

W. D. Ross' Account of What Makes Right Acts Right: an Examination

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Abstract: W. D. Ross' account of what makes right acts right has been criticized by many philosophers. Some philosophers present 'counterexamples' to Ross' *prima facie* duties. Some other philosophers claim that Ross fails to offer a single principle that can tie various duties together; and hence, according to them, his account leaves *prima facie* duties unconnected to each other. This criticism is often branded as 'Unconnected-Heap' problem. In the present paper I argue that the so-called counterexamples offered by many philosophers to Ross' *prima facie* duties do not constitute genuine counterexamples to his theory. About the 'Unconnected-Heap' problem, I argue that there is an implicit statement found in Ross' account that can be considered as a single principle which indicates the necessary and sufficient conditions for moral rightness of our acts. The presence of such a principle, I argue, removes the so-called 'Unconnected-Heap' problem. That is, even though Ross himself admits that his account is not free of the 'Unconnected-Heap' problem, I argue that the so-called 'Unconnected-Heap' problem: (i) does not indicate a genuine problem of Ross' account, (ii) can easily be removed using the above mentioned implicit principle found in Ross' account. Furthermore, I claim that by incorporating Jonathan Dancy's concepts of *intensifier* and *attenuator* (in a modified way) in Ross' account, Ross' account can be improved in a way so that it becomes a relatively plausible account of the rightness and wrongness of our acts.

In the second chapter of his book, *The Right and the Good*, Sir William David Ross (1877-1971) offers a unique account of what makes right acts right in which he shows that there are several distinct characteristics—not reducible to a single one—any of which may tend to make an act right. In this paper, first I will analyze Ross' account of what makes right acts right, and then, I will examine his account to see whether or not his account is a plausible account of determining the rightness and wrongness of our acts.

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Ross' account of what makes right acts right:

Before offering his own view about right acts, Ross sharply attacks consequentialism, in particular Moore's ideal utilitarianism which maintains that 'right' means 'productive of greatest possible good' or 'optimific'.¹ Ross argues that being right or wrong must be a property of act that is distinct from the property of having or not having the best consequences. When, says Ross, a man fulfills his promise, he fulfills it not because his fulfilling the promise produces the best consequences, but simply because he thinks that he ought to do so since he promised to do so. Even if one's fulfilling of such a promise brings a bit less good than what could be brought by breaking that promise, still one prefers to fulfill the promise, because by fulfilling the promise one fulfills his 'duty of relieving distress'.² In that sense, according to Ross, promise-keeping is sometimes a duty which is 'more of a duty'.³ This feature shows that it is the 'acting upon a duty' not just the 'productive of the best possible consequences' or 'optimific' that makes the relevant act a right act.

Ross argues that if 'productive of the best possible consequences' or 'optimific' were something that made acts right, then its relation to 'right' could be proved either by deductive way, or by inductive way, or the relation would be a self-evident one. But he sees no way to prove this relation deductively. Even the proponents of these views never claim that this relation can be proved deductively. Hence, Ross rejects the idea that this relation can be proved deductively.⁴ Again, this relation cannot be proved inductively either. Ross believes that if we are asked to choose which ones we ought to do—between right acts because they are right and 'optimific' acts because they are 'optimific'—our preference must be the former. That indicates that we cannot establish the said relation between 'right' and 'optimific' inductively.⁵ Even if one claims that our experiences show that men prefer acts that are 'optimific', there is no evidence that this result will be carried through in future.⁶ Thus inductive method does not really establish the required relation between 'right' and 'optimific'. This relation is not self-evident either. If it were self-evident that 'right' coincides with 'optimific', then it would be self-evident that what is *prima facie* 'right' is *prima facie* 'optimific'. But, as we have seen earlier, we are certain that promise-keeping is *prima facie* 'right' whereas we are not certain that it is *prima facie* 'optimific'. Thus, 'right' and 'optimific' do not necessarily coincide; hence their relation is not self-evident. So, we see, the relation between 'right' and 'optimific' cannot be proved either by deduction or by induction; this relation is not a self-evident relation either. Hence, 'optimific' is not the thing that makes right acts right. Ross' argument can be restated in the following way:

- P1: If 'productive of the best possible consequences' or 'optimific' is something that makes right acts right, then its relation to 'right'

can be proved either by deductive way, or by inductive way, or the relation is a self-evident relation.

P2: 'Optimific's relation to 'right' cannot be proved either by deductive way, or by inductive way, and the relation is not a self-evident relation.

