YOU OUGHTA KNOW:
DEFENDING ANGRY BLAME

David Shoemaker
Tulane University

And every time you speak her name
Does she know how you told me you'd hold me
Until you died, till you died
But you're still alive

And I'm here to remind you
Of the mess you left when you went away
It's not fair to deny me
Of the cross I bear that you gave to me
You, you, you oughta know

-"You Oughta Know," Alanis Morissette

In recent years, many important philosophers and moral psychologists have been arguing against the thought that anger has any legitimate role to play in our holding one another morally responsible. Citing its numerous ill effects or its dubious metaphysical underpinnings, they urge us to transcend anger, to eliminate it from our moral responsibility arsenal and replace it, if we must, with more civilized emotions like sadness or disappointment, or perhaps mere unemotional demands. But the arguments for these views misrepresent both the nature of anger and its actual functions and effects in our interpersonal lives. In this essay, I aim to correct this misrepresentation and argue that anger—properly understood—is an essential component of moral responsibility.

The Cases Against Anger

It's not hard to find arguments against anger generally, and there are several angles these objections take. Start with the Stoics. Seneca thought of anger as a kind of temporary madness, a product of false judgment (as were all the emotions, actually) (Seneca, Kaster, and Nussbaum 2010). This sort of thought has informed many a negative assessment of anger, which is taken by some to be a paradigm example of being

out of control, ungoverned by reason. You'll make a mess of things if you're angry, and you also won't be able to recognize the truth or relevant normative considerations (Flanagan forthcoming: Ch. 7). This is a *prudential* or *rational* worry about the objectionable psychological state anger puts one in.

There are also two important *metaphysical* worries about anger's grounding. The first comes from skeptics about free will. Derk Pereboom, for instance, has made a sustained and forceful case that a subset of our responsibility responses presuppose their targets' *basic desert*, i.e., presuppose that the responses are or would be deserved solely in light of the fact that the targeted agents knowingly performed the response-generating actions in question (and not for some independent moral reason; Pereboom 2014: 2). But basic desert requires libertarian free will, argues Pereboom, which we have no good reason to believe we have, so if basic desert is rendered unlikely thereby, we should eliminate the responses that presuppose it. The primary response he has in mind is moral resentment, which Pereboom calls "anger with an agent due to a wrong he has done to oneself…" (Pereboom 2014: 179). This is indeed the type of anger I will be concerned with (in a way) below, so Pereboom's argument against it—that it is metaphysically unjustified—is directly relevant to my project.[1]

A different type of metaphysical worry about anger comes from the Buddhist tradition. Anger is thought to be one of the most significant poisons of human nature. I get angry when I don't get what I want, but this response is founded on an illusion, namely, that I am a distinctive, persisting, robust SELF (*ego*, *atman*) that accrues or loses things over time, a metaphysical illusion grounding my belief that I am the center of the

[1] Others expressing similar worries are Caruso 2013 and Waller 2011.

universe (*mine* is the only perspective I see, after all). But I am in fact (according to Buddhist belief) not a permanent, big-letter SELF, a permanent and stable *I*. "I am, at most, a psychophysically continuous thing or property" (Flanagan Forthcoming: Chapter 7). The illusion of the permanent self must be crushed, and with it the kinds of responses, like anger, presupposing it. In doing so, it is posited, I will turn outward and think more altruistically, attempting to address the myriad suffering in the world.[2]

A third general worry about anger is that it is *incoherent*. The idea here comes out of an analysis of anger that identifies a constitutive part of it as wishing for things to go badly for its target, that is, as wishing for payback, as a way of gaining compensation for the damage the target caused. But this is magical thinking: Harming people who harmed you won't erase or assuage the harm they originally caused (Nussbaum 2014: 47-48).

The fourth general type of worry has by far the largest number of adherents. It is that anger is *morally objectionable*. By and large the worry is expressed in consequentialist terms, focused on anger's alleged ill effects. Here are some of them:

- Anger contributes negatively to the well-being of its target, as it often is intended to cause—and typically succeeds in causing—pain (physical or emotional) (Pereboom 2014: 180; McKenna 2012: 134-141)
- Anger corrodes relationships (Pereboom 2014: 180; McRae 2015)

[2] There is resonance here with Derek Parfit's metaphysical arguments about personal identity, and how if we adopt his reductionist view of persons, there are "defensible" arguments for why various of our practical concerns, including desert and responsibility responses, are rendered ungrounded thereby. As Parfit amusingly puts it, "Buddha would have agreed" with him (Parfit 1984: 273). More accurately, Parfit agreed with Buddha.

- Anger can backfire, producing "destructive resistance instead of reconciliation" (Pereboom 2014: 180). This is particularly true in clinical settings, when trying to treat, e.g., those with Personality Disorders (Pickard 2011; 2013[3]).

Alternatively, one might maintain that anger is morally bad for nonconsequentialist reasons. Margaret Holmgren, for instance, claims that anger ("resentment," in the Strawsonian parlance; more on this terminology below) is "incompatible with respect for persons as moral agents and ends in themselves" (Holmgren 2014: 169). Respect for persons requires unconditional good will toward them, but anger is the withdrawal of good will.

This is a wide array of objections. I cannot possibly address every variation of them individually. What I will do instead is expose some mistaken assumptions about the nature of anger that underlie and motivate objections of these kinds. Once we see the mistakes, we should be unmoved by the objections. In arguing against them, I will simultaneously construct my own positive account of anger's essential role in moral responsibility throughout the essay.

Anger vs. Resentment

I am interested in defending anger's role in moral responsibility, in particular, its role in holding people responsible in negative cases, i.e., in *blame*. Now as it turns out, aside from a precious few (e.g., Nichols 2007, 2015; Nussbaum 2015; and McGeer 2013), theorists tend to talk about resentment or indignation instead of anger (see, e.g., Wallace 1994: 245; Darwall 2006: 67; McKenna 2012: 66; Sommers 2012: 176; and

[3] See also the Pickard-generated discussion on the blog Flickers of Freedom, URL: http://philosophycommons.typepad.com/flickers_of_freedom/2014/01/responsibility-and-blame-in-the-clinic.html.

many more[4]), so it might be thought that my defense of anger's role in moral responsibility will be a nonsequitur. To show why it's not, I need to take a brief detour.

