

Book Symposium

Responses to Ásta, Sally Haslanger, and Louise Antony

Charlotte Witt

1. INTRODUCTION

I am very grateful to the *Journal of Social Ontology* for publishing this set of critical responses to my book, *Social Goodness: The Ontology of Social Norms*. And I am even more grateful to the authors for the time and thought that went into their responses. I have been very fortunate in my philosophical friendships over the years as these comments demonstrate.¹

These comments go right to the heart of the book, which is focused (rather narrowly) on the question of the source of social role normativity. As Elizabeth Anderson puts it “The great puzzle of social norms is not why people obey them, even when it is not in their self-interest to do so. *It is, how do shared standards of conduct ever acquire their normativity to begin with?*” (Anderson 2000, 191, my italics) I hope to have responded successfully to Anderson’s question in *Social Goodness*, and that my responses to these insightful criticisms of my answer have been fair and thoughtful.

2. ÁSTA

Ásta does a brilliant job of connecting the project in my earlier book, *The Metaphysics of Gender*, with the questions concerning social normativity that animate *Social Goodness*.

¹ These comments originated in a conference organized by Professor Laure Barillas to celebrate my retirement from teaching philosophy at the University of New Hampshire. I am very grateful to Laure for a wonderful day of philosophy and friendship.

As Ásta notes, my question about the source of social role normativity flows from my puzzles about gender roles and gender norms broached in the earlier book. Moreover, I find her discussion of methodology clear, useful and insightful. My project in both books is descriptive, not ameliorative; in both books I focus on how the social world is, and not how it ought to be. But the descriptions aim at explaining or illuminating (to steal from Ásta) a social phenomenon. In *Social Goodness* I offer the artisanal model for social role norms that explains the source of their normativity in an illuminating fashion.

While Ásta is extremely generous and insightful in her description of my project in *Social Goodness* she has three serious reservations that I will focus on in these comments. The first targets my project to find a single source of social role normativity—and she argues for a pluralist position instead. To be pluralist about the source of social role norms is not compatible with the view I develop in *Social Goodness*. It cannot be taken on as a friendly amendment. The reason is that I propose the artisanal model for social role normativity and not just for one or another type of social role or social role norm. The source of the normativity is the agent's social position occupancy. Of course, some type of pluralism about social norms is compatible with this unified account of the source of social normativity. For example, we can sort social roles into different kinds, like artisanal social roles and institutional social roles and familial roles. But they share a certain normative structure that I spell out using the artisanal model in *Social Goodness*. The source of normativity is the same even if the type of social role can vary. Monism about the source of social norms is compatible with pluralism about the types of social norms. Indeed, as I argue below, I think that Ásta's view is of this kind.

Ásta's second major reservation concerns whether my view adequately explains social role non-conformers (badass women!) and argues that an adequate explanation cannot be given using the resources of externalism alone. Ásta thinks that the externalist perspective—that we are responsive to and evaluable under social role norms simply by virtue of occupying a social position—can explain social role conformers just fine (good women!). To explain non-conformers, according to Ásta, we need to add an element of internalism to the story; the non-conformer is the person who does not endorse the norms they stand under by virtue of their social role occupancy. Normativity requires endorsement; without it all you have is a causal explanation of a psychological phenomenon.

So, a third important difference between us is that Ásta rejects externalism and has an internalist account of the source of social normativity. Normative pull requires endorsement of the norm by the agent: “they [norms] apply to me because of my social position occupancy, but they do not have normative pull on me because I do not endorse them.” It turns out that Ásta is also a monist about the source of social

role normativity—normativity requires endorsement and her pluralism concerns the kinds of social norms. Let's take a closer look.

2.1. Lumpers and Splitters

Ásta identifies her view of social normativity as pluralist and mine as monist; she thinks there are multiple sources of social normativity and I think there is a single source. Ásta says:

I'm usually accused of being a lumper, but in this case I side with the splitters when I ask whether there is a single distinct sort of social normativity.

