Trust in the World: Løgstrup on the Conditions of Shared Moral Life
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In Danish philosopher Knud Ejler Løgstrup's primary contributions to moral phenomenology, *The Ethical Demand* and *Beyond the Ethical Demand*, moral agents are characterized as exposed to "an unspoken, and one might say anonymous, demand on us that we take care of the life that trust puts in our hands"[i]; a demand that we "use our power over the other person in such a way as to serve them" (ED 47). Løgstrup goes so far as to say that "everything that the mutual relationship leads the individual to say and do shall be said and done not for the individual themselves, but for the sake of the other whose life is in the individual's hands" (ED 39).

For Løgstrup, this primal normative claim definitive of morality arises from certain basic conditions of human life and agency, the main one being the pervasive condition of mutual dependence and vulnerability that characterizes communal life and the trust that this condition of vulnerability demands: "It is integral to human life that we normally meet each other with natural trust" (ED 9) – it is a "fundamental phenomenon" (ED 13).[ii] In trust we lay ourselves open to the other person and from this fact arises "the demand contained in that trust, to take care of the trusting person's life" (ED 19). According to Løgstrup, a specific "understanding of life" is also "contained in the demand" – namely, the belief that life is a gift for which we can take no credit (ED 101).[iii] The kind of benevolence implicitly at work in our everyday lives – and called for explicitly in the ethical demand – requires us to understand life as a gratuitous good, not as a possession to which we are entitled, and to think of ourselves as 'wicked' (ED 119) insofar as we tend toward a self-preoccupation and entitlement that gets in the way of this orientation. Understanding life and self in these ways neutralizes our natural tendency toward selfishness and thereby enables one to experience the other person's vulnerability as calling for care.

But how does trust "contain" a demand for care? And what is the status of this belief that life is a 'gift'? Is Løgstrup's view that humans are naturally wicked, but that life is a gift, thinly disguised theology?[iv] In what follows, I will develop what I take to be the most promising version of his theory and examine what we can learn from it. Since Løgstrup's view doesn't fit easily into available ethical or meta-ethical theories – though its most relevant comparators can be found in the phenomenological tradition (especially Levinas) – it will require some interpretive work. In what follows, I will first lay out the basics of Løgstrup's view before putting it into dialogue with contemporary discussions of trust: analyzing the dynamics of symmetry and asymmetry at work in the trust relationship, the different modes of self-relation to which it gives rise, and the way that 'life is a gift' involves an implicit background trust in the goodness of the world. As we will see, this kind of generalized 'trust in the world' is importantly different from the interpersonal trust in relationships prevalent in the philosophical literature on trust – and helps make them possible.

Løgstrup: The Ethical Demand
The fact that our lives are thoroughly saturated with the expectations, vulnerabilities, and dependencies of and to other people means that we are constantly in each other's power. With this position of power comes the basic moral requirement that we not abuse people in their vulnerability but rather help them meet their needs. For Løgstrup, this is the moral orientation that underwrites our everyday patterns of exchange and makes social life possible.

In his early work, Løgstrup uses mutual trust as his primary example for examining the unrecognized background condition that creates and maintains human community in this way, but in his later work he also speaks of compassion, forgiveness, and language itself as necessary forms of human togetherness that sustain communal life as we know it. The later

Løgstrup calls these forms of seeing, feeling, and doing that create and sustain our shared lives the "sovereign expressions of life" (SEL).[v] The SEL are forms of pre-theoretical other-orientedness in which we prioritize the good of the other person.[vi]

The symmetry and mutuality of these conditions may be visible as such from the outside, but Løgstrup insists that morality requires us to avoid conceptualizing any care that we provide for the other person as governed by a logic of mutual exchange. Hence Løgstrup insists on the "one-sidedness of the demand, the exclusion of the viewpoint of reciprocity" (ED 107); what the ethical demand requires is that one is motivated in any exchange by the other person's good with no concern for one's own benefit. This is not to deny that relationships of reciprocity are an important aspect of our lives. Indeed, they largely govern the enormous swath of ethical life that Løgstrup speaks of in terms of social norms. But what distinguishes the ethical demand from social norms is its incompatibility with a viewpoint of reciprocity or concern for desert – it mandates both that you must be selfless in the service of the other person, and that:

> …the other person has no right to make the demand themselves, even though it concerns taking care of their own life. The demands which the other person—from their point of view—has a perfect right to make are of a quite different kind: they are conditioned by the moral, legal, and conventional social norms and standards which arise from our lives with and over against one another" (ED 40).

For Løgstrup, this orientation towards helping others for its own sake does not usually show up *as* a demand unless something has gone wrong. In contrast to the dominant emphasis on rules, obligations, and duties, Løgstrup insists that ethics is fundamentally about understanding and promoting the immediate relationships of benevolence and mutual support that underpin our shared lives (BED 92). Only when there has been a kind of breakdown in the communal togetherness characteristic of the sovereign expressions of life does the ethical demand appear as a demand – as a duty that we are obligated to meet. When immersed in the loving, trusting, compassionate sovereign expressions of life, the ethical demand does not appear – we are instead simply responsive to the natural give and take of human social life.

It is for this reason that Løgstrup defines the ethical demand as unfulfillable – since it never should have progressed to the point that it shows up *as* a demand at all: "the demand demands that it be itself superfluous" (BED 69). Though following rules and meeting demands is clearly better than "brutality or indifference," Løgstrup writes, "it is inferior to the immediate realization of mercy's sovereign expression of life. Duty enters when I am trying to wriggle out of the situation" (BED 76). When we act for the other person immediately and without ulterior motive, he argues, life happens in our communal being-together and the moral claim is fulfilled without it having to be mandated. But if an agent fails to maintain the life-enhancing orientations of the sovereign expressions of life, she is subjected to the ethical demand – the demand that she henceforth prioritizes care for the other person, granting second-person reasons priority over the first-person self-interested claims that she is wanting to prioritize instead. Or, as Løgstrup puts it, the demand that "the life of the other person is to be cared for at one's own expense" (ED 116). This does not guarantee that one will acknowledge or act on such a demand, but it articulates Løgstrup's view that moral oughts only show up *as* oughts insofar as we have already fallen away from the moral ideal of selfless benevolence. The very fact that something is experienced as a moral *demand* means that the recipient of the demand has already failed, morally speaking.

> To sum up: the spontaneous expressions of life lead a hidden existence. It takes crisis situations, colliding duties, and conflicts to stir them up into consciousness so that we

can engage in putting them into words. The formulations of the spontaneous expressions of life, occasioned by crises, collisions, and conflicts, are ethical norms (BED 129).

Despite his view that the reciprocal dependence evident in sovereign expressions of life such as trust comes with a basic ethical obligation to care for others, Løgstrup notes that these conditions of dependence are not in themselves sufficient to account for selflessness and benevolence, since they could just as easily promote manipulation or other forms of pragmatic benefit-maximization. Having someone in your power might prompt you to take advantage of them rather than help them. What, then, makes possible the kind of selflessness that Løgstrup takes to be not only possible, but the 'natural' condition?[vii]

An Understanding of Life
Løgstrup introduces a second key element to address this worry: what he calls a particular "understanding of life" (ED 101). To explain why it's possible to experience the other person's vulnerability as a prompt to selfless care, not an opportunity to exploit them, Løgstrup insists that it must be possible for any competing concern for the self – which gets in the way of life's natural tendency toward mutual support – to be neutralized. This occurs when one understands life as an ongoing gift. The demand "does not arise just from the fact that one human being is delivered up to the other; the demand only makes sense on the presupposition that the individual to whom the demand is addressed has nothing in their existence that was not given to them (ED 100).