C: Therefore, 'productive of the best possible consequences' or 'optimific' is not something that makes right acts right. [P₁, P₂, Modus Tollens]

Of course, Ross admits that if an act is right and at the same time 'optimific', then that is an interesting feature of that act. But he reminds us that this feature, though interesting, does not have any moral import.⁷ An act, says Ross in the conclusion of his discussion about consequentialism, is not right because it produces good result; rather, it is right because it itself is the production of a certain state of affairs which is right in itself apart from any consequence.⁸

Now, if 'optimific' is not the thing or principle that makes an act right, then what makes right acts right? Ross thinks that there is no one single principle but a set of principles of conduct which all agents of developed moral consciousness *intuit* to be their duty. Any one or others of these principles make an act right. Ross calls these principles *prima facie* duties. Ross explains his concept of the *prima facie* duties as follows:

I suggest '*prima facie* duty' or 'conditional duty' as a brief way of referring to the characteristic (quite distinct from that of being a duty proper) which an act has, in virtue of being of a certain kind (e. g. the keeping of a promise), of being an act which would be a duty proper if it were not at the same time of another kind which is morally significant. Whether an act is a duty proper or actual duty depends on *all* the morally significant kinds it is an instance of.⁹

The phrase '*prima facie* duty' is somewhat misleading. One may think that a *prima facie* duty is a duty which 'at first glance' appears to be a duty. But this is not what Ross has in mind when he talks about the *prima facie* duties. He does not think that a *prima facie* duty is something that appears to be a duty. He, rather, wants to say that when an act is a *prima facie* duty, this fact is 'an objective fact involved in the nature of the situation'.¹⁰ An example¹¹ may help us to have a clear idea about the *prima facie* duties. Suppose I have promised to meet my friend at a specific time and place. My act of meeting my friend at the specific time and place has a certain characteristic—it is an instance of promise-keeping. This fact about my act is a morally relevant feature which provides good reasons in favor of my acting upon the promise. This feature makes my act of keeping the promise

a *prima facie* duty. Were it the only morally relevant feature of my situation, then the act of my promise-keeping would be my *duty proper*. Thus the property of being a *prima facie* duty is distinct from the property of being *duty proper*. A *duty proper* is an ‘all-things-considered’ duty which arises from the whole nature of the situation, whereas a *prima facie* duty arises from an element of the situation in question.¹² That is why Ross says that the property of being a *prima facie* duty is a *parti-resultant* attribute which belongs to an act in virtue of some one component in its nature, whereas the property of being a *duty proper* is a *toti-resultant* attribute which belongs to an act in virtue of its whole nature and of nothing less than this.¹³ In the above mentioned example my promise-keeping is a *prima facie* duty in the sense that there might be other relevant features that could even override my *prima facie* duty of promise-keeping. But if that duty were an ‘all-things-considered’ duty and there were no other competing duty, the duty would be a *duty proper*.

In his above mentioned book Ross presents a list of the *prima facie* duties.¹⁴ According to this list there are six kinds of *prima facie* duties. These are: (1) there are some duties which rest on previous acts of the agent. These duties seem to include two kinds— (a) The duties of fidelity: these duties rest on implicit or explicit promise. When we promise to someone to do something then that is an instance of explicit promise. Our promise of not to tell lies or writing a good paper (self-commitments) are examples of implicit promise. Once we promise to act in some way, the promising event provides good moral reasons in favor of acting upon that promise. So, promise-keeping is our *prima facie* duty. (b) The duties of reparation: these duties depend on our previous wrongful acts. If I did something wrongful or injurious to someone, then I have a *prima facie* duty to do something for him which will make up or repair the relevant injury. (2) The duties of gratitude: if someone has previously performed a service to me and if I can now do something which will repay his service, then I have a *prima facie* duty to do so. (3) The duties of justice: it concerns the distribution of happiness or benefits. If the happiness or benefits are not distributed in accordance with the merit of the persons concerned, then we have duties to redistribute those in accordance with the merit of the persons concerned provided that we have the power to upset the existing distribution. (4) The duties of beneficence: if we can make others’ conditions better in respect of intelligence, pleasure or virtue, then we have a *prima facie* duty to increase others’ pleasure and help them in improving their intelligence or their flourishing. (5) The duties of self-improvement: we have a *prima facie* duty to improve our own virtue and intelligence. It is interesting to note that in the case of the duties of beneficence, *i.e.* our *prima facie* duties to improve others’ conditions, Ross includes pleasure;

but in the case of our own improvement, he does not include pleasure. It indicates that we have no *prima facie* duty to give ourselves more pleasure though we have a *prima facie* duty to provide more pleasures for others.¹⁵

(6) The duties of non-maleficence: Ross takes our duties of beneficence as positive duties. In contrast, there is another kind of duties which can be stated in a negative way. These are the duties of 'not injuring others'. If some act of mine is injurious or harmful or maleficence for others, then I have a *prima facie* duty not to perform that act.