Ásta attributes to the lumper (me) the view that there is just one kind of social normativity. But notice that the question that animates *Social Goodness*, concerns the source of normativity of social role norms rather than the kinds or types of social normativity. We ought to distinguish two questions here; one concerning the source of normativity and the other concerning the kinds or types of social roles or social norms. One could be a monist with regard to the source of normativity (as I am) but also a pluralist with regard to the kinds of social normativity (as I also am).

Ásta draws a slightly different distinction:

The question is twofold: Is social normativity irreducible or reducible to some other sort of normativity, such as moral or prudential? And, is there only one kind of social normativity or are there several? I am going to label Witt a monist about social normativity. I will end up advocating pluralism.

Ásta discusses two examples intended to illustrate her pluralism—a gendered norm for women of shaving armpits (around here) and an (also gendered) norm of paternal responsibility. Ásta uses the two examples to argue for pluralism about social normativity. The father exemplifies moral normativity which is one kind of social normativity. In these kinds of cases no endorsement is required for an individual to stand under the norms. The source of normativity is external to the agent. But the shaving example illustrates another kind of social normativity because the source of normativity lies in the endorsement of the agent. If the woman does not endorse the norm, then it has no normative pull. Not so for the father. So, pluralism is true.

However, in her comments on the father example, Ásta asks:

So, here is a question: is it the case that whenever we agree that a person ought to do something even though they do not endorse the norms in question, what

we are dealing with is the special case of moral norms? And if that is the case, is our judgment about the case based on norms that we endorse?

Ásta's argument for pluralism concerning the source of normativity of social role norms turns on the analysis of the father as responsive to and evaluative under paternal social norms even if he does not endorse them. Here it seems that the endorsement requirement comes back into the picture. Because moral norms are those that "we" endorse. But if that is the case then I think the pluralism concerning the source of normativity vanishes because endorsement (of some kind by someone) is required for all normative pull. So, on the topic of the source of normativity I think Ásta is a monist since she thinks that normativity requires, and is secured by, endorsement! As noted above this is compatible with being a pluralist about kinds of social norms.

2.2. Badass Women

Does the artisanal model have sufficient resources to explain women who resist oppressive social norms? Ásta thinks that expertise or skill can explain a good woman "but not the road to badass". To explain that you need to appeal to more than an understanding of gendered functions or a mastery of them. The source of a woman's ability to resist is not her gendered expertise, but rather her lack of endorsement of the norms.

It is her not endorsing those norms that explains it. She is subject to them, has internalized them to some degree, but the lack of endorsement upon reflection is the source of her ability to resist.

I agree with Ásta that this is one scenario for resistance. There is nothing in my view incompatible with it. Indeed, in *Social Goodness* I note that the artisanal model for social role normativity is compatible with practices of ethical or political critique of the norms. There are also two resources for criticism within the artisanal model itself, which are discussed in Chapter 5. First, someone with expertise has both know how and know why in relation to a social role and that could provide material to criticize a particular practice. Also, the process of learning a particular skill is at the same time a process of learning about excellence in general, and this general sense of excellence might provide additional resources for criticism. Upon reflection not endorsing a norm that one ought to endorse is one way of becoming a badass. But where does that "ought" come from? What is the source of normativity? These questions bring us to the basic theoretical disagreement between us.

2.3. Internalism and Externalism

The central disagreement between us concerns whether the source of normativity is internal as Ásta thinks or external as I think. Ásta thinks that normativity, and normative pull enters the picture with the agent's endorsement, and I think that an agent is responsive to and evaluable under a social norm just by virtue of their social position occupancy. In *Social Goodness* I give several arguments in favor of externalism; here are three of them.

