The emotion of wonder is among our genetically encoded programs for responding to unexpected features of the environment. Wonder is distinct from other emotions in its ability to foster receptivity, openness, metaphysical thinking, and moral sensitivity. Biological and psychological
studies of wonder help us understand the moods and motivations that distinguish aesthetic spirituality or nature religion.

A Framework for the Psychology of Norms
Chandra Sekhar Sripada and Stephen Stich

in The Innate Mind: Volume 2: Culture and Cognition

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Item type: chapter

Human social life is regulated by an extensive network of informal social rules and principles often called norms. This chapter offers an account of the psychological mechanisms and processes underlying norms that integrates findings from a number of disciplines, and can serve as a framework for future research. It begins by discussing a number of social-level and individual-level generalizations about norms that place constraints on possible accounts of norm psychology. After proposing its own model of the psychological processes by which norms are acquired and utilized, it discusses a number of open questions about the psychology of norms. These include questions about the role of social learning, emotions, and various reasoning processes in norm psychology.

Moral Responsibility and Quality of Will
Michael McKenna

in Conversation and Responsibility

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This chapter reorients Strawson's theory by emphasizing the role of the agent who is responsible rather than the role of those holding responsible. The three central ingredients in Strawson's treatment are examined: the quality of will of a responsible agent; the reactive attitudes involved in holding responsible; and the pleas of those held responsible. Quality of will is developed in terms of the regard an agent has for others and for morally salient considerations. Reactive attitudes, understood as response to an agent's quality of will, are explained in terms of public manifestations through alterations in otherwise ordinary practices of adult interpersonal life. Public manifestations of these emotions can in turn be normatively assessed. Pleas of excuse or justification are explained in terms of efforts to show that an agent is
not blameworthy because she did not act from a morally objectionable quality of will. Exemptions show that an agent is incapacitated for responsible agency. The sense of (in)capacity at issue is accounted for not only in terms of the (in)capacity to understand what those who hold responsible communicate through the manifestation of reactive attitudes, but also in terms of the (in)capacity to hold others responsible.

Reforming Relationships

Linda Radzik

in Making Amends: Atonement in Morality, Law, and Politics

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Item type: chapter

Chapter 4 defends a Kantian version of a reconciliation theory of atonement for moral guilt. Reconciliation is a matter of repairing the relationships that constitute a moral community. A theory of atonement built on this ideal attends to all of the parties who are negatively affected by wrongdoing: victims, communities, and wrongdoers themselves. By highlighting the damage done to relationships, we are encouraged to notice the varied kinds of harms that wrongdoing causes — from material harms, to sullied reputations, to the creation of fear and self-hatred — and to consider what can heal those wounds. This chapter articulates the goal of moral reconciliation and examines the means to achieving that goal, including apology, the moral emotions, empathy, and reparations.

Evolution of Morality

Edouard Machery and Ron Mallon

in The Moral Psychology Handbook

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Item type: chapter

This chapter examines whether morality really evolved, as many philosophers, psychologists, anthropologists, and biologists claim. It distinguishes three possible versions of this claim and reviews the evidence in support of each. It concludes that two versions of the claim that morality evolved are relatively well supported, but that they are unlikely to have significant philosophical consequences, while the stronger version, which is of real interest to philosophers, is in fact empirically unsupported.
This chapter is an introduction to the basic thesis of the book: the possibility of moral action in animals. It explains precisely what this thesis is: animals can act for moral reasons, where these reasons take the form of emotions that possess moral content. The occurrence of this thesis—or similar theses—in the work of others is examined.

Moral Authority
Linda Trinkaus Zagzebski
in Epistemic Authority: A Theory of Trust, Authority, and Autonomy in Belief
This chapter applies the arguments of previous chapters to the domain of moral belief. The chapter defends the existence of epistemic authority in the moral domain against objections from three directions: (1) there is no moral truth to be discovered, (2) there are no moral experts, and (3) taking a moral belief on authority conflicts with the autonomy of the self. However, the chapter identifies limitations of moral testimony for moral motivation and moral understanding. These limitations reveal the importance of moral communities for the transmission of practically useful and praiseworthy moral beliefs.