Why do most theorists avoid or reject talk of mere anger? The main reason is that anger is thought to be too indiscriminate to be blame's standard-bearer. We get angry at lots of things that aren't even agents, let alone morally responsible agents, including pets, malfunctioning computers, the weather (for spoiling our outdoor party), cracks in the sidewalk (for tripping us), and rush-hour traffic. So how might we restrict the relevant blaming emotion to one that (appropriately) targets only responsible agents? Far and away the standard move is to incorporate a cognitive component that focuses precisely on that target. Resentment and indignation fit the bill: They are "cognitively sharpened" (D'Arms and Jacobson 2003: 143) forms of anger, emotions (partially) constituted by a judgment about the responsibility, wrongdoing, and/or blameworthiness of the offender. So, for example, what makes my emotional response resentment is that it is (partially) constituted by the judgment, "You wronged me!" What makes my emotion indignation, by contrast, is that it responds to what you did to another, and so is (partially) constituted by the judgment, "You wronged him/her/them!" Now only responsible agents can wrong others; pets, computers, and the weather can't. So only when anger includes that constitutive judgment is it a blaming responsibility response, and so only when it is resentment or indignation can it count as such.

This is the reason skeptics about free will like Pereboom advocate the elimination of resentment and indignation, as the cognitive component for both presupposes its target

[4] One might think P.F. Strawson (1962) should be on this list, but despite his use of the term "resentment" in the title of his famous essay and throughout, he really means what I mean by "blaming anger," detailed in the text. See Deigh 2011 and Shoemaker 2015 (87-91) for discussion.

could actually meet purportedly implausible metaphysical conditions, namely, being the responsible sources of his or her actions in a way that grounds basic desert. And because of their crucial role in the metaphysical discussion, resentment and indignation have also been the emotions of choice in the more straightforwardly moral discussion about eliminating angry emotions (e.g., in Holmgren 2014).

Let us grant that many blaming responses do incorporate the judgments of wrongdoing and/or responsibility presumably constitutive of resentment and indignation. Nevertheless, both emotions clearly have *anger* as their emotional core (they are "cognitively sharpened" versions of it). And to the extent that there is something objectionable about resentment and indignation, it would have to be in virtue of that angry emotional core. After all, my making some judgment about your wrongdoing or responsibility in and of itself doesn't seem terribly problematic, even if that judgment is false.

So anger is at least necessary for the worrisome kind of blame we are concerned with. But resentment and indignation are *not*. We seem to have plenty of angry blaming responses to people that aren't accompanied by any judgments at all, let alone sophisticated judgments about wrongdoing and responsibility. These are typically the immediate, irruptive responses we have to things like a shove in a crowd, someone going out of his way to step on your shoes, or the sudden realization that a snide remark was an insult. More dramatically, suppose in seeing your daughter's black eye you immediately get that she was beaten up by her boyfriend. Your (presumed) angry response will likely seem as if it comes upon you immediately, arising independently of any judgments about whether he's (responsible for) wronging her (a judgment that just seems irrelevant in the

moment). But these are just as much blaming responses as those angry responses that do incorporate some judgment about wrongdoing and responsibility. So there's something about the anger *itself* that makes it a blaming response (more on this point below).

More controversially, I think we sometimes respond with anger (in a blaming way) to things we judge *not* to have involved any wrongdoing. Suppose you, a stranger, are picnicking in the park at a table next to me. You have brought several plastic forks for your meal, but I have brought only one. I accidentally drop my one fork in the dirt. I see your stack of forks and ask you for one, but you refuse, not because you've got any guests coming but just because they're yours and you don't feel like it. You do not wrong me (I have no claim whatsoever on your forks!), and so I can't appropriately judge you as having done so, but my anger nevertheless seems both blaming and appropriate.

One might reply that in such cases there is surely some *perception* or *belief* about nastiness, insult, or ill will occurring, and that's just what a judgment of wrongdoing and responsibility amounts to. But a constitutive judgment is quite different from a perception or belief merely associated with an emotional response. Consider, by analogy, an aesthetic response. Suppose you are moved to tears upon first hearing a live symphony play Samuel Barber's *Adagio for Strings*. This response arises in you unexpectedly as you hear the mournful chord progressions. It's not as if your response is constituted by a judgment *that this is beautiful*, even though you are of course perceiving various sounds made by the violins in contrast to the violas, say, as they go through (what you perceive as) those mournful chord progressions. In fact, making the judgment *that this is beautiful* would tend to take you *out* of that aesthetic experience. Sure, your emotional response may count as the source of a later independent judgment that the

piece was beautiful, but it seems a mistake to say that the judgment is constitutive of that response at the time. So too it seems with many instances of anger as a blaming responsibility response: a judgment of wrongdoing or responsibility seems unnecessary to its experience, and that judgment may sometimes even remove one from the emotional experience itself. This could be true even if what is necessary to the emotional response is a perception, or better, a *discernment* of insult or ill will, say.[5]

So anger's wider scope actually has an advantage over resentment and indignation in our efforts to capture blame. But isn't it still *too* wide, capturing as well the anger that targets computers, sidewalks, the weather and all sorts of other non-responsibility responses? To address this issue, I need to explore in more detail just what anger *is*.

Anger's Emotional Syndrome

There is insufficient space here for me to provide a thorough argument for why we should conceive of emotions generally, or anger specifically, in the way I am about to articulate. But there is nevertheless some consensus on this approach amongst psychologists (even if there is very little consensus about it amongst philosophers), and that's enough reason for me to begin there, as my ultimate aim is to be as true to our actual humanity and interpersonal exchanges as possible, and I think the psychologists have gotten closer in that respect than many philosophers (which should surprise no one). But I will attempt to supplement the more controversial aspects of the account I will develop with arguments when the time comes. I am going to follow the lead of the leading psychologist of emotion Nico Frijda here, as well as the philosopher Andrea

[5] For talk of "discernment" in this context, see Deigh 2011.

Scarantino (who develops his own theory following Frijda) in explicating some of these issues.

Emotions typically involve "*appraising* a stimulus a particular way, *feeling* a particular way, and being *motivated* to act a particular way" (Scarantino 2014: 156). Call these three elements the emotion's *syndrome*.[6] Emotions are appraisal responses to events that matter, events the agent cares about. The responses are irruptive and typically pleasant or painful feelings, and they are defined and differentiated in terms of their associated "awareness of state of action readiness" (Frijda 2007: 351), i.e., their action tendencies (Roseman 1994: 216).