It is important to note here that several of the above mentioned *prima facie* duties, e.g. the duties of fidelity, reparation, gratitude, are backward looking. Thus utilitarians would have a hard time explaining why we have any moral reason to perform such acts, because utilitarians consider that rightness of an act depends not on any past event, but on the future outcomes of the act in question.¹⁶ Though Ross believes that he has mentioned all the principles that ground the *prima facie* duties, still he leaves it open that there is a possibility that he has left out some principles.¹⁷ Ross admits that this list is unsystematic in the sense that it is not grounded on any logical principle. But he does not think that it is a great defect, because this list is only a *prima facie* list which is 'correct as far as it goes though not necessarily complete'.¹⁸ Actually, he is more concerned to the fact than to construct a systematic theory. In his words, 'loyalty to the fact is worth more than a systematic architectonic or a hastily reached simplicity.'¹⁹

One question may reasonably be raised here: in most situations in our life we are confronted with conflicting *prima facie* duties. And, as we see, Ross does not rank them in order of their relative importance. In that case, how will we decide which of the *prima facie* duties will be the right choice for doing the right act in a particular situation? Ross suggests that if there are conflicting *prima facie* duties in a particular situation, then the most 'stringent' one of these duties is one's actual duty in that particular situation. For example, if I confront with two conflicting duties, such as keeping a promise of accompanying my friend in watching a movie and helping an accident-victim, then helping the accident victim is more stringent than keeping the promise to my friend in this situation. So, promise-keeping will be overridden and helping the accident-victim will be my actual duty. Of course, by this my *prima facie* duty of keeping the promise will not be cancelled; it will bring a new duty, a duty of reparation—to do what is necessary to make it up to my friend.²⁰ There is, however, no rule or principle by which we can measure the relative stringency of these *prima facie* duties. Ross indicates that there is a great deal of stringency that belongs to the duties of perfect obligation, e.g. promise-keeping, reparation, beneficence. But no rule can be given here. It depends on the situations. One

should think about the whole situation and use his sense of duty to determine which duty is more stringent than all others. This is a highly fallible way of measuring the comparative stringency of conflicting *prima facie* duties; but, says Ross, it is only a guide in this regard.²¹ Since measuring the comparative stringency of conflicting *prima facie* duties is a highly fallible method and since one cannot foresee the long term effects of his action, we are not certain whether we ought or ought not to do an act on the basis of a chosen *prima facie* duty. So, whether we do it or not, we take a moral risk.²²

However, from the above list and discussion we get to know that the *prima facie* duties or obligations are the properties of acts that really make right acts right. That is why we can consider *prima facie* duties as *right-making features* of actions. Besides, one should measure the relative stringency of *prima facie* duties on the basis of his sense of particular duty in particular circumstances if there are conflicting *prima facie* duties. So, we can formulate Ross' account of right conduct in the following way²³:

Right acts: in a situation an act is right if and only if it is a *prima facie* duty and no alternative is more stringent *prima facie* duty in that situation than the act in question.

Similarly,

Wrong Acts: in a situation an act is wrong if and only if in that situation there is some alternative *prima facie* duty which is more stringent than the *prima facie* duty on the basis of what the action in question is done.

Ross believes that the relation between *prima facie* duty and rightness of acts is self-evident. But it is not self-evident in the sense that it is evident from the beginning; rather, it is self-evident in the sense that a mentally matured person with sufficient attention can easily recognize that it is evident without any need of proof. Ross compares it with mathematical axioms. He says:

It is self-evident just as a mathematical axiom, or the validity of a form of inference, is evident. ... In both cases we are dealing with propositions that cannot be proved, but that just as certainly need no proof.²⁴

This indicates that a mentally matured person with sufficient attention actually judges what acts are right and what acts are wrong through intuition. Ross clears this in the following passage:

I would maintain, in fact, that what we are apt to describe as 'what we think' about moral questions contains a considerable amount that we do not think but know ... We have no more direct way of access to the facts about rightness and goodness

and about what things are right or good, than by thinking about them; the moral convictions of thoughtful and well-educated people are the data of ethics just as sense-perceptions are the data of a natural science.²⁵