First, I think the phenomenon of social norm non-conformity requires an externalist account. And this is a significant point in favor of externalism because non-conformity is an important phenomenon to be explained. Here is the argument in a nutshell. In order to be a non-conformist there has to be a norm that you ought to follow (given your social position and the local norms that comprise the social role) but you don't follow. On Ásta's internalist account there is no such norm because if you don't endorse the norm (and you wouldn't being a non-conformist) then it isn't something you ought to follow. But social role non-conformity requires that you do what you ought not or you not do what you ought. For an internalist like Ásta this can't happen since if you don't endorse the norm, it is not something you ought to be responsive to. This means that—for the internalist—social role non-conformity cannot get traction. But it does, of course, and in fact is one of the central phenomena that needs to be explained.

Second, there are many social roles where the person's attitudes are irrelevant to the obligation. Consider being a professor or being the President. In these cases, we hold individuals responsible to the relevant norms just because they occupy a certain social position. Or consider the obligation that a medical researcher has to disclose their ties to drug companies in their published research. Isn't this an obligation that the researcher has because of their social position as an academic and scientist? If the researcher does not endorse the norm (because she thinks the research is very important and would not be funded otherwise, or because she is confident that she is not prey to greed or undue financial influence) we do not think that she is no longer governed by the norm. This line of thought is intended to make externalism initially plausible by appealing to examples where it seems to provide the appropriate explanation for the phenomenon but internalism does not. We would want our explanation of social role normativity to cover these many everyday examples.

Third, notice also that the medical researcher's activities are responsive to research norms that form part of, contribute to, and cohere with a larger system of norm governed activities quite independently of the researcher's attitudes towards them. The assumption by others working on the project or contributing to it in some way is that the researcher will work governed by certain norms which they

are responsive to and evaluable under because of their social position. As I explain in Chapter 7 social roles form systems, and they (the roles) are normatively and ontologically dependent upon one another. For example, maternal norms, what ought to be done and the way it ought to be done around here, are what they are in relation to paternal norms. A social role norm exists not because an individual person endorses a single norm, but as a node in a normative structure.

Internalist accounts of social role normativity are unable to explain central phenomena that externalist accounts can illuminate. So, one ought to be an externalist about the source of social role norms.

3. SALLY HASLANGER

Sally Haslanger's comments are expansive, provocative and raise many important questions about social normativity that both exceed and enlarge the range of *Social Goodness*. I found it very useful to consider the broad issues and context that Haslanger brings to the topic. For example, Haslanger's catalogue of different kinds of social "ought" statements is useful as an indication of the many kinds of social norms we can name and refer to. My project was to try to understand just one kind of social norms—albeit an important kind—social role norms, which are those norms that attach to an agent by virtue of their social position occupancy. My question was how that happens. What grounds the normativity? I think that it's an important question how social role normativity is related to various different kinds of social norms that are not grounded in an agent's social position occupancy or related activities. But figuring out these relationships was not part of the project that animates *Social Goodness*.

Haslanger comments on three major issues that I will address in what follows—internalism and externalism, the role of instrumental value in the artisanal model, and the resources of the artisanal model for understanding social critique. I am not persuaded by Haslanger's criticisms of externalism and the artisanal model. However, I found her discussion of instrumental value and the resources for social criticism both clarifying and useful.

But I want to begin by commenting on the aporia that Haslanger attributes to me:

The aporia Witt has in mind might be put this way:

- On one hand, we ought to conform our behavior to social norms, even if it is not in our self-interest.
- On the other hand, social norms are just "shared standards of conduct." Why am I bound by such standards just because others think they matter, even when I don't?

She rejects the suggestion that I have somehow, implicitly or explicitly, bound myself, made a commitment, or otherwise volunteered myself to join the club that imposes these standards. Instead, she argues, the norms apply to me whether or not I joined the club. How can this be? This is the main challenge the book seeks to answer.

Notice how Haslanger's framing of the subject of *Social Goodness* in the aporia and the comment that follows assumes an internalist perspective. Her possible explanations for "binding myself" include self-interest, or individual disagreements over what matters, or commitment, or volunteering myself.