Philosophical Sentimentalism
Shaun Nichols
in Sentimental Rules: On the Natural Foundations of Moral Judgement
According to the influential sentimentalist tradition in moral philosophy, moral judgment is grounded in affective response. On Allan Gibbard’s prominent contemporary version of this view, he maintains that to
judge an action wrong is to judge that it would be appropriate to feel guilt on doing the action. In this chapter, evidence from developmental psychology is brought against this sentimentalist theory. The capacity for moral judgment emerges quite early, apparently well before the capacity to attribute guilt or other moral emotions. The evidence thus suggests that this capacity for moral judgment cannot be captured by accounts which identify the capacity for moral judgment with the capacity to judge that guilt is normatively appropriate.

The Gratitude of Exchange and the Gratitude of Caring
Ross Buck

in The Psychology of Gratitude

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Item type: chapter

This chapter examines the difference between gratitude of exchange and gratitude of caring from a developmental-interactionist perspective of moral emotion. It suggests that complete treatments of gratitude must recognize its dual nature because important implications of failing to do so follow. It attempts to relate each form of gratitude to its biological origins in curiosity and attachment, and highlights the importance of this distinction for understanding important social issues such as the nature of evil.

Changing One's Heart, Changing the Past
Linda Radzik

in Making Amends: Atonement in Morality, Law, and Politics

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Item type: chapter

The theories examined in this chapter suggest that atonement for moral wrongdoing consists in a transformation either of the wrongdoer or the wrongful action. The interest in transformation is most commonly expressed in a demand for repentance — a form of rehabilitation or reformation that is accompanied by moral emotions such as regret, remorse, and shame. Repentant wrongdoers are sometimes described as undergoing a change of identity that frees them from their guilt. At other times, repentance and other forms of atonement are described as changing the meaning of the past, whereby an act once deemed
wrongful is renarrated as something positive in light of later responses by the wrongdoer. Chapter 3 defends the value of repentance but argues that it is insufficient for atonement because it fails to address the social nature of wrongdoing.

The Cultural-Developmental Theory of Moral Psychology

Lene Arnett Jensen

in Bridging Cultural and Developmental Approaches to Psychology: New Syntheses in Theory, Research, and Policy

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Item type: chapter

On the basis of both developmental and cultural findings from diverse research traditions, this chapter proposes a cultural-developmental approach to moral psychology. It introduces a concept termed a “cultural-developmental template,” which charts developmental patterns across the life course for moral reasoning in terms of the three ethics: Ethics of Autonomy, Community, and Divinity. The template, however, is not one-size-fits-all. Its general developmental patterns accommodate the different constellations of ethics held by culturally diverse peoples. From this theoretical proposal follows a set of specific research expectations as well as a set of broader research implications for how to conduct research on morality from the vantage points of both culture and development. These expectations and implications include consideration of moral emotions, definitions of morality, and cultural variation in the life course itself. From the model follows suggestions for policy.

The Further Geography of the Soul

Douglas V. Porpora

in Landscapes of the Soul: The Loss of Moral Meaning in American Life

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Item type: chapter

Explores the importance to our sense of self of moral commitment and moral ontology. A pivotal role is attributed to the moral emotions that connect us to moral values and ideals. These relate to our sense of the good.
A dirty hands case is (1) justified, (2) obligatory or permissible, and (3) morally wrong. It is argued that dirty hands are conceptually unproblematic and that they are instances of ordinary evaluative phenomena. Some ordinary cases of moral conflict are like dirty hands in that they are entirely justified, yet regrettable. The analysis shows that such cases involve double counting—the disvalue is counted once and overridden in the act-guiding evaluation, and counted again later as the object of the moral emotions (guilt, shame, regret) and as being a disvalue. In addition, dirty hands are cases in which what is morally required is also immoral, and therefore regrettable. Shows that ethical theories can and should account for the existence of moral choices involving acts that are justified, even obligatory, yet nevertheless wrong, shameful, and regrettable.