Such a presupposition is not a tool that one deliberately uses to actively neutralize one's own selfish dispositions; Løgstrup is instead offering an account of the conditions that must be in place for moral being to be possible. He insists that these goodness-enabling conditions are largely outside of our control. This marks a significant difference from most contemporary moral theory, which is concerned primarily with freely chosen autonomous actions for which we are responsible. In contrast, Løgstrup is describing goodness and its conditions of possibility, putting aside the questions of how you yourself can bring it about. Understanding life as a gift, then, is constitutive of moral goodness, and should not be understood as a heuristic for bringing it about.

In keeping with this, understanding life as a gift need not and typically is not present as an occurrent concept. Rather,

> …whether a human being believes it or denies it, is decided entirely by the attitude they display in responding to the entanglement of their own life with that of other people. If the individual uses the entanglement as an occasion for taking care of the other person's life, then the individual lives in the belief that their life is an ongoing gift. If, on the other hand, they exploit the involvement to their own advantage, they live in denial of this (ED 106).

Hence 'life is a gift' is not simply a data point regarding the limits of one's own power or the general powerlessness of human beings. Rather, living our entanglement with others in a manner expressive of an orientation toward life as a gift requires one to have lost one's sense of entitlement to the goods of life. It is for this reason that Løgstrup claims we must view ourselves as fundamentally unworthy or "wicked" (ED 119) – regardless of the good we may be able to help bring about – if lack of entitlement and hence genuine moral responsivity to the other person is to be possible. Here we see Løgstrup's debt to Luther and the conception of the self as '*incurvatus in se*' – curved in on itself in a morally problematic self-concern.[viii] It is only when this default sense of entitlement has been neutralized that an individual can

respond to a condition of mutual dependence not simply as an economy of prudential exchange or reliance but as a condition of asymmetrical moral answerability; as demanding that she help the other with no concern for what she will get in return.

For Løgstrup, then, genuine moral answerability – wherein it is possible to place the other person's needs first – depends on two conditions: Thoroughgoing mutual vulnerability and an orientation toward the goods of life in which they are not viewed as caused, maintained, or owned by you, but rather as goods in which you are lucky to participate – and hence not things you have an entitlement to or can legitimately demand of others as reciprocal payment for good deeds you have done (ED 106). Only in this condition will you be able to put the other person first without calculating what you will get back in return.

In what follows, I will get clearer on the nature of the symmetries and asymmetries operative in the different experiences of trusting and being trusted that characterize our condition of mutual vulnerability. It will then be possible to better understand how the moral orientation toward life as a 'gift' functions in Løgstrup's account. As these analyses of trust will reveal, both trusting and being trusted involve experiences of vulnerability and risk that, Løgstrup suggests, can only be coped with by way of a background faith in the ordered reasonableness and trustworthiness of the world, a faith that cannot simply be reduced to the sum of individual interpersonal trust relationships but helps to make them possible. This generalized background trust in the reliability and goodness of life is what Løgstrup means by understanding life as a gift.

Trust
What is trust? The existing literature on trust emphasizes a number of features that track Løgstrup's characterization of this relationship. For example, it suggests that a key feature of a trust relationship is vulnerability: to trust is to "lay oneself open" (ED 9) to have been "laid bare" to the other person (11). Others point out that an essential distinction in understanding the nature of trust lies in the way that it differs from mere reliance.[ix] We rely on all kinds of things –furniture, machines, schedules – without trusting them. We can also rely on people without trusting them. I rely on the postman to bring the mail, but it's not quite right to say that I trust him to bring the mail insofar as the latter formulation implies an understanding or belief on my part about this individual mailman's motivations, character, or commitments, while the former does not. Similarly, some accounts view trust as a variety of instrumental rationality: it is a risk-assessment strategy wherein one weighs the benefits of the extended agency that cooperative action would allow against the risks of disappointed projects that such social reliance could produce.[x] Such accounts ultimately characterize trust as the kind of reciprocal prudence that Løgstrup rejects as insufficient for understanding the nature of social life.

Avoiding these interpretations requires us to recognize that a central feature of the stance of trust is the belief that the trusted person will be motivated not (solely) by prudential self-interest but by the mere fact that the trusting person is trusting her. As Jones puts it, trust involves "the expectation that the one trusted will be directly and favorably moved by the thought that we are counting on her."[xi] To trust another person is to believe that she is and will be responsive to the fact that this trust makes you vulnerable to her and this vulnerability matters.

There are different theories about this, the most widely discussed being Annette Baier's justly famous goodwill account: namely, that trust involves relying on the other person's goodwill as opposed to just his predictable habits.[xii] On this view, trust involves affective optimism about the trusted-person's goodwill – i.e., a will in which second person reasons will register as relevant to the trusted person's deliberations – coupled with a belief that this will produce favourable responses to one's condition of dependence.

This idea of 'goodwill' is importantly different than feelings of benevolence or warm feeling; we might ascribe 'goodwill' to someone who is a mean crank but who we nevertheless believe acknowledges the moral standing of others and takes their desires and needs into deliberative account, even if this comes at a cost to themselves.[xiii] Hence in Karen Jones' development of Baier's account, she rejects talk of 'goodwill' and speaks instead of trust-responsiveness wherein one trusts that the other person responds to one's condition of dependence for its own sake and not for further prudential reasons.[xiv] One believes that the other person is responsive to second-person reasons. In Jones' account, this optimism in the trusted person's 'goodwill' depends on a kind of background belief about their moral character, though this need not be robust – it might be little more than a belief in the trusted person's minimal moral decency or lack of ill will.[xv]

These discussions helps explain why we feel betrayed – not just disappointed – when a trusted person lets us down. Namely, because we had believed in the other person's goodwill toward us; a belief that we discover to be unfounded. We see a comparable position in Løgstrup, who suggests that the most painful aspect of betrayed trust is the communication of indifference and scorn – "coldness" – displayed in it (ED 10).

a. Trusting Others

Belief in the other's goodwill or vulnerability-responsiveness can never be entirely justified by the evidence, for if it were there would be none of the features of vulnerability characteristic of trust. After all, if there were a *guarantee* that the trusted person would do or be what the trusting person believed or expected she would, then trust would not be necessary. Hence trusting involves an optimistic belief that despite the lack of a guarantee, one is not making a mistake in entrusting oneself to someone who might turn out to be selfish or thoughtless or hostile.[xvi] Indeed, the deeper the relationship, the deeper the feeling of betrayal when that trust is broken, since it reveals a limitation on the care for one's vulnerability that has been taken to be constitutive of the relationship. Mistrust, on the contrary, involves attempts to catalogue and manage the other person's behavior such that all vulnerability is eradicated (ED 13-14). Fundamental to the experience of trusting, then, is the experience of oneself as being made vulnerable to the other person in one's dependence on them, but of simultaneously maintaining one's faith that such vulnerability will not be abused. Or, as Løgstrup puts it, ethical life always involves "daring to come forward to be met by the other" (17 ED).

In all trust relationships, then, there are normative expectations that are more or less robust; as Margaret Urban Walker puts it: "The truster relies upon the one trusted not only as one likely to do something...but also as one responsible for behaving in the way relied upon."[xvii] Phillip Nickel describes this kind of normative relationship as one in which the trusted person has obligations ascribed to her – that the recipient of trust is being assigned responsibilities through the act of being trusted.[xviii] We need not agree that all normative claims take the form of obligations, but a key feature of this kind of stance is nevertheless that it implicitly communicates that the trusted person is answerable to the claim. As we will see in the next section, this has important implications for the transformative power of the experience of being trusted. Trusting someone is not simply counting on them to take one's preferences as motivating but also communicates that they *ought* to take those preferences as motivating – thereby shifting their deliberative landscape by bringing second-person reasons to the fore.