3.1. Internalism and Externalism: The Mediocre Knitter

Haslanger discusses the internalism/externalism distinction both at the beginning and at the end of her comments. I think it's fair to say that she is an internalist about the source of social role normativity, but her view has an interesting twist. Internalism and externalism, as I use the terms in *Social Goodness*, are two types of answer to just one question, namely, what is the source of social role normativity or why is an agent responsive to and evaluable under social role norms? An internalist thinks that endorsement or commitment to the norm is the source of normativity, and an externalist does not, pointing instead to the agent's social position occupancy. Haslanger suggests instead that internalism and externalism might be answering two different questions. Internalism might explain how certain norms bind an agent: "But if I occupy a social role through making a commitment or endorsing it or undertaking it then there is a sense in which what binds *me* is my action of taking up the role." Internalism, for Haslanger, answers the central question I pose in *Social Goodness*, namely what is the source of social role normativity. Externalism, according to Haslanger, explains "how norms attach to roles" and "why the social norms that bind me have the content that they do."²

In *Social Goodness* I bracket questions about the basis for social position occupancy; there are many different causal paths a person could follow to occupy a social position. It's an empirical question. For example, around here, one could become a mother by giving birth, through adoption, or through marriage to the mother of a child. That causal path could include making a commitment or endorsing the role as well as simply undergoing certain physical, emotional and financial events. For an externalist like me it really doesn't matter how an agent gets there. If they are a

2 In *Social Goodness* I discuss a similar view that I attribute to Hegel via Brandom. I call it the "Recognitive Attitude View", p. 24.

mother, however they get there, which could include making a commitment to being a mother, then they are bound by local maternal norms. These are norms that they might endorse enthusiastically or they might reject categorically, but either way the agent who occupies the social position of being a mother stands under local maternal norms. So, I agree with Haslanger that sometimes our endorsement, agreement or commitment is part of the causal explanation of our social position occupancy—how we got there—as in the case of becoming a mother through adoption. But sometimes (frequently given the example!) the process does not include our endorsement, agreement or commitment as in an unintentional pregnancy carried to term. The causal pathways to a social position occupancy are various, complex and multiple. However, we externalists note that the social position occupancy is a common element. To the question: Why should a mother nurture their child? The externalist answer is simple—because they are a mother and that is what a mother ought to do. There is one (correct) answer to a single question. So, I don't accept Haslanger's proposal that internalism and externalism (as I use the terms) address different questions. And, as I said in my response to Ásta, I think there are good reasons to favor externalism over internalism. I won't repeat those arguments here.

Haslanger is also critical of the artisanal model for social role norms in her discussion of Afunctions, which is the label I use to refer to the central element of the artisanal model. Afunctions have two faces. They are comprised of artisanal technique, which is social and shared, and expertise or skill, which is skill in an individual. There are two layers of normativity in the artisanal model. For the artisan there are (1) things to be done and (2) there are better and worse ways of doing what is to be done according to local norms. Haslanger introduces the example of the unmotivated, mediocre knitter in order to question whether and in what sense the mediocre knitter is responsive to knitting norms. After all she just doesn't care about them. Sure, there are things a knitter ought to do (keep adequate tension on the wool while casting on) and ways they ought to do it around here (by using thumb and first finger). But Haslanger seems to be right that a knitter might not care much about what they ought to be doing—but notice that it is what they *ought* to be doing. The example of the unambitious knitter does not undercut the artisanal model and, by extension, externalism. In so far as she is a knitter, even an unambitious knitter or a mediocre knitter, there are things she ought to be doing and ways to do them. In so far as she is knitting, she is responsive to and evaluable under an artisanal knitting technique. That is what makes her a knitter rather than a yarn tangler. Whether the knitter is wildly ambitious or not ambitious at all, in so far as they are a knitter there are things to be done (those they ought to do) and better and worse ways of doing them. If you randomly tie knots in the wool, you are not knitting; if you carelessly drop stitches, you are knitting but not well. Most importantly of all, you can be knitting with

ambition to really make a good hat, or aiming just to be satisfied with a mediocre one. But in so far as you are a knitter you ought to do certain things and you ought to do them in a certain way. The artisanal model uses this frame to understand the normativity of social roles in general in a parallel fashion. If you are a mother, you ought to do certain things in a certain way, namely the way we ought to do them around here. That there are mediocre or indifferent knitters (or mothers) does not undercut the artisanal model.

