

I am not. It is surprising that someone who is as careful as Kamm would make such a mistake.

This is a fascinating book, with insightful discussions of a wide range of philosophical topics and contemporary philosophers. All philosophers will gain from reading it.

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John Christman and Joel Anderson (eds.), *Autonomy and the Challenges to Liberalism: New Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. xii + 383.

This collection of essays is a successor volume to John Christman's *The Inner Citadel: Essays on Individual Autonomy*, which was published in 1989. The new volume seeks to update discussions of autonomy and relate them to recent debates in political philosophy over the nature and foundations of liberalism. The collection contains thirteen original essays and an introduction by the editors.

Several of the essays that seek to make a free-standing contribution to understanding autonomy focus on the social or relational dimension of the concept, often asserting that traditional accounts of autonomy rest on excessively individualistic conceptions of human beings. One essay, for example, asserts that most contemporary philosophical discussions of autonomy 'neglect the sorts of heteronomy that derive from interpersonal relations and the treatment of the self by others' (p. 155). Perhaps this is true. But autonomy is a protean term. Different writers attribute different senses to it for different theoretical purposes. A writer who seeks to understand the structure of a person's will necessary for autonomous action does not neglect interpersonal relations if he does not discuss them. For it may be that these relations are relevant to a different sense of autonomy. A significant measure of the disagreement over the concept of autonomy registered in this volume results, I suspect, from equivocation on the different senses of the term.

Still, genuine disagreements remain. Several of the essays in the volume reject the influential model of autonomy that views higher-level identification of lower-level wants and desires as the crucial component of the concept. This hierarchical model of autonomy, inspired by the work of Harry Frankfurt and most fully developed by Gerald Dworkin, is said to neglect aspects of our motivational lives that are not open to self-conscious identification. In addition, several essays take issue with models of autonomy that, more generally, valorize the reflective endorsement of aspects of one's identity. Both these models of autonomy are accounts of *autonomy as self-constitution*.

How then should we understand this sense of autonomy if we reject the hierarchical model and the reflective endorsement model? Several possibilities are explored in this volume. One such possibility is to view autonomy as an intrinsically social concept. Paul Benson argues that autonomy consists in

'taking ownership' of one's actions, where this involves the exercise of the social capacity to authorize one's actions and to be held accountable by others for them. In a similar vein, Joel Anderson and Axel Honneth focus on the different ways in which a lack of social recognition can diminish autonomous agency. A second possibility explored in this volume is that autonomy as self-constitution should be understood in terms of narrative unity. We are autonomous to the extent that we are part authors of our lives.

The narrative model of autonomy is mentioned by a number of the authors in the volume, but it is most carefully explored by J. David Velleman. In an essay that engages with Daniel Dennett's provocative claim that the self is the 'chief fictional character' at the center of a person's autobiography, Velleman contends that the self is not a fiction, but a real entity. 'We invent ourselves,' he claims, 'but we really are the characters whom we invent' (p. 58). The key idea that Velleman develops is that while it is true that the self imposes a narrative pattern on its actions, this narrative pattern not only reflects what the self has done, but also guides what it will do. The self as a narrative agent makes choices so as to ensure a coherent continuation of the story that it is telling.

This is an intriguing picture of autonomous agency; but one may worry that it asks too much of narrative coherence. Agents, it may be thought, act for reasons and reasons cannot be reduced to narrative coherence. Velleman anticipates this objection. He argues that human beings look to their motives for their reasons for acting and that to make sense of their motives they must tell a coherent story about them. The plausibility of his narrative model of autonomous agency, then, rests on deeper issues about the nature of practical reason.

The narrative model of autonomous agency seeks to illuminate the sense of autonomy understood as self-constitution. This is an element of the sense of autonomy understood as a character ideal, or what is often called *personal autonomy*. The person who realizes this character ideal is a self-constituting agent (he is part author of his own life), but he is also relatively free from coercion and manipulation and he has access to a wide range of options. Gerald Gaus argues that personal autonomy, so understood, is a perfectionist ideal and not an ideal that all persons have reason to adopt. For this reason, liberalism should not be understood to rest on a commitment to personal autonomy. By contrast, Gaus contends that *moral autonomy* – the basic capacity to distinguish one's own desires and aims from the requirements of public morality – is central to liberal political theory. Gaus's contribution builds on and further develops arguments he has pursued in earlier work on public justification. Those interested in this topic will profit from this engaging chapter.

Like Gaus, Jeremy Waldron calls attention to the distinction between personal autonomy and moral autonomy. Waldron points out that many philosophers mention this distinction so as to distance their own understanding of personal autonomy from moral autonomy. But Waldron worries that the distinction, while it serves some useful analytic purposes, nonetheless can obscure important interrelations between the two ideas. In a chapter that ranges over the writings of Kant, Rawls and Raz, Waldron casts light on the ways in which the exercise of personal autonomy is subject to the requirements

of morality and the ways in which 'personal autonomy is often the subject-matter of moral autonomy, as morality attempts to reconcile one person's autonomous pursuit of his ends with others' autonomous pursuit of theirs' (p. 325).

The question of which conception (or conceptions) of autonomy is (are) fundamental to liberal political theory is also taken up by John Christman. In his contribution, he insightfully connects theoretical discussions of the conditions of autonomy with recent discussions of the conditions of liberal political legitimacy. By doing so, he makes a strong case for the importance of self-reflection in an account of autonomy that is relevant to politics. As Christman explains, liberal legitimacy, at least as writers like Rawls have formulated it, requires that citizens be able to self-reflectively endorse the values promoted by the political arrangements that bind them.

Like many collections, this volume contains essays of uneven quality. I have not been able to mention all of the strong contributions. (There is, for example, an excellent essay on republican liberalism by Richard Dagger.) But on the whole the volume is a valuable addition to the literature on autonomy. Readers interested in the place of autonomy within liberal political theory will find it particularly rewarding.

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