What, then, is anger's emotional syndrome? Its feeling is typically one of heat and aggression (Eatough and Smith 2006). As for its appraisal, Richard Lazarus calls it "the recognition of 'a demeaning offense against me and mine'" (Lazarus 1991: 222; as quoted in Nichols 2015: 153). And the action tendency? Nearly everyone takes it to be *retaliation* (Izard 1997; Shaver et al., 1987; Keltner et al. 1993; Nichols 2007, 2015). As Jonathan Haidt avers, the angry person's motivational inclination is "to attack, humiliate, or otherwise get back at the person who is perceived as acting unfairly or immorally" (Haidt 2003: 856; quoted in Nichols 2015: 153).

This characterization was essentially put forward long ago by Aristotle, who defined anger as "an impulse, accompanied by pain, to a conspicuous revenge for a conspicuous slight directed without justification towards what concerns oneself or towards what concerns one's friends" (Aristotle/Roberts 1954: 92/1378a).[7] What

---

[6] Talk of emotional "syndromes" comes from Averill 1980.

[7] There is an interesting translation controversy here. Nussbaum translates the "conspicuous" modifier as "imagined" (Nussbaum 2015: 42), and others use "real or apparent," or "manifest." These all

psychologists call anger's action tendency, philosophers call anger's *aim*, and Nussbaum (one of my primary foils here) interprets Aristotle's version of it (revenge or retaliation) as being "seen as somehow assuaging the pain or making good the damage" (Nussbaum 2015: 45) caused by the slighter.

How does this characterization of anger's emotional syndrome help us rein it in for purposes of blame? To answer this question, we need to note an important dispute and a potentially fruitful distinction that comes out of it. The dispute has to do with what anger really responds to. The syndrome I just articulated, it turns out, is not at all uncontroversial for developmental psychologists, given an obvious datum: infants sure seem like they feel and express anger too (see, e.g., Lewis et al. 1990; Lemerise and Dodge 2008; Stenberg and Campos 1990; Stifter and Grant 1993). But infants could not possibly perceive events as slights or insults, as demeaning or unfair. So what does their anger respond to? *Goal frustration*. When they are prevented from getting what they want (food, drink, attention from mommy), they get angry.

It might be thought, then, that we've got a dilemma on our hands. Either we allow for cases of infant anger, in which case we have to switch the real target of anger to goal frustration, not slights, or we exclude infants from the realm of those who "truly" get angry. Grasping the former horn would seem to undermine our project, as anger would have no intimate or even clear connection any more to moral responsibility (i.e., it would no longer be explicitly about slights, injustice, or wrongdoing). Some might thus prefer

---

make for significantly different definitions. Indeed, it seems that how one translates the original Greek term (*phainomene*, from the verb *phainetai*, to appear) is a function of one's take on Aristotle's overall moral psychology. It may be that both "conspicuous" and "imagined" go too far in either direction, and that something like "apparent" is the way to go, but in what follows I will try to avoid this controversy, so we should be okay. I am very grateful to my colleague Ronna Burger for discussion on this point.

to grasp the latter horn. But this is implausible too: infant "angry" behavior seems quite consonant with adult angry behavior, so such a restriction would be ad hoc, just a way to preserve the desired direct connection between ("real") anger and moral responsibility by fiat, without principled differentiation.

I believe this is a false dilemma. The way to bust it is simply by realizing that there are two types of anger, one appropriately triggered by goal frustration—being prevented from doing or getting what one wants—and one appropriately triggered by slights, insults, wrongdoing, etc. This is not an ad hoc move, though, given that we have the tools for clear differentiation from our discussion of general emotional syndromes. To do so, we can appeal, not to any cognitive components, but to their distinct action tendencies. The obvious action tendency of what I will call *goal-frustration anger* is to overcome or eliminate the source of the frustration. The action tendency of what I will call *blaming anger* can thus be as longstanding philosophical thought has had it, namely, to get back at the slighter (I will allow this as the distinguishing action tendency only for now).[8] It is thus only the second type of anger we are concerned with in our investigation into the responses appropriate for moral responsibility and blame.

Obviously, the two types of anger may overlap. When you are intentionally standing in my way, preventing me from leaving the room to get to an appointment, I will be motivated to push you out of my way or do an end-run around you, but I may also be moved to get back at you for making me late. But these are two distinct action tendencies, as illustrated by pure cases of each. Perhaps a rockslide has covered my road to work. My anger when I see the blockage will not result in any sort of motivation to get

[8] This sort of anger is what I have also called *agential anger* (Shoemaker 2015: 90-1). It is what Nichols 2015 (152) calls *moral anger*.

back at the rockslide! Rather, it will motivate my immediately looking around for a way around it or for an alternate route to work. And on the flipside, suppose after a promotion I have an employee (who used to be my office mate) who does everything I ask him to do, albeit with great condescension, as if it amuses him to see me in a position over him. He is slighting me, although he's not preventing me from doing anything I want. My blaming anger, on the standard story, will tend to motivate me to get back at him regardless.

It is only blaming anger that is relevant to our enterprise, as it responds to agential features such as intention, motivation, knowledge, and volitional control that many have independently thought crucial to moral responsibility. But there is one last difficulty to deal with before we can respond to anger's critics. It has to do with the actual action tendency of blaming anger. Up until now I have granted that it is for retaliation, for revenge. But I don't think this is accurate. Rather, I think blaming anger's more fundamental encompassing action tendency is *to communicate the anger*. Unfortunately, I don't have any explicit empirical psychological work on my side for this claim, but that is, I believe, only because it has yet to be identified and tested properly. It is quite true that action tendencies to "get back at" the slighter are often reported in open-ended questions to subjects about their past anger at someone (e.g., Roseman et al. 1994; Bougie, Pieters, and Zeelenberg 2003). My thought, however, is that these action tendencies are more fundamentally about letting the slighter know that one is angry with him or her. In other words, any retaliation that occurs is typically meant to *serve* the communicative aim in the most dramatic fashion. Unfortunately, no one has asked the natural follow-up question, "*Why* do you want to hurt, or to get back at, the person who

made you angry?" In addition, no one asks whether communication *without* retaliation would successfully resolve one's anger. And finally, in nearly all experimental settings, subjects are asked to think about a kind of paradigm case when they got angry at someone, and then to report their feelings. The paradigm cases are likely to involve the desire for retaliation, as they tend to be the most traumatic. But there seem to be plenty of less dramatic situations of interpersonal anger in which the desire for retaliation isn't even on the table. These are severely underexplored situations. The best I can do for now, therefore, is to try to motivate and argue for my view a bit, as it is important to my case against the anger skeptics below, then leave it to the reader to contemplate and see if it resonates. One of my aims here is to spur some more research into this hypothesis.

