affairs* may be the best achievable from the standpoint of the person who wishes to make the sacrifice. This means, to begin with, that what is good or best for someone and what is good or best from their point of view are different concepts. But, more importantly perhaps, we can praise someone who sacrifices their own good to that of another because of their great concern for the other person's welfare, rather than because of any concern they may have to produce a state of affairs that is best from their own (or an agent-neutral) point of view. The full moral value and virtue not only of self-sacrifice, but also of generosity, compassion, loyalty to family or friends, and so on, depends on the fact that a self-sacrificing or compassionate agent is typically focused on people's welfare. However, it is difficult to see how such a focus can be incorporated within Hurka's recursive approach, with its exclusive reliance on attitudes to states of affairs. Such an approach doesn't accu-

rately portray what self-sacrifice and compassion *are*, much less why these traits/motives are admirable.

Furthermore, when Hurka (pp. 175 f.) favourably mentions Stocker's and Williams's 'preference for a direct emotional concern' for people, he himself brings up an aspect of virtues like compassion or family 'loyalty' that by its very nature seems to defy identification with any sort of attitude toward states of affairs. Concern for someone seems to involve a concern for *that person* (or for *her* welfare), rather than a desire to produce a state of affairs that is good from one's own or an impartial standpoint (and that involves the person in question). And so, in the end, I think Hurka's perfectionist approach fails to make use of important concepts that are needed for making sense of the full range of human vices and virtues. Nonetheless, *Virtue, Vice, and Value* is to be highly recommended for its powerful techniques, the vast range of its moral concerns, and its integration of historical understanding with contemporary theoretical issues.

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In Defense of Truth: A Pluralistic Approach, by Lenn E. Goodman. Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 2001. Pp. 431. H/b $55.00.

Truth is widely under attack from such philosophical positions as scepticism, some forms of pragmatism, phenomenalism, relativism, and even the narrowing effects of logical positivism. Goodman takes on the daunting task of defending truth, including empirical, scientific, and mathematical truth, as well as moral and religious truth. Goodman also includes artistic truth in the scope of his inquiry: 'We trivialize the work of painters, artisans, and poets if we fail to look or listen for truth in what they make or say or show' (p. 14).

The seeds of scepticism are in the recognition of the possibility of error. However, this recognition suggests the possibility of catching and correcting our errors. Improvement requires an objective standard, which can distinguish error and allow for improvement. 'Without that distinction there is no reason to doubt or deny any claim' (p. 16). Goodman, however, not only accepts, but embraces the proposition that multiple standards of truth may and do coexist. He embraces an 'epistemic, rather than an ontic pluralism' (p. 17).

Goodman mounts an illuminating historical review and critique of the variety of sceptic philosophers in his first two chapters. Goodman first attempts to show that one can be a pluralist about logics without succumbing to relativism. He gives an account of the Sceptics' efforts to profit from an ancient

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