And finally he mentions that the success and failure are the only and sufficient tests of the performance of one's duty. Just like consequence, motive too does not play any role in making a right act right. For example, if I have a duty to return the book that I borrowed from you, then I must successfully return it to you. If I intend to return it, but somehow, say for the carelessness of the postal service, it does not reach you, then I fail to perform my duty and my act is wrong. My motive cannot make it right. That is why in such cases we feel the obligation to buy a new book and send it again. Of course, if I fail to return the book because of the carelessness of others, then it might be the case that I would not be blamed. But the question of praise and blame are different issues and has no role in the question of rightness and wrongness of an act. Thus, Ross warns us that we must not mix up the question of rightness and wrongness of an act with that of the morally good and the morally bad.²⁶

Examination of Ross' Account:

Richard Garner and Bernard Rosen present a 'counterexample' to Ross' fourth *prima facie* duty, namely the duties of beneficence which tells us that we have a *prima facie* duty to make others' conditions better in respect of intelligence, pleasure or virtue. Garner and Rosen claim that sometimes we face situations when we should not make others' conditions better in terms of increasing their intelligence, pleasure or virtue even though there are no other active alternative *prima facie* duties that defeat the *prima facie* duties of beneficence in relevant situations. Their example runs in the following way:

We do not have a *prima facie* duty to tell our neighbor intimate details concerning our love life, even though that would increase his knowledge and perhaps even give him some pleasure. In fact, we seem to have a duty not to increase his knowledge or pleasure in this way. That is, Source 4 [the duties of beneficence] is activated positively, none of the other sources is activated at all, and yet it is false that we have a *prima facie* duty to do something; in fact we seem to have a duty not to perform that action.²⁷

Garner and Rosen claim that this counterexample shows that an action is not a duty just because it is an instance of the *prima facie* duties. This example is important because if it is a genuine counterexample to Ross' principles, then Ross' claim that the relation between the rightness of acts

and the *prima facie* duties is self-evident will be in trouble since self-evident relationship between two objects requires necessary coexistence of the objects in question. But, fortunately, this is not a genuine counterexample to Ross' *prima facie* duties of beneficence. I think Garner and Rosen's move from *prima facie* to actual duty is wrong. Ross would argue that we have a *prima facie* duty to tell our neighbors about our love life, but at the same time we have an implicit *prima facie* duty not to tell them about our special relations to our loved ones. We should remember that Ross considers these sorts of personal relationships as one of the most important foundations of the *prima facie* duties. Consider the following passage from Ross' *The Right and the Good*:

But they [other people] may also stand to me in the relation of promisee to promiser, of creditor to debtor, of wife to husband, of child to parent, of friend to friend, of fellow countryman to fellow countryman, and the like; and each of these relations is the foundation of a *prima facie* duty, which is more or less incumbent on me according to the circumstances of the case.²⁸

And, I believe Ross would be happy to include 'of lover to loved' in his list of various important relationships. A relationship between the lover and the loved implicitly or explicitly involves a *prima facie* duty of fidelity, namely promise of maintaining secrecy. In the situation described by Garner and Rosen the agent in question has a *prima facie* duty of fidelity (an implicit promise of maintaining secrecy about his love life) which overrides his *prima facie* duty of beneficence (to tell his neighbor about his love life). Thus, this example is not a genuine counterexample to Ross' *prima facie* duties. Ross' account can accommodate this so-called counterexample.

It might be argued that Ross' list of our *prima facie* duties is somewhat unsystematic—there is no single principle that can tie them together. So, all *prima facie* duties are unconnected to each other. In other words, Ross fails to provide a single criterion of what makes right acts right. Timmons calls it the 'Unconnected-Heap' problem.²⁹ Ross seems to agree with this observation. But he thinks that this is not a defect of his theory because moral situations appear to us in such a complex manner that no single rule—which can capture all the relevant considerations—can actually be found. That is why, unlike many other moral philosophers, he does not try to construct a single rule by any sort of 'hasty generalization'. He, rather, keeps himself 'loyal to the facts'.³⁰

Though Ross admits that there is the 'Unconnected-Heap' problem in his account, many philosophers think that Ross is too quick to admit this problem. Fred Feldman claims that in Ross' account there is actually a single criterion of what makes our acts right. According to him this criterion

is: *an act is right if and only if it is a prima facie duty and no alternative is more stringent prima facie duty*.³¹ This criterion, according to Feldman, gives us a single statement of a necessary and sufficient condition for moral rightness of our acts. Feldman thinks that it is hard to find any other moral theory which is more 'unified' or 'coherent' than Ross' account.³²