There is actually some glimmer of communication as an action tendency of anger in the existing literature, although it is overlooked. In an extremely thorough investigation into the action tendencies, actions, and goals subjects report with respect to a wide variety of emotions, Roseman et al. (1994) found that there are two action tendencies most closely associated with anger: "Feel like hitting someone," and "Feel like yelling." The actions most closely associated with anger are "say something nasty" and "want to hurt someone" (Roseman et al. 1994: 217). What could unite these responses under the single rubric of blaming anger, however? In both cases there is an expressive element that would serve to communicate the anger to the offending party. This is also true of the "getting back at" responses too, of course! Further, to the extent that anger has been thought to produce *good* consequences, such as generating more successful negotiation in business (Van Dijk et al. 2008), and thus to have some fitness enhancing effects, it is only in its *communication as such* that it could have such effects.

A straightforward philosophical argument (that is nevertheless constructed for eventual empirical investigation) for the fundamental role of communication comes in considering two side-by-side cases. Suppose that someone has publicly humiliated your child, and you plot your revenge. Perhaps a concerned friend has secretly sent you some compromising pictures of the offender, which you are planning to post on social media. In the first scenario, you successfully exact your revenge—the offender is publicly humiliated—but he thinks it was the result of his own phone's malfunction, so he has no idea anyone, especially you, did this to him. In the second scenario, he *does* know you did it. In which scenario does anger feel (more) successfully discharged? It seems that only in the second has anger fully achieved its aim. Something feels absent in the case of the secret revenge.

What about cases of blaming anger without any (motivation for) retribution? There are plenty such cases in our interpersonal lives. Seeing my partner come home drunk and late yet again, I may merely shake my head and quietly shut the bedroom door. Or when the department chair once again ignores my contributions at the meeting, I may, with a trembling but measured voice, state just how he has disrespected me. Or perhaps I shout "Goddam it!" as an oblivious texter walks right into me. Or perhaps I sit down and write an angry letter to my congressperson after she has voted yet again against gun control legislation. None of these cases feels like undischarged blaming anger. That's because they all involve its successful communication. But they also involve no retribution, in either aim or receipt.

Of course, there are also plenty of cases of uncommunicated, private blaming anger. When I am disrespected by the gigantic hair-trigger bully, I will likely keep my

anger to myself. Or when I think about the abuse I took at the hands of my now-dead father, I may simmer with resentment. But these cases are no challenge to my argument, as it is fairly obvious that there is something unfulfilled in each. I've got the motivation to let that bully know, but it would endanger my health, and that's a stronger reason to keep quiet. Or I would love to tell my dad off, but I can't anymore, so that resentment just lingers, eating away at me, with no place to go. As in the secret revenge case, these are instances of unsatisfied blaming anger, and this again suggests that blaming anger's fundamental aim is communication. The motivation for retribution is very often associated with it, of course, but that's essentially because retribution is perhaps the most effective and dramatic *form* the communication of anger can take. But the matter of blaming anger's appropriate form is an ethical one, I think, and not a matter of its fundamental aim.

I have now completed my characterization of the sort of blaming emotional response most relevant to moral responsibility, viz., blaming anger. But if this is the right emotion to focus on (and not resentment or indignation as such), then it would seem to be vulnerable to the critical arrows of the anger rejecters. In what follows, I will attempt to defend blaming anger from their criticisms.

Responding to the Stoics

The Stoics, recall, rejected anger insofar as it put one in an objectionable psychological state: it's just prudentially bad for you to get angry, as it disarms self-control and prevents you from being governed by reason. But this is what's called a *wrong kind of reason* against blaming anger (D'Arms and Jacobson 2000). Blaming anger appraises agents with respect to some perceived slighting attitude or action. The

slighting agent is perceived to have viewed you as lesser than he is, or as failing to take you or your interests and ends sufficiently seriously. This is a matter of his having *poor quality of regard* for you.[9] So what blaming anger appraises as *angersome*, or as meriting anger, is an agent's poor quality of regard, and the anger is thus *fitting* when the appraisal is correct, that is, when the agent actually did have poor quality of regard. That such a response would be fitting is just to say that one has a reason—a reason of the "right" kind, a reason of "fit"—for feeling blaming anger. But of course, in determining what one has *all-things-considered* reason to feel, other types of reasons come into play, e.g., prudential, aesthetic, and moral. With respect to the appraisal feature of the emotion itself, though, these are wrong kinds of reasons. So even if one has a reason of fit to feel blaming anger, it may be, as in the gigantic bully case above, that one has a stronger prudential—"wrong" kind of—reason not to do so.

What Seneca and the Stoics are arguing is that one has prudential reason not to feel anger, but this is a wrong kind of reason against blaming anger. It may be that I have been slighted, and the slighting was an expression of the offending agent's poor quality of regard for me. My blaming anger at him, on this construal, is *fitting*. But perhaps that anger does get me a bit crazy, and I occasionally do lose control of myself when in its grip and do things that are bad for me. Then it might be true that I have prudential reason against feeling blaming anger. And perhaps in this case the slight against me was minor, but the damage I might do to myself in feeling it could be major. If so, then, all-things-considered it could well be that I shouldn't feel blaming anger.

---

[9] This point is often put in terms of *quality of will*, but I have argued at length elsewhere (Shoemaker 2015: Part One) that "quality of will" is multiply ambiguous, and what anger typically fits is just one of those senses, namely, quality of regard.