Hence in trusting we experience ourselves as making a kind of normative claim on the other person through our vulnerability; ascribing responsibility to them for granting our concerns deliberative weight and prioritizing our good, even at a cost to them. But the obligating quality of trusting is always coupled with powerlessness and the partial opacity of

other minds. One must simply entrust one's well-being to the other person's ability and desire to take one's good as intrinsically and not just instrumentally motivating. When you trust someone, you are aware of yourself in your vulnerability; sensitive to the fact that responding to your claim cannot be compelled or guaranteed. This is an important feature of Løgstrup's account. Namely, that when we are trusted we have an obligation to respond positively to the other's claim – namely, to "use our power over the other person in such a way as to serve them" (ED 47) – but the trusting person does not have the standing to *demand* this as theirs by right.[xix] For Løgstrup, this is because the authority of the ethical demand comes from the broader goods constitutive of human lives, not the particular moral authority of this or that vulnerable person. As Løgstrup puts it:

> …the other only has the right to make demands of me on their own behalf that are conditioned and grounded in this authority [of the conventional norms of social/legal life]… By contrast the other has no right to make the ungrounded demand, the absolute demand of the responsibility relation itself, that everything that I say and do in our reciprocal relation ought to be for their sake and not for my sake. The other cannot in their affairs make this demand of me, for it [81] is not a demand about which we have agreed; here there is no convention, no 'what is valid' and 'what prevails', from which we might proceed. What the demand aims for in its unconditionality is exclusively a matter of responsibility and of the absolute demand. The other, for whom I have responsibility, cannot here identify themselves with the authority, in such a way that the authority and their own 'you shall' directed to me then coincide."[xx]

Robert Stern demonstrates how this kind of asymmetrical structure is also at work in the forgiveness relationship – namely, a structure in which there is a moral obligation to provide a certain kind of care, but no corresponding moral standing on the part of the recipient to demand the care that is so required. Forgiveness cannot be demanded by the wrongdoer – having forfeited the moral standing to make such demands – but we can nevertheless say that there will be cases where the wronged party ought to forgive.[xxi] Similarly, tender compassion cannot be demanded by the vulnerable – since this vulnerability is simply imposed on the trusted person – but we can nevertheless say that the relied-upon party *ought* to care for them.

There is a good deal of discussion about the nature of the authority that does underwrite the demand – with the early Løgstrup associating it with a creator God, but the later Løgstrup attempting to adopt an explicitly secular viewpoint.[xxii] For our purposes, the key point is that we are called to do what is best for the other person – regardless of what that person has done, and regardless of what they themselves think is best. What is best can and does diverge quite strongly from both what the community and the person herself views as best. Hence the authority of the claim might be better understood as nothing more or less than the good itself. The ethical demand requires that we act for the sake of the other individual, but we do so on the authority of the good, not the authority of the individual whose good we seek.

When thinking through the nature of trusting, it is important not to overlook the distinction between the kind of trust that we display toward strangers and the kind we display toward loved ones with whom we have shared a past that gives us reason to rely on their trustworthiness. In light of this distinction, one might be tempted to object that when we truly trust someone completely there is no sense of the groundlessness or risk that I have claimed to be operative in experiences of trust. After all, I feel that I *know* my sister will not betray my secrets or abuse me. How is this compatible with the quality of vulnerability that I have claimed is characteristic of trust?

Here we should distinguish between the target of the trust in the two cases: with a stranger, my trust is typically focused on some specific task or activity that I believe they will complete – say, getting me to the airport safely and on time. With the loved one, my trust expands and deepens to encompass whole styles of being in the world.[xxiii] Both cases involve an attribution of goodwill – namely, the expectation that the other person will be moved to take my needs as worthy of consideration in their own right, not merely as instrumentally non-threatening to her own.

In the case of the stranger, this ascription is circumscribed to encompass only the specific task or activity for which they are being trusted, coupled with a general belief in their minimal moral decency or non-malevolence as a typical member of the community. In the case of the stranger, the risks are twofold: the person might fail to perform the task I am trusting them to perform (e.g., I miss my flight because they are incompetent at their job as a taxi-driver), or they might fail to be minimally morally decent (e.g. they drive me to a field and rob me instead).[xxiv] Hence, trusting strangers typically involves ascribing to and implicitly asking for a condition of basic moral responsivity to second-person reasons, but within the context of a limited relationship; I trust the taxi-driver to get me to the airport and not abuse me while doing so.

With a loved one, however, the posited goodwill is not simply minimal moral decency but rather loving concern, and the tasks or activities that I expect to be completed cannot be neatly delimited as in the taxi-driver case. In a marriage, for example, the tasks one trusts one's spouse to perform are innumerable. In such cases it is therefore not helpful to use the three-term model of interpersonal trust popular in the literature wherein the paradigm of trust is a relationship in which A trusts B to do some specific X. In loving relationships, we often trust the other person by giving them a great deal of freedom to judge what is best, counting on the fact that they will do so with our flourishing in view. We trust them to specify the relevant X themselves. This open-endedness is not well-captured by a summative model whereby loving care amounts to a long list of specific delimitable tasks that one optimistically believes the other will perform.

A question remains, however, regarding what form the element of risk takes in such intimate relationships. After all, one can and does trust someone deeply who nevertheless repeatedly breaks his promise to put his dirty socks in the laundry basket. The depth of your trust in this case lies in the certainty that your well-being will be prioritized, and key responsibilities will be performed (no matter how many superficial demands go unmet). Nevertheless, an element of risk remains; a risk not that specific superficial obligations will go unmet, but rather that key responsibilities will go unmet because the loved one ceases to be the person with whom your shared life – and hence the practical identities it enables – can no longer function as such. The risk, in other words, is that the future will bring unforeseeable changes that make it impossible for the loved one to remain the person whose identity is entwined with your own. This can happen through no fault of their own. It might involve a gradual change in character of you or the loved one; it might involve changes in circumstance that bring out existing but unknown aspects of character. Hence the risk in loving committed relationships is not being late for the flight or being annoyed by dirty socks, but of being unable to go on living the identity central to who one understands oneself to be – an identity that is shared and hence vulnerable to the other person's failure to maintain it.