Thus, we see, there is a unified criterion of what makes our acts right in Ross' account though the criterion is not explicitly mentioned by Ross. Even if there were no such single criterion, it would not be a defect of his theory provided that moral situations involve complex considerations which might not be addressed by a single criterion. Robert Audi seems to share a similar view about Ross' account. He says:

The point is not that Ross's principles can be deduced from the categorical imperative ... rather, the intrinsic end formulation of the imperative expresses an ideal that renders the principles of duty intelligible or even expectable.³³

Ross thinks that in almost all situations we are confronted with some duty to discharge because we have *prima facie* duties of beneficence which suggest us to produce as much good as possible for others. Besides, we have *prima facie* duties of self-improvement that suggest us to improve our own virtue and intelligence. Moreover, our *prima facie* duties of non-maleficence require that we should be careful as much as possible so that our acts do not harm some innocent people. Ross describes the situation in the following way:

It is obvious that any of the acts that we do has countless effects, directly or indirectly, on countless people, and the probability is that any act, however right it be, will have adverse effects (though these may be very trivial) on some innocent people. Similarly, any wrong act will probably have beneficial effects on some deserving people. Every act therefore, viewed in some aspects, will be *prima facie* right, and viewed in others, *prima facie* wrong, ...³⁴

So, we are obligated to maximize the good unless there are other *prima facie* duties which are more stringent in the situations in question. But this seems to involve a kind of overdemandingness. Timmons says that it seems implausible that if I am just lying around on some Sunday afternoon taking it easy, then I am doing something morally wrong because on all or most occasions I have some duty or other to discharge.³⁵ This objection is important to those who claim that Ross' account is more plausible than utilitarian accounts or consequentialism in general, since they often mention that utilitarianism and consequentialism are guilty of overdemandingness. I think if there is any overdemandingness in Ross'

account, that overdemandingness can easily be removed. To show how it can be removed I will borrow two terms from Jonathan Dancy's *Ethics Without Principles*.³⁶ These are: *intensifier* and *attenuator*. To serve my purpose I will use them in a slightly different way than Dancy's. So, let me first clarify what I mean by intensifier and attenuator in this context: *an intensifier is a consideration presence of what makes a prima facie duty stronger*; and, *an attenuator is a consideration presence of what makes a prima facie duty weaker*. One can call an intensifier a *strengthenener*, and an attenuator a *weakener*. Now consider the following example:

She needs help	[Assumption]
I have a <i>prima facie</i> duty to help her	[The duties of beneficence]
I am the only one available in the situation	[Intensifier]
Therefore, I help her	[Right act]

In the above example intensifier plays the role of making the duty of beneficence stronger. Now let us see another example that shows the role of attenuator:

She needs help	[Assumption]
I have a <i>prima facie</i> duty to help her	[The duties of beneficence]
There are many others who can help her in a better way	[Attenuator]
Therefore, I am not obliged to help her	[Permissible act]

Here, we see, an attenuator weakens one's *prima facie* duties of beneficence. This feature signifies that we are not always obligated to discharge our duties of beneficence. Thus, when we walk through a street, it is not our duty to ask people whether they need any help. Even when someone really needs help and there are other people who are willing to help her, then we are not required to discharge our duties of beneficence unless there are other considerations which intensify our duties of beneficence in that situation. So, one can surely pass her time 'just lying around on some Sunday afternoon taking it easy'. There is nothing wrong in it. In this way, the overdemandingness problem can be removed from Ross' account.

It is important to note that the concepts of intensifier and attenuator can be used in determining our actual duty when there are many conflicting *prima facie* duties. To show this let me modify my previous example:

She is severely ill	[Assumption]
I have a <i>prima facie</i> duty to help her	[The duties of beneficence]
I am on the way of my school	[Assumption]
I have a <i>prima facie</i> duty to go to my school	[The duties of self-improvement]
Her condition is critical	[Intensifier]
Therefore, I help her instead of going to my school	[Right act]

Here, we see, intensifier plays the vital role in resolving the conflict between two duties by making one duty—namely the duties of beneficence—stringent than the other. Similarly, an attenuator can help us resolving conflicts among duties by weakening one or more duties. Consider the following example:

I promised to accompany her in watching a movie	[Assumption]
I have a <i>prima facie</i> duty to accompany her	[The duties of fidelity]
I need to read my books because my exam is due tomorrow	[Assumption]
I have a <i>prima facie</i> duty to read my books	[The duties of self-improvement]
I know that she is just sleeping now and the movie is not an excellent one	[Attenuator]
Therefore, I read my books	[Right act]

Thus, we see, by using the concepts of intensifier and attenuator, we can resolve conflicts of duties. So, I think, these two concepts can be incorporated in Ross' accounts of what makes right acts right.