But we might well think—and many of us *do* think—that there will be plenty of cases in which one ought to feel blaming anger even if there is a prudential reason against it. Suppose my child has been harmed by the offender, or perhaps some egregious injustice has occurred. Yes, I may become a bit out-of-control, but here the strength of the fittingness reason in favor of blaming anger far outweighs the prudential reasons against it. Egregious injustice, we might think, demands—renders fitting—righteous indignation, and this defeats wrong kinds of reasons otherwise in virtue, perhaps, of the degree to which the offender's quality of regard was poor. So we can grant Seneca's point without granting that it undercuts the appropriateness of blaming anger, or that there can't be strong reasons in its favor. Indeed, when one feels blaming anger in response to its strong reasons of fit, one is in fact still governed by reason after all, a view the Stoics should *embrace*.

Responding to the Metaphysicians

The metaphysical critics of anger have some complex arguments on their side, and I cannot address them all. What I will try to do, though, is point to some basic presuppositions of their approaches that defenders of blaming anger can reject.

The first metaphysical rejection of anger comes from free will skeptics, who think that there is just no plausible metaphysical defense of the kind of desert presupposed by resentful anger. The most sophisticated version of this argument is Pereboom's. As he says, "For an agent to be morally responsible for an action in [the basic desert] sense is for it to be hers in such a way that she would deserve to be blamed if she understood that it was morally wrong…" (Pereboom 2014: 2). The type of blame presupposing basic desert includes "expression of…genuine resentment or indignation" (Pereboom 2014:

129). Let's focus on resentment, which for Pereboom (and many others) is thought to be "anger with an agent due to a wrong he has done to oneself…" and contains a constitutive cognitive component, a "belief…that its target deserves in the basic sense to be its recipient" (Pereboom 2014: 179). Given resentment's metaphysical presuppositions, and given many independent moral objections about its ostensibly destructive role in our interpersonal lives (to be discussed later), Pereboom thinks not only that we should get rid of it, but also that we should not worry too much about doing so, as we have a variety of morally unobjectionable and metaphysically neutral reactive emotions, such as sadness or disappointment, that we can substitute for them without much loss (and with some moral gain).

Now what, precisely, is it that's objectionable here? Pereboom targets resentment, but recall that resentment has two constitutive components, the cognitive belief and the angry affect. His moral objections must be to the angry affect, as the belief in and of itself (even if expressed) wouldn't have the destructive interpersonal effects he is worried about (e.g., saying impassively to others, "You deserve blame for what you did" may generate only shrugs in response). But Pereboom's metaphysically-grounded objection to resentment is explicitly to its cognitive component: Once one takes on board his skeptical arguments against the plausibility of desert-grounding free will, then the belief (partially) constituting one's resentment of someone will conflict with the skeptical belief that it lacks grounds. Consequently, his metaphysically-grounded objection is that resentment is *irrational*.

In contrast with the Stoic objection, Pereboom's metaphysical complaint against resentment does not necessarily implicate a wrong kind of reason. Rather, it could be

construed as going after resentment's *fittingness*. If its appraisal of an agent necessarily includes the belief in desert, then where the conditions for agential desert are absent, such appraisals would be incorrect. But what about the fittingness of resentment's *angry* component? Given my characterization of blaming anger as the emotion that is actually preferable for talking about negative moral responsibility, and given that Pereboom's cognitive component is unnecessary to it, then a Pereboomian metaphysical complaint against it is a nonsequitur. In other words, *blaming anger does not require any beliefs about desert*, and, more significantly, there is no reason to think that its fitting deployment requires basic desert either. All that it requires to be a correct appraisal is that a slight occurred, i.e., that the offender's quality of regard was poor.

Perhaps, though, Pereboom's arguments do successfully undermine the justification for a *subset* of blaming anger responses, namely, those that cross over into resentment (or indignation) in virtue of coming to have that accompanying belief about the target's desert? I am happy to allow this, but it doesn't provide much of a victory for Pereboom. For even if he is right, then while anyone who feels true resentment would be irrational, they could ameliorate the irrationality simply by eliminating the belief, and so transforming their resentment back into blaming anger, which could still be fitting. This metaphysical worry thus doesn't cut against blaming anger as such.

Turn, then, to the Buddhist metaphysical objection. Recall that the basic idea was that anger presupposes the existence of a SELF, an enduring metaphysical object, but this self is an illusion, and insofar as anger is a response to the failure of that particular sort of self not getting what it wants, it is metaphysically ungrounded and should thus be eliminated.

Again, I do not need to engage with the metaphysical reasoning to offer a reply, which draws from my earlier distinction between types of anger. The target of the Buddhist objection, as far as I can tell, is primarily what I have labeled goal-frustration anger, not blaming anger. So we can grant that wanting something, and having that desire frustrated, presupposes an enduring self, a permanent EGO, and we can even grant that there is no such thing, that we are merely a procession of i's, not I's (as Flanagan Forthcoming puts it). This would imply that no goal-frustration anger is fitting, as it incorrectly appraises its object as blocking the desires of an enduring self. But (fitting) *blaming* anger need not presuppose this purportedly illusory metaphysical object. That's because it appraises its object as having committed a slight, and so is correct (fitting) only if that agent in fact committed a slight at that time.

There are of course complications here, due in part to the vagueness of the Buddhist account. One might think, for instance, that holding another responsible in this way would be unwarranted, as the slighter isn't a permanent SELF either, but merely a psychophysical successor to the "i" who slighted me. Wouldn't it thus be unfair to blame him for the actions of his psychophysical predecessor?[10] But again, the story I've told is about blaming anger's *fittingness*, not its fairness, which is a wrong kind of (moral) reason. Furthermore, one of the primary points of eliminating the illusion of the permanent self, in Buddhism, is for us to turn outward to relieve the suffering of others. But if others aren't permanent selves either, then the person whose suffering one attempts to relieve won't be the same self whose suffering has been relieved, but merely her

[10] Again, this is quite akin to what Parfit called the Extreme Claim, which states that if there is no further fact of our personal identity (which would be about some kind of separately existing entity, like a Cartesian ego), then the practical concerns, like responsibility, that were built on it are ungrounded (Parfit 1984: 307-12; 323-25).

psychophysical successor. Indeed, if there were truly *no* selves, it would seem there could be no grounds for any interpersonal interaction of the sort with which we are intimately familiar. We treat the people we know as if they were the same enduring people we have always known, returning favors, making inside jokes, repaying debts, helping them move, and so on. None of these practices would make sense without their having *some* kind of permanent identity. It seems, then, that we at least have to ground altruistic treatment and practices on psychophysical succession, if not persisting permanent egos.[11] If so, why not ground blaming anger on the same sort of relation? In other words, as long as you are most closely psychophysically continuous with a past slighter, my blaming anger at you for that slight would be fitting. And notice that the fittingness of my current blaming anger may not depend on my having any kind of persisting ego, as the anger fits slights, and it may not matter *who* feels it in response to the slight. In Strawsonian terms, this would just make virtually all (except simultaneous-with-the-slight) blaming anger akin to *indignation*.

