## **BROWN ON MACKIE: ECHOES OF THE LOTTERY PARADOX**

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Abstract

In "The possibility of morality," Phil Brown considers whether moral error theory is best understood as a necessary or contingent thesis. Among other things, Brown contends that the argument from relativity, offered by John Mackie—error theory's progenitor—supports a stronger modal reading of error theory. His argument is as follows: Mackie's is an abductive argument that error theory is the best explanation for divergence in moral practices. Since error theory will likewise be the best explanation for similar divergences in possible worlds similar to our own, we may conclude that error theory is true at all such worlds, just as it is in the actual world. I contend that Brown's argument must fail, as abductive arguments cannot support the modal conclusions he suggests. I then consider why this is the case, concluding that Brown has stumbled upon new and interesting evidence that agglomerating one's beliefs can be epistemically problematic—an issue associated most famously with Henry Kyburg's lottery paradox.