3.2. Instrumental Value in the Artisanal Model

Haslanger's primer on instrumental value is useful and allows me to clarify the point I intended to make about instrumental value and the artisanal model. In *Social Goodness* I said that the normativity of artisanal functions or activities is not purely instrumental. The standard of excellence for being a good carpenter, for being skilled and having expertise is not simply a matter of instrumental goods like delivering a good quality product. In addition, there are aspects of skill and expertise that are local, the way we do things around here, and cannot be cashed out in purely instrumental terms. Indeed, some local standards of excellence might lack instrumental value entirely. The point that I intended to make was that the normativity expressed by the artisanal model was two tier and it includes not only what is to be done, but also the way what is to be done ought to be done around here. My view is that the goodness of local norms need not be a matter solely of their instrumental value but might also reflect aesthetic and other non-instrumental values.

Haslanger asks a good question:

I'm not sure I understand how the variety of context sensitive norms is relevant to the issue of instrumentality?

I hope that my picture is now clearer. My view is not that the context sensitivity of social role norms bears on their instrumentality. But rather there are aspects of social role norms, ways of doing things, that reflect local traditions (including for example, aesthetic traditions) that can be distinguished from their instrumental value. Although what is to be done and how it is to be done around here are thoroughly intermingled in practice.

3.3. Social Justice and Social Criticism

A central challenge facing externalist accounts of social role normativity is that they seem to leave little room for social role critique or for normative self-creation. The

role of imitation, habituation and guided practice in developing artisanal skill might seem to undercut the possibility of developing an attitude of critique and creativity. In fact, I think it is a strength of the artisanal model that it has resources to explain both the evident persistence of social norms and oppressive normative hierarchies and to explain normative critique, innovation and self-creation.

I develop the critical resources and creative potential of the artisanal model in chapters 5 and 6 respectively. While Haslanger acknowledges these resources and potential she also attributes a stronger position to me. “More importantly, however, it seems that on Witt’s view, the best critic of a practice will be one with the greatest expertise.” Haslanger is critical of this claim and I agree with her criticisms for the reasons she gives. I aimed to show that there are resources for both normative criticism and self-creation in the artisanal model but I did not intend to make a claim about who the best critic of a practice might be. Indeed, I suspect there might be no one answer to this question.

4. LOUISE ANTONY

I am very grateful to Louise Antony for her incisive, critical comments on *Social Goodness*. I believe that our interchange will help situate my views in relation to some widely held philosophical convictions—that I don’t share. While I would love to think that I can change minds on these issues in this space, I will be satisfied if readers finish with a clearer sense of what is at stake.

Antony does not think that social role norms are “genuinely *normative*”, and, since the project in *Social Goodness* is to explain the source of their normativity, one might think that no more needs to be said or, indeed, could be said on the topic. Also, since Antony thinks there are no mind independent functions, in nature or in the social world, it seems that my use of the artisanal model and the idea of an Afunction to explain the source of normativity of social role norms is also ruled out of court. In short, Antony accepts neither the explanans nor the explanandum of my project. Recall Ian Hacking’s comment on philosophical disagreement: “if two people genuinely disagreed about great issues, they would not find enough common ground to dispute specifics one by one.”³ Fortunately, and even in the face of our significant disagreement, there is a social norm among us philosophers to respond to important criticisms fairly and fully, and I will do what I ought—given that I am a philosopher—just as Antony has done.

3 *Representing and Intervening* by Ian Hacking (Cambridge 1983) p. 5. Thanks to Mark Okrent for suggesting this quote.