We see a similar concern in Bennett's work, which highlights cases of disappointed trust that are due to internal or external changes in circumstance and not due to lack of goodwill, violations of specific obligations, or other moral failures. A friendship might fade, or an emergency might arise, leading one's trusting expectation that someone will do X to be disappointed. Bennett takes this to mean that moral-motivation theories are at best incomplete

and proposes instead a non-moral commitment-based account whereby trust involves expecting that a person "will be motivated to act a certain way by a commitment that we ascribe to them."[xxv] The commitment might be to an action, goal, value, project, other person, etc., and – in order to rule out potential cases of manipulation and trickery – the trusted person's commitment must be sufficiently similar to my own commitment that I can "expect them to act as I trust them to." [xxvi] By ascribing such a commitment to the other person, we take them to be a) internally motivated by psychological (or normative[xxvii]) commitment(s) and b) competently responsive to the practical reasons for doing the expected act insofar as it is internally related to the committed-to end.[xxviii]

Despite its advantages in being able to account for failures of trust that don't involve overt moral failure and to more accurately track the nature of ongoing personal relationships, it's not clear that Bennett's account fully 'de-moralizes' trust, as he hopes to do.[xxix] After all, we typically rely on the trusted person to make assessments of what is best in circumstances involving competing commitments, and we expect that in so doing, basic moral decency will be the overriding commitment. I would not trust a taxi-driver to whom I ascribed a commitment to job-performance if I also ascribed to them a commitment to callous and self-serving opportunism. This is the case even if I too were committed to both job-performance and callous self-serving opportunism. Trusting a stranger means being vulnerable to the potential that maliciousness and greed might at any time override the rational requirements of the specific commitment that I trust him to perform. Hence ascription of a shared commitment to X or Y specific task, value, or practical identity – if it is to be capable of generating trust – also depends on the belief that the other person will be governed by minimal moral decency, else the more localized commitment specifying the particular task I trust him to perform is always in danger of being overridden by opportunistic desires to take advantage of me in my vulnerability.

The strength of our belief in the bindingness of this claim and the reliability and depth of the other person's goodwill and commitment to shared ends corresponds to our degree of trust. But there is never – and cannot be – an ultimate guarantee that the other person will live up to those expectations, no matter how deep or old the relationship. Trust always involves an element of issuing out into the unknown in the face of one's vulnerability and the corresponding possibility of harm or loss.

We have seen how trusting in the face of risk seems to involve attributing goodwill or shared commitments to the person whom one trusts. But I would like to suggest that Løgstrup's idea of believing in life as 'a gift' offers an important supplement to this view, according to which entrusting oneself to others does not necessarily or exclusively involve an attribution of goodwill to a specific person, but relies, rather, on a kind of generalized faith that the world is overall safe and reliable. As Løgstrup puts it: one might see trust as "a complex phenomenon incorporating an experience of the other person's character and personality, which one has come to trust" but we should instead understand trust as "an elemental phenomenon in our existence that… I believe it is found in many more places than [the character-based] complex phenomenon [approach]" recognizes (BED 5). Before we examine this idea of "elemental" trust in greater detail, however, we will first turn to the other half of the trust dynamic: being trusted.

b. Being Trusted
To experience oneself as trusted is to recognize that the other person believes that you will take his desires and preferences as compelling reasons in your deliberative landscape.[xxx] As we noted above, such belief is experienced as having a normative quality; the experience of being trusted is not simply conveying neutral information about the other person's belief in your goodwill but is in some sense prescribing it.

When we think through the nature of the experience of being trusted, we see that it involves the other person showing you a certain way to be, a way you ought to exercise your freedom. Namely, as doing so in such a way that justifies their confidence in you. This can be seen when we consider Løgstrup's characterization of the experience of being trusted as one in which the agent is shown to herself as poised between competing incentives: suspended between self-serving and other-serving motives. As he puts it, being trusted "forces us into the option of either taking care of the other person's life, or ruining it" (ED 18, fn. 6). In the experience of being trusted, one's self-conception as free to meet one's own preferences is juxtaposed to a conception of oneself as a potential source of strength and comfort to the other person. Through the trust relationship you see yourself from these competing perspectives simultaneously, brought into a condition of normative tension in which we are "compelled to decide whether to use our power over the other person for serving him or her or for serving ourselves" (ED 53):

> Because there is power in every human relationship, we are always constrained in advance—in the decision whether we will use our power over the other person for their good or our own. There are plenty of motives for the latter, ranging from the satisfaction of the lust for power which is ignited just by possessing it, to the use of power driven by anxiety. But whatever the situation, in deciding to act, the demand asserts itself, namely the demand to use our power over the other person in such a way as to serve them. That we are confined between these always already given alternatives is captured in the meaning of the word 'responsibility' (ED 47).

In being trusted, we are brought face to face with the fact of potential conflict between different sources of normative claim, both recognized as legitimate. By encountering the other's vulnerability via trust, a default self-servingness is called into question such that the self's desires cannot be taken as legitimate by default. This priority now shows up as needing justification if it is to trump the other person's (implicit) request for you to express your agency in a different way. This does not guarantee that you will in fact place the other's needs first, but it introduces the normative self-distance required for this to become an option.[xxxi]

In the experience of being trusted, then, the other's vulnerability brings you face to face with the ethical claim that second-person reasons should be allowed to trump first-person reasons. But not only that: exposure to this vulnerability and the kind of immediacy of presence that comes with encountering the other person in this way brings you some way down this path, since the mere consideration of whether to give the other's needs deliberative weight has already decoupled you to some degree from the first-person demands that typically claim you. Thus, experiences of being trusted involve having one's self-conception challenged from without in such a way that the self-questioning necessary to escape the stranglehold of the '*incurvatus in se*' becomes possible. This may not produce a genuine change to someone's selfishness and entitlement, but it introduces this as a possibility for the first time. The central idea here is that the other person's trust essentially prompts a split in the self, wherein competing visions of who you might be show up as in tension. Experiencing competing potential modes of being places you in a position of critical distance from the claims intrinsic to them. You are no longer simply in the grip of first-person reasons but able to experience them as claims open to critical assessment. This prompts an alienation from your own reasons: you see their legitimacy as in question and therefore as demanding deliberation and justification.

Indeed, we might understand Løgstrup's characterization of human beings as irredeemably 'wicked' as a rhetorical move designed to prompt or enable the normative shift

in the self that is necessary to consider favoring the other person – despite all the reasons to favor oneself instead. The self-conception as 'wicked' is itself a mode of self-alienation wherein one's tendency toward narcissism is called into question such that the sovereign expressions of life might take over.[xxxii]

This aspect of the trust relationship cannot be reduced to either a first-person self-prioritization or a third-person stance of reciprocal prudential reasoning but is rather a second person willingness to accept that a) the other person's well-being is in your hands, and b) that this gives you reason to protect it – even, perhaps, at the cost of your own. To be trustworthy is to stand as warrant for the other person's belief that their desires will be recognized as making a legitimate claim on you.

c. Evocative Trust: The Transformative Experience of Being Trusted

Another important aspect of understanding the experience of being trusted is what has been called 'hopeful' or 'therapeutic' trust.[xxxiii] In such an understanding of trust, the trusted person has not yet displayed behavior warranting the trusting person's belief that he will do or be what the trusting person hopes he will. The trusting person trusts that person anyway to help evoke the trustworthiness that is not yet evident. For example, one might grant children more responsibility than they have shown themselves to be capable of handling to push them to grow.

One might object that we don't really *trust* in this case – we simply feign trust in order to educate the other person, despite our (hidden) lack of confidence that they will in fact do what they ought. But here again we might distinguish between the kind of deep trust for the loved other and the more limited trust we have for strangers. Evocative trust seems to involve deeper trust for the other person – especially in their potential for renewal and growth (ED 13-14) – while merely feigning trust for some specific X, the striving for which is part of that growth process.[xxxiv]

Though this kind of evocative trusting is particularly clear with the case of children, this can help us understand the transformative possibilities of the trust relationship. When you are trusted, you are held up to an ideal – however minimal – that the trusting person is both ascribing to and entreating from you through that trust. The other person's trusting vulnerability brings you face to face with a way you *ought* to be, not necessarily a way that you *are*.

