

Mayeda goes on to argue that, in addition to its legal relationships to individuals, the state has ethical relationships that impact upon identity. By distinguishing ethical from legal relations between individuals and the state, illegitimate social demands can be exposed and delegitimized. For example, the requirement of a medical determination of gender for the purposes of granting a passport, driver's license, or surgery is not an issue of rights. Understanding this exposes such requirements as unwarranted and unethical.

During the time that I was reviewing this book I chanced upon a botanical documentary. The presenter dutifully identified and described the male and female reproductive parts of a flower. This struck me as ludicrous, and akin to labeling yeast "male" and citric acid "female" when making wine. There is something like human culture's idea of "sexual" in the animal world, but even then, only among certain animals whose reproductive function is sufficiently analogous to humans'; but plants? Clearly, within nature there is a point at which the concept of "sex" stops making sense. What the essays in this book make equally clear is that there is a point within the human world at which the concept of "sex" stops making sense. Unfortunately, this point is not widely recognized, thereby compelling many to live in the non-space delimited by the male-female alternatives of sexed gender identity.

Evil, Political Violence, and Forgiveness: Essays in Honor of Claudia Card. Edited by ANDREA VELTMAN and KATHRYN J. NORLOCK. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books 2009.

Trudy Govier

This nicely produced book includes twelve essays arising from Claudia Card's work on evil and atrocity, with an afterword by Card. Given the significance of the topic, we may expect profound and provocative themes in the work, and indeed that was my experience.

Although contributors include Andrea Veltman, Kathryn Norlock, Todd Calder, Lynne Tirrell, Sarah Clark Miller, Robin May Schott, Ann Cudd, Laurence Thomas, Alice MacLachlan, Eric Russert Kraemer, and Maria Pia Lara, I attend here only to the chapters by Ann Cudd, Alice MacLachlan, Robin May Schott, and Eric Russert Kraemer.

Cudd explores the issue of humanitarian intervention from a feminist perspective. The term "humanitarian intervention" has come (somewhat perversely) to refer to intervention by *military* means by an outside party in a context wherein a state has shown itself unable or unwilling to protect citizens

from human rights violations. The notion that states have a responsibility to protect their citizens and that a failure to do so constitutes a justified departure from norms of sovereignty was developed in the 2001 United Nations report “Responsibility to Protect.” That report now forms the basis of official United Nations policy, which is derived from Just War Theory. To intervene, what are needed are a just cause, right intention, last resort, minimal force, and an expectation of good consequence. A just cause is a necessary condition for the subsequent four conditions, so Cudd focuses her attention on it. She argues persuasively that genocide is not the only evil that should be presumed to justify intervention: such matters as mass killing, sexual trafficking, and mass rape could also justify it. Cudd urges, significantly, that means of intervention should not be restricted to those of military force. They should also include nonviolent coercive measures such as embargoes, espionage, selective foreign aid, and, especially, education and consciousness-raising.

Kraemer argues that Card’s account cannot accommodate necessary evil and is insufficient because it fails to capture some highly significant cases. According to Card, evil acts must foreseeably deprive others of basics needed for their lives; hers is an atrocity-inspired account in the sense that atrocities provide paradigms, and evil is *culpable* wrongdoing. Kraemer argues that cases of necessary evil exist, and that in these cases Card’s culpability condition would not hold. (An act X may be a necessary evil and as such *non-culpable* if the only alternative to doing X is doing a still more evil act Y.) Kraemer also raises the interesting problem of social practices, such as female genital mutilation, which do impose intolerable harm but are such that agents may be unaware of the extent of that harm. Such agents cannot count as morally culpable since they are not responsible for the harm they (unwittingly) impose. Kraemer argues persuasively for an amended model according to which evil is intentional significant harm, and *necessary* evil is non-culpable significant intentional harm. He urges that we acknowledge important questions about responsibility that may be posed regarding actions grounded in social practices that are not understood as wrong because they are so common. We may wish to say that such actions and practices are evil, though they are not intended to bring intolerable harm to their victims. Kraemer seeks a notion of *social evil*, so that we may deem some institutions and practices that cause significant harm to be evil, even though the culpability of individuals within them may be in question.

MacLachlan explores the notion of a moral power, introduced by Card in relation to the topic of forgiveness. By virtue of having moral powers, agents may actually alter moral reality. Using the work of Christopher Wellman, MacLachlan explains moral power as the capacity of an agent X to bring about some morally significant consequence C, because some specific act of X’s implies C—given background facts about X and the circumstances of that act. When the question of forgiveness arises, a victim has a legitimate grievance against a perpetrator who

wronged him or her. He or she may “hang onto” the grievance or relinquish it. It is often assumed that the primary victim of a wrongful act has an absolute prerogative to forgive (or not to forgive) the perpetrator who committed that act. But some victims may be unscrupulous, abusive, unkind, or manipulative; for this reason there are valid moral grounds for criticizing victims’ responses to perpetrators. MacLachlan suggests that the prerogative to forgive may be better understood by thinking of it as a moral power. It may be more helpful to value agents’ capacities to choose or not choose forgiveness, rather than to value forgiveness itself. If we cease to think of the victim’s prerogative as absolute, we open the door to persons other than the primary victim of a wrong having the moral capacity to forgive its perpetrator.

Schott seeks to bring out the political dimensions of the concept of evil by considering war rape and enforced impregnation in times of war. These are attacks on the human reproductive capacity and on the very principles of political life. Supported, incited, and contextualized by intense group conflict, such evils are inflicted by individuals on others as members of collectivities. Schott quotes Susan Brownmiller’s statement that “rape is a deliberate, hostile, violent act of degradation and possession on the part of a would-be conqueror, designed to intimidate and inspire fear” (81). Rapes and forced impregnation in Bosnia in the 1990s were genocidal in intent. Schott says that these acts force social identities into chaos, because the next generation will be a reminder of torture: on her account, victims will lose all rights and lose their polity. At this point, I would welcome empirical evidence, because the matter strikes me as not entirely evident *a priori*. My own highly preliminary inquiries suggest that women’s responses vary. Some kill unwanted infants; others abandon them; others bring them up fondly with deceptive stories about their origin. Still, Schott is clearly right to insist that we explore the political aspects of this kind of evil.

This book deserves attention and careful study.

The Moral Skeptic. By ANITA SUPERSON. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Lisa Tessman

When I first saw Anita Superson’s *The Moral Skeptic*, I was excited to read it in part because I had not seen any sustained feminist treatments of the topic. The idea of the moral skeptic, I thought, is so ill-conceived in mainstream analytic philosophical discussions of moral skepticism that a feminist revision was long overdue; I was curious to learn what shape Superson’s feminist engagement