In what follows, I will address several important areas of disagreement between us. First, Antony doubts that social role norms are genuinely normative. Or if they are, their normativity is a result of our attitudes towards them. But Antony also thinks that many of them, like parental or professional norms, are actually objective ethical norms, a view that I reject. I wonder how the two pieces of Antony's view hang together? Second, Antony is critical of the role I assign to Afunctions as the source of normativity of social role norms because she thinks there are no natural or social functions—independently of our minds and attitudes. So, Antony thinks that functions are not going to be able to figure in an externalist theory of social role norms like mine. Or, indeed in any other theory since they don't exist. Also, she wonders about the aptness of using Afunctions at all given the classic problem of the "good" bomb. Finally, Antony has a number of narrower, related criticisms and questions concerning my view of the relation between social roles and social kinds and what it is to be responsive to a norm.

4.1. Are Social Role Norms Genuinely Normative?

As I mentioned in the Introduction my project in *Social Goodness* was inspired by Elizabeth Anderson's question:

The great puzzle of social norms is not why people obey them, even when it is not in their self-interest to do *so*. *It is, how do shared standards of conduct ever acquire their normativity to begin with?* Once we understand this, there is no further difficulty in understanding the motive to obey them. We obey them because we believe that we *ought* to. (Anderson 2000, 191, my italics)

Anderson's puzzle makes two assumptions: First, that social norms are normative and describe not just what we do but what we *ought* to do and, second, that there is some explanation for their normativity.

In several places Antony disagrees with me that social norms are genuinely normative but adds that what she denies is that "their normativity is independent of agent's attitudes towards them." So, at least on one interpretation what Antony means by denying that social norms are genuinely normative is that their normativity derives from the attitudes of agents. "unlike Charlotte, I do not think that social norms are genuinely *normative*—they do not bind anyone unless an agent binds themselves to them." Using my terminology, Antony is an internalist about the source of social role norms. For my reasons for rejecting internalism please see my response to Ásta.

However, internalism is not the whole story according to Antony. In addition, she argues for a version of what I call "the applied ethics" view of social role

norms, namely that some social role norms are objective ethical norms that have limited, or conditional, application. Antony thinks that parental and professional social role norms are like this; they are objective and genuinely normative but only apply conditionally—to parents and to professionals.

Here we reach an impasse on how to understand Antony's position on social role normativity and her grounds for criticism of mine. On the one hand Antony ties the normativity of social role norms to the attitudes of agents—"they do not bind anyone unless an agent binds themselves to them." A clear statement of internalism—the bindingness comes from the agent's attitude toward the norm. But, on the other hand, Antony thinks that many social role norms are objective ethical norms of conditional application whose normativity does not depend at all on the agent's attitude. "I want to say that many social role norms *are* ethical norms of the conditional sort." However, I think that social role norms are not merely conditionally normative, what you ought to do if you are a certain kind of social individual, but also encode the way you ought to do it around here. The locality, the way it ought to be done around here of social role norms is not captured by a conditional objective norm. So, I reject Antony's idea that many social role norms are objective ethical norms. But I also want to point out that Antony's internalism, the idea that social role normativity is mind-dependent sits uneasily with her view that many social norms are actually objective ethical norms and not mind-dependent.

4.2. Functions and Norms

A second important criticism Antony makes is about my use of *A*functions to explain social normativity:

To beg the question right at the start: I don't believe that things, whether natural or artifactual, have *functions* except insofar as the functions are assigned to them by beings with minds. I don't think that, in general, it's an objective, mind-independent fact about *anything* that it has a particular function.

Since Antony does not believe in mind independent functions, they could not provide the basis for a mind independent (or in my terms, externalist) understanding of social role normativity.

This might be a good example of what Hacking called "a disagreement over a great issue" in relation to which it is difficult to dispute specifics. So, I will bracket the very large issue/question of whether anything, natural or artifactual, has a mind independent function, to focus on a narrower question about the social world. Because according to Antony whatever you might think about the mind dependence of natural

functions it is patently clear that artisanal functions are mind dependent and therefore not material for an externalist theory of social normativity.