We can see what is at stake in this idea of evocative trust when we consider how analyses of trust are regularly framed in terms of the question of when or whether trust is *warranted* – the assumption being that the recipient of trust either is or is not trustworthy prior to the act of trusting. But on this alternative account, the very act of trusting can help bring the trusted party into the condition of being trustworthy. Such evocative trust goes beyond the evidence of trustworthiness – or indeed abjures the practice of self-interested evidence-weighing – in a movement of faith that helps to engender trustworthiness in the trustee.[xxxv] The surrender of control and the opening up to risk shown in such modes of trust are a kind of gift to the other person in which they are shown different agential possibilities available to them. Indeed, we often feel gratified by another person displaying trust in us because it is a testament to their belief in our potential; it is an empowering vision of possibilities that we had not necessarily recognized or accepted as our own.[xxxvi] As Victoria McGeer nicely puts it, our expression of trust in the other person:

> …actively holds out a vision to them of what they can be or do. This vision creates for them a kind of affectively charged scaffolding, empowering their own sense of potential agency with the energy of our hope, and thus encouraging them to act in ways commensurate with the vision we maintain.[xxxvii]

In being trusted, you are shown the kind of person you might be. The idealized possibility manifest in the trusting serves as a role model, motivating you with the thought of becoming who the other person sees you as capable of being.[xxxviii]

Risk and the Gift of Life

Often, trusting and being trusted occur simultaneously and we consequently find ourselves poised between two competing normative orientations. On the one hand, the vulnerability of trusting can prompt you to focus on the self and the risks posed by trusting. On the other hand, the experience of being called to answer by being trusted prompts you to recognize in the other person's trust two competing risks: a) the risk of suffering by giving the other person too much of your limited time/energy/resources, and b) the ethical risk of failing to live up to the better self that the other person asks you to be. Thus, in circumstances of mutual trust there are multiple modes of risk operative: the risk of having one's projects or well-being thwarted by trusting an untrustworthy person, the risk of suffering for one's altruism, and the risk of failing to be the better self that one is capable of being.

As we have seen, Løgstrup thinks that the dependence operative in interpersonal trust relationships is necessary but not sufficient for the selfless benevolence that defines genuinely ethical life, since it cannot fully defuse our natural selfishness – which is exacerbated by the fear of betrayal and suffering characteristic of trust's unavoidable elements of risk.

These different modes of risk must be addressed if the kind of selflessness that Løgstrup discusses is to be possible. The trusting person's anxiety at the thought of potential betrayal must be neutralized, as must the trusted person's fear of suffering too much for their efforts. Meanwhile, the trusted person's anxiety at the thought of betraying the vulnerable other must be enhanced. As Jones puts it: "It is part of our common humanity, grounded in our capacity for sympathy, that we are susceptible to being responsive to the dependency of others. The problem is not getting us to recognize dependency as a reason, but rather getting us to give it enough weight so that it can become a compelling reason."[xxxix] Løgstrup's answer to this problem is the perspective operative in the belief that 'life is a gift.' But why is this a necessary condition for taking the other person's vulnerability as a prompt to help them, and not just as a further motivation toward grasping selfishness?[xl]

The key idea for Løgstrup is being able to experience your own life and the help you can provide the other person with that life – through loving, merciful, and trusting acts – as not your *own* in the sense of being something for which you are able to take credit or claim ownership. And this ultimately involves experiencing the world as a font of goodness that you feel you can trust to ongoingly provide the conditions of life, especially the conditions that make specifically human life possible as such: "If trust, openness, compassion between us vanished and no longer broke through our attempts to destroy them, we would be done for" (BED 129). The idea at work here is that life is experienced as both overall *good* and as something for which we are not responsible in its goodness, except insofar as we get out of its way to allow these goods to hold sway.[xli] We can and should "in confidence surrender ourselves" to these goods (ED, 117), recognizing, in doing so, that they are not attributable to "the will and the resolution of the individual" (BED 138). We do not create the goods of life; rather, they arise "out of the nature and the universe in which the individual is embedded" (BED 138). Hence the belief that 'life is a gift' is ultimately a pre-theoretical understanding of life as an arena of ordered reasonableness and trustworthiness; a general life orientation that cannot be reduced to the sum of individual interpersonal trust relationships, but rather helps make them possible:

If life is given to us, not once and for all, but in every moment, then we have it for
delivering ourselves up to it. If it is a gift, then it has been given for living trustingly
towards it. And the trust which we have from the outset towards the other human
being, and which in a fundamental way belongs to our human lives, is then based in
the very trust in life itself which is given with the fact that it is given. Life is there in
order to be lived as something unfinished, meaning that in our relationship to another
human being, we are never supposed to have it under /our thumb. The one-sidedness
of the demand expresses the fact that we receive life in order that we might in trust
abandon ourselves to it. And in contrast to this, any moral theory that is based on the
viewpoint of reciprocity is an expression of our will to get on top of our existence (ED
101-2).

Belief in the gift quality of the goodness of the world is required to counteract concern for
what I'm going to get back from you in exchange for my selfless care. By thinking of these
goods as reliably present through no agency of one's own, one's broader tendency toward
risk-fueled anxiety – which feeds selfishness and gives rise to obsessive concern for
reciprocity – is quieted. Belief in life as a gift allows us to trust that the goods of life will
persist despite our generosity, regardless of whether the other person gives you anything in
return.

By 'life' Løgstrup is not articulating a naturalistic conception of biological systems
but rather an existential account of the domains of meaning within which human beings
operate. 'Life' encompasses the sources of goodness – human, natural, or otherwise, that are
a condition for the possibility of these spaces of meaning and irreducible to the agency of any
specific person. It shares important similarities with Heidegger's notion of 'world' – namely,
the context of significance in terms of which meaningful human lives are possible.[xlii]

Hence 'life is a gift' is Løgstrup's name for the mode in which we acknowledge and
enable a meaningful whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. It is a shift away from a
perspective of self-assertion and willfulness toward dependence on something larger than the
self – something *good*. This shift neutralizes the kind of grasping concern for protecting one's
own vulnerability by encouraging one to see the overarching context as one conducive to
wellbeing, regardless of whether one has sufficient warrant to trust this or that specific
person. It is, as Rabjerg puts it, a case of ontological optimism coupled with anthropological
pessimism,[xliii] with the former required as counterweight to the latter. An orientation towards
life as a gift can neutralize both the anxiety that comes with awareness of one's vulnerability
and the conception of life's goods as something that one should constantly battle to secure for
oneself if they are to be available at all.

Let us return for a moment to our discussion of the asymmetry between stranger-trust
and loved-one-trust that we discussed above. There we noted that what we trust in our loved
ones is ultimately the fact of their love for us – which also displays the 'gift' structure that
Løgstrup is invoking.[xliv] Like life, the love bestowed on us cannot be earned and is not in our
control. While we can strive to protect and enable it by being worthy of it, ultimately it is a
gratuitous good that is not ours to demand as a matter of entitlement – and hence shows up as
a kind of gift in our lives.
Løgstrup's idea is that many aspects of our lives share this structure – not only in the form of
the love, trust, mercy, and communicative openness to which I am not entitled but which
enriches my life beyond measure, but in all the ways that life is characterized by the good:
"what we meet in each other is so often first and foremost nature, understood as the realities
for which we do not have ourselves to thank, but which are given to us. It is thanks to these
realities that we make it through our lives together so surprisingly unscathed" (BED 34). As

Rabjerg points out: "We can *claim* that trust and love are our personal achievements, Løgstrup says, but in doing so we stifle trust and love in self-gratulation."[xlv]

This sense of the world as an arena of goodness conducive to our well-being is essential for neutralizing the terror that comes with acknowledging our thoroughgoing "existential helplessness."[xlvi] Trusting the people who share the world with us relies on this more elemental trust in the world as a place in which one's vulnerability is bearable. Through this generalized trust in the world, the other person – especially the stranger – can be experienced as a representative of a broader worldly context of reliableness, and inherits the corresponding atmosphere of safety. And when someone trusts you, they are placing you in the position of being a manifestation of the forces of goodness upon which you yourself depend.