The key point here, though, is that blaming anger is not necessarily about the pernicious desires of the illusory SELF. It is instead about the fitting response to some expression of disregard, or downgrading, and it's hard to see it as depending on the problematic metaphysical illusion of the grasping, desiring SELF, at least if we are somehow to preserve our multitude of other interpersonal (and often altruistic) interactions with one another.

Responding to the Charge of Incoherence

Nussbaum's initial complaint is explicitly about blaming anger, claiming that it is

[11] This move is consistent with what Parfit calls the Moderate Claim (Parfit 1984: 311-312).

incoherent, as it conceptually involves a wish for payback, or more precisely involves "a retributive and hopeful outward movement that seeks the pain of the offender because of and as a way of compensating for one's own damage" (Nussbaum 2015: 47). This is obviously magical thinking, however, as getting the offender back won't assuage or compensate for the lost value. Consequently, we should give up this form of anger as a leftover from a more intellectually unsophisticated time.

One might well think, however, that *fitting* anger doesn't aim at rectifying damage. Rather, it aims, as Aristotle suggested, at restoring one's (moral) status, which the offender has downgraded. On this view, when the injured party angrily retaliates against the offender, the moral balance has been restored, or at least the positions have been reversed. And that doesn't seem magical or incoherent at all.

Nussbaum admits this possibility, but she rejects it as well, this time on moral grounds, as it expresses an objectionable sort of narcissism, a fussy focus on one's own vulnerability and relative status. And if that is the aim when we are angry at those who hurt our friends, then its focus on the downgrading to *ourselves* is certainly misplaced. There remains, for Nussbaum only one possible rational aim of anger, and that is an utterly forward-looking utilitarian aim: to assess what can be done in light of the offense that would be most helpful for all affected parties. This could include punishing the offender, but with an ameliorative, not retaliatory, end in mind (Nussbaum 2015: 50).

I will take up Nussbaum's (and others') moral objections to anger in the next section, but for now, there is a response worth making to her view about the three possible aims of blaming anger. None of these is quite right. To see what its actual aim is, we need to think about its successful resolution. There are fitting and unfitting

instances of blaming anger. It is unfitting, we think, when it targets accidental injuries, or injuries caused by some psychological disorder (e.g., manias or compulsions). On my analysis, that's because these injuries don't express poor quality of regard. But fitting anger can *become* unfitting, under certain conditions. For example, it might be that my blaming anger at you for your offense is no longer fitting once you've entered into a persistent vegetative state or end-stage dementia. But it also seems unfitting if I have *forgiven* you. In such a case, I have set aside my angry feelings as no longer appropriate. This requires a change in *you*, of course, but what changes successfully render blaming anger no longer fitting in this way?

In the empirical psychological literature, there are several items that people cite that successfully effect forgiveness, including the offender's making amends or admitting fault (see Schmitt et al. 2004; Zechmeister et al. 2004; and Dill and Darwall 2014: 51). But by far the best predictor of forgiveness is sincerely expressed *remorse* (Davis and Gold 2011: 392). This is a ruminative emotion, its action tendency being to think over and over again, pained, about the loss of or damage to a value that one caused (Thomas 1999: 130). And when that loss in value attaches to a fellow human being, one's ruminations consist in identification with that person (Deigh 1996: 50).

This seems quite right. Normatively successful—fitting—forgiveness is prompted most effectively by a perception of the offender's having genuinely understood and felt from the victim's perspective what he put the victim through. Call this *acknowledgment*. It is a fairly robust identifying stance, one which appropriately dissolves blaming anger. But this could only be because it meets blaming anger's fundamental aim, and not for any wrong kinds of reasons (like feeling sorry for the

offender, or wanting to get back to profitable interactions with him). That means anger's aim must be to generate the offender's acknowledgment, and not necessarily to achieve payback or compensation. This point should resonate. After all, payback often leaves us empty. Many family members of murder victims admit no real resolution after watching the murderer executed.[12] Indeed, why should payback help if the offender doesn't "get it"? Why would payback be needed any longer if he *does* "get it"? And of course being compensated with no apology or acknowledgment won't tend to dissolve anger; indeed, it is likely to leave it simmering more deeply, as if one could really be bought off!

The most natural explanation for why acknowledgment normatively resolves anger is that it's precisely what was missing prior to the offense. I have been talking about anger's being a fitting response to slights, but what are slights, precisely? They are, at bottom, failures of acknowledgment (or examples of insufficient acknowledgment), a failure to take the victim seriously (enough). Such failures generate anger even in the face of no harm at all. Think of Dustin Hoffman's response, as the character Ratso Rizzo in *Midnight Cowboy*, when a taxi driver turns a corner and almost hits him. He slams the hood and shouts, "I'm walkin' here! I'm *walkin*' here!" This is fitting anger solely in virtue of insufficient acknowledgment. But insufficient acknowledgment effectively involves viewing the victim as a moral *lesser*, as someone whose interests are not important.[13] That creates a moral imbalance, a tilt away from genuine moral equality. Acknowledgment of what one did in creating this situation can

---

[12] Here is how one family member of a murder victim spoke about the death penalty recently: "It's seen as a closure, but there's no closure. It's not going to make your grieving better." (Julia Rodriguez in the *Boston Globe*, May 12, 2015: https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2015/05/11/family-members-murder-victims-speak-out-against-capital-punishment/qTmZn2A5XD1RyzxMPO7BiI/story.html.)