However, recent work in social ontology draws our attention to important differences in degree of the mind dependence of social or human kinds. For example, Khalidi (2015) distinguishes three kinds of social kinds in terms of their degree of mind dependence. The existence of some social kinds (recession, racism) does not depend upon anyone having propositional attitudes towards it.

This discussion suggests that there are three kinds of social kinds. First, there are social kinds whose nature is such that human beings need not have any propositional attitudes towards them for them to exist (e.g. recession, racism). The existence of these kinds clearly depends on the existence of human beings and depends on those humans having certain propositional attitudes. There can only be racism in a society if some members of that society are prejudiced against others or harbor attitudes of superiority or contempt towards them insofar as they are members of a different group. But members of that society need not have any propositional attitudes that involve the category racism itself.

So, while it is the case that artifactual functions, are mind dependent in the sense that they would not exist if agents with intentions did not exist, their functions are not dependent upon the existence of any mind or any intension in particular. That an artisan has a function, things that ought to be done and a way of doing what ought to be done around here (aka a local technique) is mind dependent in the weak sense just described. But what is to be done and how it ought to be done around here does not depend upon any individual artisan's mind or attitude.

The two levels of norms in the artisanal model, what is to be done and how it is to be done around here also provides a response to a worry Antony has about the diversity and variation in social norms in my picture. Its ability to capture and express the diversity and variation of social norms is actually a positive feature of my view and not a bug. Antony asks: "What objectively are the norms that bind someone who identifies as a Jew?" According to the artisanal model the answer is indexed to a location and a community, but that does not take away from its objectivity. In a given community it is perfectly objective what the norms are that a person who is a Jew ought to be responsive to, including a norm of debate and dispute over norm interpretation. Just as cooking practices and norms vary from community to community—both what ought to be done and how one ought to do it around here—so too do other social role norms. It is an important feature of social role norms that

they are both objective and local; what ought to be done, and the way it ought to be done, around here.

Finally, Antony thinks that the existence of oppressive or morally bad social roles is particularly problematic if understood on the artisanal model. “This is the problem of the ‘good’ bomb”. The function of a bomb is to blow things up; if what it is to be a good bomb is for the thing to perform the function of a bomb, then a good bomb is one that really does a good job blowing things up. But it is not good, in general, to blow things up, and so, arguably a good bomb is not *good*.” This example is useful because it allows us to see that it is important to distinguish social normativity from both ethical and political normativity in order to express the layers of normativity in the social world. Good bombs function well, and their goodness can be explained on the artisanal model; but whether or not it is right or good to use a bomb in a given circumstance is an ethical or political question.

Antony raises an interesting question about the relationship between social kinds and social roles, and asserts that social kinds are fundamental because the presence of norms is not necessary for the existence of social kinds. I am not sure what I think about this issue—for one thing I would need to know more about what Antony means by fundamental. But I am not at all convinced by her argument. “I believe that race is a social kind and I believe that I have a racialized identity as a white person. But I have not, in my life experienced any *normative* pressure to behave in any way because of my whiteness.” She makes the same point about her nationality; she has experienced virtually no normative pressure as an American. Hence social kinds can exist without social roles. But this argument is unconvincing. The experts on whiteness norms are the members of other races—just ask—and the experts on the norms associated with being American are Europeans, the Japanese and other national groups.

The discussion brings me to the last point I will make in response to Antony—although there is lots more to discuss in her comments. Antony asks: what is it to be responsive to a social norm? For Antony there are two options. Either responding to a norm requires that a person “accepts and feels themselves bound by the norm” or it means that the person “is subject to consequences if one violates the norm.” But this alternative entirely bypasses the resources of the artisanal model which centers the development of technique via habituation, imitation and guided practice. Responding to an artisanal norm is a habitual practice and neither a matter of acceptance or explicit embrace nor a prudential calculation of consequences. I think the same is true of responding to social norms; we act in response to certain social norms because of who we are, and because responding to the norm is part of being that kind of person.

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