Matthew Ratcliffe similarly develops a Løgstrup-inspired view of non-localized forms of hope and trust that cannot be tied to specific expectations, but rather involve wider-range styles or patterns of anticipation about what kinds of possibilities the future might hold. Ratcliffe's view is also inspired by Jonathan Lear's idea of 'radical hope' which "amounts to the bare sense that new possibilities remain, that the future still offers the prospect of positive change and meaningful development, even though it cannot currently be conceived of in more concrete terms."[xlvii]

This trust in the world's basic goodness can in a sense function in the therapeutic way discussed by McGeer. By approaching the world with anticipations that it will be structured, predictable, and safe, we help to bring this condition into being, not least by modeling it for others and thereby alleviating their own sense of anxious vulnerability. Bennett offers the example of a confrontation in a lawless frontier to illustrate this kind of "bootstrapping" of a trustworthy world:

> …in this scenario I put down my gun because I trust that the stranger will reciprocate this conciliatory gesture. For this to be trust and not simply a gamble, I must be confident that the stranger will reciprocate. But it could be that the stranger has no plausible motivation to disarm until I have done so. I thus create the stranger's motivation to disarm—the same motivation that supports my trust—by communicating that I trust them, through my own disarming gesture.[xlviii]

An important difference here, of course, is that the gunfighter case involves two rational agents, whereas the object of one's therapeutic trust in the 'life is a gift' scenario is 'life,' which has no such rational standing. But in keeping with McGeer's account, the idea is that by trusting in life, one commits "the energy of hope" to a vision of a possible world in which vulnerability does not invite abuse but rather tenderness, and, importantly, that this is a world we have all been gifted – I no more than others. The asymmetries in the trust relationship might explain the possibility of a normative shift from first-person to second-person concern, then, but they also depend on recognizing a kind of symmetry between all of us as recipients of a worldly context that enables the goodness in our lives.

Lost Trust in the World

Typically, this optimism in the general goodness of the world as a source of wellbeing that it is not my responsibility to create or control – or my right to demand of others – is unacknowledged. As we have seen, Løgstrup thinks that the spontaneous expressions of life lead a "hidden existence" (BED 129). Elemental trust in the world's goodness is a kind of pre-theoretical background commitment that is thrown into relief when it is damaged or lost. Bernstein points out that such loss of trust in the world is typically caused by violations of interpersonal trust so severe that they infect the entire moral landscape.[xlix] Bernstein makes a

case for the importance and invisibility of this background trust in the world by considering "empirical accounts of lives deprived of trust."[l] He makes especially effective use of Jean Amery's account of Nazi torture in Auschwitz and of Susan Brison's groundbreaking work on the role of sexual assault in destroying an agent's trust in the world:

> In showing a victim that she is unconditionally vulnerable and categorically helpless, traumatic events lead to a withdrawal from the conditions that make ordinary existence possible, the most basic of which, Brison and Améry urge, is trust in the world. By such trust they have in mind, broadly, the existential confidence that permits the rational suppression, overlooking, forgetting, or fortunate ignorance of each individual's utter dependence on surrounding others, and hence each's categorical helplessness; with our helplessness no longer in conscious view, we can attend to the world rather than ourselves, or ourselves as fully worldly beings.[li]

Bernstein himself focuses on the loss of a sense of *moral* safety and argues for an account of relational autonomy on this basis – pointing out that in conditions of severe trauma, these dependencies "appear impossible to sustain…[and] the self's relations to self and world necessarily collapse."[lii] This lost sense of relative existential safety brings to the fore one's vulnerability and helplessness – an awareness that inhibits "a trusting and confident relation to an individual's personal, social, and material environments."[liii] But as this quote reveals, the loss of the sense of the world as conducive to our good can have material and non-human sources – as victims of fire and flood will attest. The result of these natural traumas – as with moral traumas – can be a sense that "*everything* appears uncertain, unpredictable, unstructured, and unsafe."[liv] A sense, in other words, that the *world* cannot be trusted, not just specific people in it.[lv]

   I have argued elsewhere that confidence in the goodness of the world can be strengthened or restored through revelatory or epiphantic experiences wherein goodness becomes manifest in exemplary form. I cannot discuss that aspect of this moral phenomenon here. What I would like to consider instead – by way of concluding – is whether Løgstrup's claim that belief in life as a gift is a necessary condition for the possibility of trust relationships, is in fact simply theodicy in disguise.

Theodicy and Suffering

With his commitment to the idea of life as a gift, is Løgstrup expressing a theological worldview indebted to his Lutheranism and at odds with attempts to develop a secular ethics? As Løgstrup himself says:

> The expressions of life suggest a religious interpretation…When something as unconditional as an expression of life comes from the universe, the thought springs to mind that humankind is not irrelevant to the universe (BED 139).

> Let me add that the theological reason why we can only talk about the demand of existence in anthropomorphic terms is because in the demand of existence we hear God's word to us. And incidentally, I believe that in this discussion I have only been expressing in modern-day language what Luther spoke of as God's word to us apart from Christ (ED 144).

Whether Løgstrup himself believed that his view depends on God or a metaphysical commitment to God is ultimately beside the point.[lvi] For our purposes, such theological commitments are not a prerequisite for having an orientation to life as a source of upwelling

goodness – an orientation that acts as counterweight to the paralyzing terror and reactive selfishness that comes with facing our existential vulnerability. Religious faith may help one achieve such an orientation, but it is not the only path to it.

But one might nevertheless worry that such existential optimism still represents a worrying kind of theodicy that is no longer morally available to post-Auschwitz humanity or those concerned about the ongoing suffering of so many in the world. After all, isn't optimistic confidence in the goodness of the world a cruel joke for those at the sharp end of life's many injustices, and at best, nothing more than a delusional coping mechanism for those unable to face the realities of life?

As Levinas points out, Western humanity has always sought to cope with its fear and its suffering by invoking:

> [A] metaphysical order, an ethics, which is invisible in the immediate lessons of moral consciousness. This a kingdom of transcendent ends, willed by a benevolent wisdom, by the absolute goodness of a God who is in some way defined by this super-natural goodness; or a widespread, invisible goodness in Nature and History, where it would command the paths which are, to be sure, painful, but which lead to the Good. Pain is henceforth meaningful, subordinated in one way or another to the metaphysical finality envisaged by faith or by a belief in progress…Such is the grand idea necessary to the inner peace of souls in our distressed world. It is called upon to make suffering here below comprehensible.[lvii]

The problem, as Levinas goes on to show, is that by making sense of suffering via faith in a metaphysical order, we eradicate the core feature of suffering – namely, that it is a kind of afront to our capacity for meaning. By domesticating suffering via optimistic narratives about the ultimate goodness, order, and meaning of the world, we may make it easier to cope with in our own case, but in so doing we downplay the horror of the other person's suffering. And as Levinas puts it, such "justification of the neighbour's pain is certainly the source of all immorality."[lviii]

But what is the alternative? Abandoning any sense of the world's meaning, Levinas argues, condemns us to "fatality" or "drifting" in the face of "blind forces which inflict misfortune on the weak and conquered."[lix] In other words, without confidence in the world as a place hospitable to the good, it's hard to maintain the sense of hope and moral purpose necessary for working towards realizing such a good world. Levinas, like Løgstrup, ultimately insists on the necessity of a kind of difficult faith, a faith "without theodicy," as Levinas puts it, which validates as meaningful not *all* suffering, but only the suffering of compassion and generosity.[lx] Putting oneself in the service of the other person – suffering for their sake – involves adopting a theodicy-style trust in the world as a place in which such compassionate suffering will matter, will make sense, will have an effect – but without thereby eliding the depth and horror of the other person's suffering. And this compassionate suffering helps to bring into being the very goodness that is the content of one's faith.