[13] It perhaps more often involves a simple failure to view the victim as a moral equal or even to perceive the victim at all. One should take my statement in the text to incorporate these failures as well.

thus restore the moral balance one caused through one's original lack of acknowledgment.[14]

So contrary to Nussbam's view, there is a very different aim of blaming anger not only possible, but quite widespread. It is backward-looking in that it is rendered fitting entirely by the offender's past slighting attitude. And while it does have a forward-looking aim, that aim is restoration of the moral balance via acknowledgment. But this aim could not be further from utilitarian. It is also not narcissistic. To say that I matter—"*I'm* walkin' here!"—is not to say that *only* I matter. It is instead to demand for oneself the kind of acknowledgment everyone should receive, a demand generating what I have elsewhere called the *empathic glue* that creates and binds the members of a moral community together (Shoemaker 2015: 109-110). But this is to talk of a value that is better left for our final section on the alleged immorality of anger.

Responding to the Charge of Immorality

Most of the anti-anger action is moralistic. But given all of our preparatory work to this point, we can dismiss the moral arguments against blaming anger in fairly quick fashion. Of course, one very easy way to do so is simply to point out that all of the moral arguments against blaming anger are "wrong kinds of reasons" arguments, committing what D'Arms and Jacobson 2000 call the moralistic fallacy. Just as it's a mistake to say that a joke isn't funny solely because it's somehow immoral, or it's a mistake to say that a colleague's new promotion isn't enviable given that envy is a character flaw, so too it's a mistake to say that a nasty action doesn't merit blaming anger given that blaming anger is somehow immoral. To make things harder for me, then, the moralists could actually

[14] Not always, of course. There are some acts that are unforgiveable.

allow that blaming anger is fitting but urge instead that, *all-things-considered*, we shouldn't feel it, given that the moral reasons against it outweigh the reasons of fit in its favor. As this is a possible position (although not one I've heard expressed), let's explore it a bit.

There were two very general moral arguments against anger, recall, several consequentialist and one nonconsequentialist. Start with the nonconsequentialist argument, which claims that blaming anger fails to respect persons insofar as respect requires unconditional goodwill, and blaming anger is precisely the withdrawal of goodwill (Holmgren 2014). As we saw at the end of the previous section and throughout, however, this isn't true. Blaming anger fits slights, i.e., insufficient acknowledgment of one's moral worth, and its action tendency is to communicate itself, a communication whose demanding aim is for precisely such acknowledgment. None of this is incompatible with goodwill. That I don't feel good about you and what you did right now (and I'm letting you know that) does not mean that I lack goodwill toward you. Indeed, it may be precisely because I *do* hold you in high regard that I am angry with you for your poor behavior. "That's just not worthy of you!" I may say. But this is surely an *expression* of respect. Of course, it's true that lots of angry reactions involve full-fledged withdrawals of goodwill, and perhaps those expressions are incompatible with respect for persons, but there is nothing about the account given here of blaming anger that at all implicates such expressions.

The consequentialist arguments included worries about how anger aims to cause pain to others (and so contributes negatively to their well-being), corrodes relationships, or can backfire, ultimately producing destructive resistance rather than reconciliation

(particularly in clinical settings). Our answer to the first worry ought to be obvious: blaming anger doesn't necessarily aim at pain, and indeed to the extent that it might, that would be quite incidental to its true aim, which is communication of the demand for acknowledgment.

Now again, of course, many angry people do intend to cause pain to offenders. And it's also true that blaming anger can corrode relationships and produce destructive resistance. What are we to say, then, about these bad consequences? The answer should be clear: These are all objections to the forms of *expression* that blaming anger may take. Blaming anger that attempts to punish, simmering private resentment of an intimate that turns to contempt, or tone-deaf yelling—all of these may have bad effects. But these are all just poorly executed attempts to communicate blaming anger's demand. Don't blame the *anger* for that, however; blame its form of expression. We have lots of room for improvement in how to express fitting anger. But that is not the focus of defenders of blaming anger, which is just about whether it *fits*, i.e., does one have reason to *feel* blaming anger? How to manage and express it falls under the rubric of ethicists and therapists.

I have defended blaming anger against the moralists without touting its *good* consequences. But there are plenty. Many have thought one cannot participate fully in close interpersonal relationships without being vulnerable to blaming anger, so that eliminating it from one's emotional diet will produce only poor interpersonal nutrition (Strawson 1962; Shabo 2012). And anger's prudential benefits are many: It tends to motivate greater success in getting things one wants (Veling, Ruys, and Aarts 2012); it tends to make one more optimistic (Lerner and Keltner 2001); it promotes psychological

insights and self-improvement (Kassinove et al. 1997); it tends to promote more successful business negotiations (Van Kleef, De Dreu, and Manstead 2004); and it can be empowering when deployed in protests and struggles for justice (Wowra and McCarter 1999). These benefits should not be dismissed lightly (see Shoemaker 2015: 108-112). So even if there are bad consequences of blaming anger, that's not to say that they are ultimately more weighty than its good consequences, which are numerous.

Conclusion

Anger has gotten a bad rap, primarily because there has been insufficient understanding of its true nature. I have attempted here to set forth a clearer understanding of what it is (in its familiar blaming form), and so show how all of the main arguments against anger in the realm of moral responsibility come up short. Importantly, this is not to say that all forms of blaming anger's *expression* are not problematic; indeed, many are. What should no longer be viewed as problematic, though, is the idea that blaming anger plays—and ought to play—a key role in our interpersonal lives. I hope to have made clear just what that crucial role is.

REFERENCES

Aristotle. 1954. *The Rhetoric and the Poetics of Aristotle*. Transl. by W. Rhys Roberts. New York: The Modern Library.

Averill, J.R. 1980. "A Constructivist View of Emotion." In R. Plutchik & H. Kellerman, eds., *Theories of Emotion* (San Diego, CA: Academic Press), pp. 305-339.

Bougie, R., Pieters, R. and Zeelenberg, M. 2003. "Angry customers don't come back, they get back: The experience and behavioral implications of anger and dissatisfaction in services." *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science 31*: 377-393.

Caruso, Gregg. 2013. *Exploring the Illusion of Free Will and Moral Responsibility*. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books.

D'Arms, Justin, and Jacobson, Daniel. 2000. "The Moralistic Fallacy: On the 'Appropriateness' of Emotions." *Philosophical and Phenomenological Research*: 65-90.