This chapter argues that shame is a morally valuable emotion, but not in the traditional sense. It argues for a constitutive view of the moral value of shame. Determining an emotion’s moral value involves examining the role it plays in moral psychology rather than the circumstances under which it is permissible to feel. A liability to shame is constitutive of our recognition of other moral points of view and of a wider sense of self. This chapter shows that a liability to shame is morally valuable because it shows that we do not take our self-conception as the final authority on the kinds of people we are. We can see this by examining what is wrong with shamelessness. The shameless person takes her own self-conception to be the final and only authority in her self-estimation.
This chapter looks at the issue of the rationality of the emotions from a slightly different angle, focusing on the relationship between emotions and epistemic rationality. It observes that emotions seem capable both of helping and hindering our ability to gain knowledge of the world. On the one hand emotions offer insights that would not be available in their absence, as suggested by the fact that the capacity for emotion seems to be an evolutionary adaptation. However at other times emotions skew the epistemic landscape, that is, predispose us to adopt certain beliefs in the absence of epistemic justification and distort our ability to see things as they are. The chapter argues that these phenomena suggest that it is critical to our ability to be epistemically virtuous, that we also have virtuous prudential and moral emotional dispositions.

Moral Psychology as Accountability

Brendan Dill and Stephen Darwall

On the basis of recent work in moral philosophy (Darwall 2006; 2013a; 2013b), this chapter hypothesizes that interpersonal accountability plays a foundational role in moral psychology. Drawing on a large body of empirical evidence, it argues that the implicit aim of the central moral motives and emotions is to hold people accountable for compliance with the demands of morality. Moral condemnation aims to hold perpetrators accountable to moral demands, and moral conscience aims to hold oneself accountable to these demands. This framework allows us to see what makes morality distinctive: its essential connection to accountability.
Empirical research apparently suggests that emotions play an integral role in moral judgment. The evidence for sentimentalism is diverse, but it is rather weak and has generally been overblown. There is no evidence that our moral concepts themselves are partly composed of or necessarily dependent on emotions. While the moral/conventional distinction may partly characterize the essence of moral judgment, moral norms needn’t be backed by affect in order to transcend convention. Priming people with incidental emotions like disgust doesn’t make them moralize actions. Finally, moral judgment can only be somewhat impaired by damage to areas of the brain that are generally associated with emotional processing (as in acquired sociopathy and frontotemporal dementia). While psychopaths exhibit both emotional and rational deficits, the latter alone can explain any minor defects in moral cognition.

Current debates about risky technologies are frequently heated and end up in stalemates, due to the scientific and moral complexities of these risks. This chapter argues that emotions can make an important contribution to deliberation about ethical aspects of risk, because emotions can point out what morally matters. However, the chapter will also address the fact that emotions can be biased and that it can be hard to overcome such biases. The role that works of art can play in enticing moral emotions concerning responsible innovation of risky technologies will be examined. It is argued that works of art can contribute to emotional moral reflection on risky technologies by making abstract problems more concrete, letting us broaden narrow personal perspectives, exploring new scenarios, going beyond boundaries and challenging our imagination. In that sense, emotions as well as works
of art can contribute to socially extended knowledge concerning ethical aspects of risk.

Empirical Analysis
Steven Hitlin and Sarah K. Harkness

in Unequal Foundations: Inequality, Morality, and Emotions across Cultures
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Chapter 9 presents our empirical results. The chapter begins with a description of the competing theories’ predictions for how the countries under analysis (the United States, China, Germany, Japan, and Canada) should differ by their moral reactions. We then present results demonstrating that the negative self-sanctioning and other-sanctioning moral emotions are far more common in the United States and China—countries with high levels of inequality. Conversely, the self-transcendent, communal moral emotions, like compassion and praise, are more often experienced in Germany, Japan, and Canada—countries with much lower inequality. This is consistent with our theoretical predictions.