Here we see the essential notion of asymmetry return; the world is taken to be a place of goodness, but a goodness dependent on one's ability to take on the vulnerability and suffering of the other person without concern for how that will produce benefits in return. The moral danger of making sense of suffering – which is theodicy's task and the source of the moral hope that it provides – can only be alleviated if the meaning of suffering is to care for the vulnerable others with whom we share the world.

Conclusion

By thinking through the phenomenology of the mutual trust relationship and the nature of the asymmetries that characterize it, it has become clearer how one's default presumption to normative priority can be called into question from within the trust relationship. But focusing on the asymmetries of the interpersonal trust relationship will only get us so far: an orientation toward life as a gift – as a source of goodness over which the will has no sovereignty – also proved to be essential for neutralizing the fear and risk that gets in the way. With this concept, Løgstrup is articulating an idea of elemental trust in the world as an implicit background condition for human life as we know it, with specific acts of interpersonal trust only possible as such on the basis of this background hope that the world is a place conducive to the good. Through this orientation toward understanding human life as bigger than the individual, we see Løgstrup moving away from the individualism of so much moral theory and political philosophy. Though the ethical demand requires us to put *this* other person's needs ahead of our own, it also requires us to see that all of us are embedded in a milieu of broader meaning – an orientation that alleviates our anxiety about our own existential vulnerability and gives us hope that our acts of selflessness will not be in vain.

NOTES

[i] Knud Ejler Løgstrup, *The Ethical Demand (Selected Works of K.E. Logstrup)*, trans. Bjørn Rabjerg and Robert Stern (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 18.; henceforth ED, followed by page number. Throughout this paper I am indebted to Robert Stern's invaluable feedback and insightful work on Løgstrup, especially *The Radical Demand in Logstrup's Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

[ii] For a detailed discussion of how to understand the fundamentality of trust in Løgstrup's work, see Robert Stern, '"Trust Is Basic": Løgstrup on the Priority of Trust', in *The Philosophy of Trust*, ed. Paul Faulkner and Thomas Simpson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 272–94.

[iii] Eric Nelson makes the case that Rawls' early belief in the anti-Pelagian doctrine of original sin, with its skepticism about desert and its reliance on grace as a gift, informs Rawls' later commitment to egalitarianism. Eric Nelson, *The Theology of Liberalism: Political Philosophy and the Justice of God* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2019). For discussion see Andrew Lister, 'Theology, Desert, and Egalitarianism', *The Journal of Politics* 84, no. 3 (2022): 1263–1883.

[iv] Hans S. Reinders, 'Donum or Datum? K.E. Løgstrup's Religious Account of the Gift of Life', in *Concern for the Other*, ed. Svend Anderson and Van Kooten Niekerk Kees (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008), 177–206. I have raised these worries elsewhere on Levinasian grounds: Irene McMullin, 'Levinas and Løgstrup on the Phenomenology (and Metaphysics?) Of Moral Agency', *The Monist* 103, no. 1 (2020): 38–62.

[v] K. E. Løgstrup, *Beyond the Ethical Demand*, trans. Susan Dew and Heidi Flegel (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), 152.; henceforth BED, followed by page number.

[vi] Svein Aage Christoffersen, 'Sovereign Expressions of Life, Virtues, and Actions: A Response to MacIntyre', in *Concern for the Other: Perspectives on the Ethics of K. E. Løgstrup*, ed. Svend Anderson and Kees van Kooten Niekerk (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008), 167–75.

[vii] "…while Løgstrup begins in a Lutheran manner in his conception of our inturnedness, and accepts that we are unable to free ourselves from this inturnedness through our own efforts, he nevertheless does not appeal to faith in God as a way out, and hence to our obedience to his will, but rather to 'our fellow human beings' and the service we perform for them in coming to their aid. Thus, while on the Lutheran model that Olesen Larsen is exploiting, the self has first to be overcome through obedience to God before it is capable of love for the neighbour, on Løgstrup's account it is the call of that love *itself* which seems sufficient to achieve the overcoming of self that is required, which is how our liberation from inturnedness can be brought about by our 'fellow human beings' without any need for God at all. This then explains how Løgstrup's ethics can take a vital step in a secular direction, while also abandoning any appeal to a command model and its account of obedience." Stern, *The Radical Demand in Logstrup's Ethics*, 312.

viii Stern, 108, 282.

ix Jones, 'Second-Hand Moral Knowledge', 68.

x Russell Hardin, 'Trust and Trustworthiness', *Ethics* 107 (1996): 26–42.; Karen Jones, 'Trustworthiness', *Ethics* 123 (2012): 65.

xi Karen Jones, 'Trust as an Affective Attitude', *Ethics*, no. 107 (1996): 4.

xii Annette Baier, 'Trust and Antitrust', *Ethics* 96 (1986): 234.; Karen Jones, 'Second-Hand Moral Knowledge', *Journal of Philosophy* 96 (1999): 55–78.; Collin O'Neil, 'Lying, Trust, and Gratitude', *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 40, no. 4 (2012): 309.

xiii Carolyn McLeod, *Self-Trust and Reproductive Autonomy* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002).

xiv Karen Jones, 'Trust, Distrust, and Affective Looping', *Philosophical Studies* 176, no. 4 (2019): 955–68.

xv Jones, 'Trust as an Affective Attitude', 10.

xvi Victoria McGeer, 'Trust, Hope, and Empowerment', *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 86 (2008): 237–54.; Pamela Hieronymi, 'The Reasons of Trust', *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 86 (2008): 213–36.

xvii Margaret Urban Walker, *Moral Repair: Reconstructing Moral Relations After Wrongdoing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 83.

xviii Philip J. Nickel, 'Trust and Obligation Ascription', *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 10 (2007): 309–19.

xix See Darwall's argument that trust is in this sense not a "deontic attitude": Stephen Darwall, 'Trust as a Second-Personal Attitude (of the Heart)', in *The Philosophy of Trust*, ed. Paul Faulkner and Thomas Simpson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 40.

xx K. E. Løgstrup, *Kierkegaard's and Heidegger's Analysis of Existence and Its Relation to Proclamation*, trans. Robert Stern et al., Selected Works of K.E. Logstrup (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 61. For discussion see Robert Stern, 'Introduction', in *Kierkegaard's and Heidegger's Analysis of Existence and Its Relation to Proclamation (Selected Works of K.E. Logstrup)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), xv–xliv.

xxi Stern makes this argument in an unpublished talk entitled "Løgstrup on Forgiveness: Owed but not Demanded?"

xxii Stern, 'Introduction', 32–34.

xxiii One might characterize this as a distinction between 2 place and 3 place trusting relationships. See Richard Holton, 'Deciding to Trust, Coming to Believe', *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 72 (1994): 69.

xxiv As feminists have often noted, it is this latter kind of trust that cultures of violence undermine for women and other oppressed groups, which has worrying knock-on effects, as we will see later.