------. 2003. "The Significance of Recalcitrant Emotions (or, Anti-Quasijudgmentalism)." Reprinted in Anthony Hatzimoysis, ed., *Philosophy and the Emotions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Darwall, Stephen. 2006. *The Second-Person Standpoint*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Davis, James R. and Gold, Gregg J. 2011. "An examination of emotional empathy, attributions of stability, and the link between perceived remorse and forgiveness." *Personality and Individual Differences* 50: 392-97.

Deigh, John. 1996. *The Sources of Moral Agency: Essays in Moral Psychology and Freudian Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

-----. 2011. "Reactive Attitudes Revisited." In Carla Bagnoli, *Morality and the Emotions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 197-216.

Dill, Brendan, and Darwall, Stephen. 2014. "Moral Psychology as Accountability." In D'Arms and Jacobson 2014, pp. 40-83.

Eatough, Virginia, and Smith, Jonathan. 2006. "'I Was Like a Wild Person': Understanding Feelings of Anger Using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis." *British Journal of Psychology* 97: 483-98.

Flanagan, Owen. Forthcoming. *The Geography of Morals: Varieties of Moral Possibility*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Frijda, Nico. 1998. “The Laws of Emotions.” *American Psychologist* 43: 349-358.

Holmgren, Margaret. 2014. “A Moral Assessment of Strawson’s Retributive Reactive Attitudes.” *Oxford Studies in Agency and Responsibility* 2: 165-186.

Izard, C.E. 1997. *Human Emotions*. New York: Plenum Press.

Kassinove, Howard, et al. 1997. “Self-Reported Anger Episodes in Russia and America.” *Journal of Social Behavior & Personality* 12: 301-24.

Keltner, D., Ellsworth, P.C., and Edwards, K. 1993. “Beyond Simple Pessimism: Effects of Sadness and Anger on Social Perception.” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 64: 740-52.

Lazarus, Richard. 1991. *Emotion and Adaptation*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Lemerise, Elizabeth A., and Kenneth A. Dodge. 2008. “The development of anger and hostile interactions.” *Handbook of emotions* 3: 730-741.

Lerner, Jennifer S. and Keltner, Dacher. 2001. “Fear, Anger, and Risk.” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 81: 146-59.

Lewis, Michael, Steven M. Alessandri, and Margaret W. Sullivan. 1990. “Violation of expectancy, loss of control, and anger expressions in young infants.” *Developmental Psychology* 26: 745-751.

McRae, E. 2015. “Metabolizing Anger: A Tantric Buddhist Solution to the Problem of Moral Anger.” *Philosophy East and West* 65: 466-484.

McGeer, Victoria. 2013. “Civilizing Blame.” In D. Justin Coates and Neal Tognazzini, *Blame: Its Nature and Norms* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 162-188.

McKenna, Michael. 2012. *Conversation and Responsibility*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Nichols, Shaun. 2007. “After Incompatibilism: A Naturalistic Defense of the Reactive Attitudes.” *Philosophical Perspectives* 21: 405-28.

-----. 2015. *Bound*. *Oxford: Oxford University Press*.

Nussbaum, Martha. 2015. “Transitional Anger.” *Journal of the American Philosophical Association 1*: 41-56.

Pereboom, Derk. 2014. *Free Will, Agency, and Meaning in Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pickard, Hannah. 2011. "Responsibility Without Blame: Empathy and the Effective Treatment of Personality Disorder." *Philosophy, Psychiatry, & Psychology* 18: 209-223.

-----. 2013. "Responsibility Without Blame: Philosophical Reflections on Clinical Practice." K.W.M. Fulford et al., eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy and Psychiatry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 1134-1154.

Roseman, Ira J., Wiest, Cynthia, and Swartz, Tamara S. 1994. "Phenomenology, behaviors, and goals differentiate discrete emotions." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 67: 206-221.

Scarantino, Andrea. 2014. "The Motivational Theory of Emotions." In Justin D'Arms and Daniel Jacobson, eds., *Moral Psychology and Human Agency* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 156-185.

Schmitt, M. et al. 2004. "Effects of objective and subjective account components on forgiving." *The Journal of Social Psychology* 144: 465-86.

Seneca, L.A., Kaster, R.A. and Nussbaum, M.C. 2010. *Anger, Mercy, Revenge (Complete Works of Lucius Annaeus Seneca)*. Trans. Robert A. Kaster and Martha Nussbaum. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Shabo, Seth. 2012. "Where Love and Resentment Meet." *Philosophical Review* 121: 95-124.

Shaver, P., Schwartz, J., Kirson, D., and O'Connor, C. 1987. "Emotion Knowledge: Further Exploration of a Prototype Approach." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 52: 1061-86.

Sommers, Tamler. 2012. *Relative Justice*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Stenberg, Craig R., and Joseph J. Campos. 1990. "The development of anger expressions in infancy." In Nancy L. Stein, Bennett Leventhal, and Tom Trabasso, eds., *Psychological and Biological Approaches to Emotion* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Publishers), pp. 247-282.

Stifter, Cynthia A., and Wanda Grant. 1993. "Infant responses to frustration: Individual differences in the expression of negative affect." *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior* 17: 187-204.

Strawson, P.F. 1962. "Freedom and Resentment." *Proceedings of the British Academy* 48: 1-25.

Van Dijk, E., Van Kleef, G. A., and Steinel, W. 2008. "A social functional approach to emotions in bargaining: When communicating anger pays and when it backfires." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 94: 600-614.

Van Kleef, Gerben A., De Dreu, Carsten K.W., and Manstead, Antony S.R. 2004. "The Interpersonal Effects of Anger and Happiness in Negotiations." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 86: 57-76.

Veling, Harm, Ruys, Kirsten, and Aarts, Henk. 2012. "Anger as a hidden Motivator: Associating Attainable Objects with Anger Turns Them Into Rewards." *Social Psychology and Personality Science* 3: 438-45.

Wallace, R. Jay. 1994. *Responsibility and the Moral Sentiments*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Waller, Bruce. 2011. *Against Moral Responsibility*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Wowra, Scott A., and McCarter, Robert. 1999. "Validation of the Empowerment Scale with an Outpatient Mental Health Population." *Psychiatric Services* 50: 959-61.

Zechmeister J.S. et al. 2004. "Don't apologize unless you mean it: A laboratory investigation of forgiveness and retaliation." *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology* 23: 532-64.