Finally, one may want to reject Ross' account on the ground that it relies on intuitionism. But that would be unfair. We must note that Ross does not say that *anyone* can 'see' or 'intuit' our obligations properly. There are some requirements of proper intuition. Ross mentions that a 'mentally matured', 'thoughtful' and 'morally well-educated' man can intuit our obligations properly when he 'carefully thinks' with 'sufficient attention' about the relevant moral situations.³⁷ So, Ross' idea of intuition involves a number of qualifications. His intuitionism may be called *restricted intuitionism*. These restrictions, or so to speak qualifications of intuition, make his intuitionism relatively agreeable.

Conclusion:

From the above discussion we understand that Ross' account of what makes right acts right provides us something valuable. It fits nicely with our ordinary reason about the moral rightness and wrongness of our actions. Besides, it accommodates the intuitively appealing idea that personal relationships have moral significance. Furthermore, though he warns us not to mix up the question of rightness and wrongness of our action with that of the morally good and morally bad, his principles of the *prima facie* duties fairly match with the moral goodness and moral badness. Most of the competent moral agents must find that acting upon the most stringent *prima facie* duty makes our acts right acts, and at the same time such acts are morally praiseworthy. That is, Ross' *prima facie* duties and the moral goodness go hand to hand. These features give a great satisfaction to those who are dissatisfied with utilitarianism and consequentialism in general because of (i) the extreme impartiality—which does not take any personal

relationship into consideration—adopted by these theories, and (ii) the sort of detachment between morally significant acts and moral goodness and badness involved in these theories. Of course, Ross’ account involves some uncertainty and moral luck, but, as we have seen, that is not a great defect of his account. French philosopher Alain Badiou says that uncertainty is the beauty of morality—it is the lack of certainty for what there is a place of ethics.³⁸ Thus, we can conclude our discussion by saying that Ross’ account of what makes right acts right is relatively a plausible account of the rightness and wrongness of our acts.

Notes and References:

1. Ross, William David (1930/1973), *The Right and the Good*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, p. 17
2. Ibid, p. 18
3. Ibid, pp. 17-18
4. Ibid, p. 36
5. Ibid, p. 37
6. Ibid, p. 36
7. Ibid, p. 37
8. Ibid pp. 46-47
9. Ibid, 19-20
10. Ibid, p. 20
11. The example of promise-keeping is Ross’ favorite example. He has presented this example several times in his book to clarify different notions.
12. Ross (1930/1973), p. 20
13. Ibid, p. 28
14. Ibid, pp. 21-22
15. Feldman, Fred (2002), *Introductory Ethics*, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, p. 152
16. Feldman (2002), p. 152
17. Ross (1930/1973), p. 20
18. Ibid, p. 23
19. Ibid, p. 23

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20. Timmons, Mark (2002), *Moral Theory: An Introduction*, Ithaca, Boulder, NY, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., p. 196
 21. Ross (1930/1973), 41-42
 22. Ibid, p. 30
 23. Feldman (2002), p. 156
 24. Ross (1930/1973), pp. 29-30
 25. Ibid, pp. 40-41
 26. Ibid, p. 45
 27. Garner, Richard T & Rosen, Bernard (1972), *Moral Philosophy: A Systematic Introduction to Normative Ethics and Meta-ethics*, NY: The Macmillan Company, London: Collier-Macmillan Limited, p. 109 [my bracket]
 28. Ross (1930/1973), p. 19
 29. Timmons (2002), p. 203
 30. Ross (1930/1973), p. 23
 31. Feldman (2001), p. 156
 32. Ibid, p. 156-57
 33. Audi, Robert (1977), "Intuitionism, Pluralism, and the Foundation of Ethics", *Moral Knowledge and Ethical Character*, NY: Oxford University Press, p. 48
 34. Ross, p. 41
 35. Timmons, p. 204
 36. Dancy, Jonathan (2004), *Ethics Without Principles*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, pp. 38-52
 37. Ross, pp. 17-19, 29, 40
 38. Badiou, Alain (2002), *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil*, London, New York: Verso, p. 69