xxv Matthew Bennett, 'Demoralizing Trust', *Ethics* 131, no. 3 (2021): 511.

xxvi Bennett, 534.

xxvii Bennett, 531.

xxviii Bennett, 529–37.

xxix Bennett, 512.

xxx Jones, 'Trustworthiness', 71.

xxxi My interpretation of Løgstrup (and the ethical encounter) in this section is indebted to Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 2007).

xxxii For further discussion of the rhetorical aspects of Løgstrup's (and Levinas's) work, see McMullin, 'Levinas and Løgstrup on the Phenomenology (and Metaphysics?) Of Moral Agency'.

xxxiii McGeer, 'Trust, Hope, and Empowerment'.; H.J.N. Horsburgh, 'The Ethics of Trust', *Philosophical Quarterly* 10 (1960): 343–54.

xxxiv I am grateful to Bob Stern for this objection.

xxxv Walker, *Moral Repair: Reconstructing Moral Relations After Wrongdoing*, 82.; McGeer, 'Trust, Hope, and Empowerment', 240.

xxxvi Philip Pettit, 'The Cunning of Trust', *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 24 (1995): 218. McGeer, 'Trust, Hope, and Empowerment', 249. Sometimes trust can also be a burden. E.g., If someone has an ideal vision of you that is inconsistent with your own. Ultimately, you may decide that your own self-conception is the one to endorse, rejecting the obligations that the other person is ascribing to you. Indeed, in extreme cases, you might ultimately conclude that the other person's 'trust' is better characterized as manipulation or emotional coercion, since they are not trusting you to act on your goodwill and calling you out to your better self, but are rather attempting to bend you to their interpretation of who you should be, typically for their benefit. See Zac Cogley, 'Trust and the Trickster Problem', *Analytic Philosophy* 53 (2012): 30–47.

xxxvii McGeer, 'Trust, Hope, and Empowerment', 247–48. See also Irene McMullin, *Existential Flourishing: A Phenomenology of the Virtues* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), Ch. 5.

xxxviii McGeer, 'Trust, Hope, and Empowerment', 249. There is a huge empirical literature on this kind of aspirational self-becoming and the role that other people's perception and treatment can play in helping us become otherwise. In one study, psychologists found that children who were told that they *were* good at math performed better and tried harder than students who were simply *encouraged* to be good at math. R.L. Miller, P.

Brickman, and D. Bolen, 'Attribution versus Persuasion as a Means for Modifying Behavior', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 31 (1975): 430–31.; See also Rachana Kamtekar's claim that "the character traits we believe we have exert an influence on our behavior" and "It is not easy to say why attributions would have this effect: perhaps attributions affect our self-conceptions, which we try to live in accordance with; or perhaps attributions lead us to feel that others expect certain sorts of behavior from us and so to behave as expected." 'Situationism and Virtue Ethics on the Content of Our Character', *Ethics* 114 (2004): 490.

[xxxix] Jones, 'Trustworthiness', 73.

[xl] I have argued elsewhere that Levinas's answer to this problem is more compelling than Løgstrup's. McMullin, 'Levinas and Løgstrup on the Phenomenology (and Metaphysics?) Of Moral Agency'.

[xli] Stern, *The Radical Demand in Logstrup's Ethics*, 337. See also Bjørn Rabjerg, 'Løgstrup's Ontological Ethics: An Analysis of Human Interdependent Existence', *Res Cogitans* 12, no. 1 (2017): 93–110.

[xlii] Løgstrup studied with Heidegger in Freiburg in 1933–4 and published several works on his philosophy, in addition to writing about Heidegger in his dissertation. For Løgstrup's views on Heidegger's philosophy, see especially Løgstrup, *Kierkegaard's and Heidegger's Analysis of Existence and Its Relation to Proclamation.*

[xliii] Rabjerg, 'Løgstrup's Ontological Ethics: An Analysis of Human Interdependent Existence'.

[xliv] I am grateful to Matthew Burch for pointing out this connection. See also Darwall's discussion of love as an 'attitude of the heart' in Darwall, 'Trust as a Second-Personal Attitude (of the Heart)', 47.

[xlv] Rabjerg, 'Løgstrup's Ontological Ethics: An Analysis of Human Interdependent Existence', 103.

[xlvi] J.M. Bernstein, 'Trust: On the Real but Almost Always Unnoticed, Ever-Changing Foundation of Ethical Life', *Metaphilosophy* 42, no. 4 (2011): 395.

[xlvii] Matthew Ratcliffe, 'The Underlying Unity of Hope and Trust', *The Monist*, Forthcoming, 10.

[xlviii] Bennett, 'Demoralizing Trust', 533.

[xlix] Bernstein, 'Trust: On the Real but Almost Always Unnoticed, Ever-Changing Foundation of Ethical Life', 395. See also Karen Jones, 'Trust and Terror', in *Moral Psychology: Feminist Ethics and Social Theory*, ed. P. Des Autels and Margret Urban Walker (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), 3–18. Jones refers to this general trust as "basal security."

[l] Bernstein, 'Trust: On the Real but Almost Always Unnoticed, Ever-Changing Foundation of Ethical Life', 396. Ratcliffe, 'The Underlying Unity of Hope and Trust'., similarly considers empirical accounts of lost trust with regard to the Covid Pandemic. For details, see Tom Froese et al., 'The Pandemic Experience: A Corpus of Subjective Reports on Life During the First Wave of COVID-19 in the UK, Japan, and Mexico', *Frontiers in Public Health* 9 (2021): 1–7.

[li] Bernstein, 'Trust: On the Real but Almost Always Unnoticed, Ever-Changing Foundation of Ethical Life', 398. See also Jean Amery, *At the Mind's Limits: Contemplations by a Survivor on Auschwitz and Its Realities* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1998). and Susan J. Brison, *Aftermath: Violence and the Remaking of a Self* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003).

[lii] Bernstein, 'Trust: On the Real but Almost Always Unnoticed, Ever-Changing Foundation of Ethical Life', 399.

[liii] Bernstein, 398–99.

[liv] Ratcliffe, 'The Underlying Unity of Hope and Trust', 7. See also Matthew Ratcliffe, *Experiences of Depression: A Study in Phenomenology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), Ch. 4.

[lv] Here my account diverges somewhat from Bernstein and Ratcliffe, who focus their analyses on trust for other people, where I want to insist that we also have a spontaneous, pre-reflective (though defeasible) attitude of trust in the world as a broader context of meaning of which other agents are simply a part.

[lvi] As Stern puts it: "Nonetheless, it may seem that Løgstrup must be relying on a creation metaphysics in order to bolster his 'ontological optimism' regarding the goodness of life [but] rather his claim is closer to a transcendental one, namely that unless trust, compassion, openness of speech, and so on were the norm, then human life itself would no longer persist in the form it does given our nature as interdependent creatures, which is what makes these structures inherent to life itself, thereby constituting its goodness." *The Radical Demand in Logstrup's Ethics*, 283. For further discussion, see Hans Fink and Alasdair MacIntyre, 'Introduction to The Ethical Demand' (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997). and Reinders, 'Donum or Datum? K.E. Løgstrup's Religious Account of the Gift of Life'.

[lvii] Emmanuel Levinas, 'Useless Suffering', in *The Provocation of Levinas: Rethinking the Other*, ed. Robert Bernasconi and David Wood, trans. Richard A. Cohen (New York: Routledge, 1988), 160.

[lviii] Levinas, 163.

[lix] Levinas, 164.

[lx] Levinas, 164.

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