

Degrees of Responsibility

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1. Introduction

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2. Three ingredients of responsibility
3. Degrees of responsibility 1 (Causal contribution)
4. Degrees of responsibility 2 (Alternative opportunity)
5. Responsibility voids
6. Defining (resultant) moral luck
7. Conclusion

1. Introduction

'Degrees of Causation' (2009)

'Some General Results on Outcome Responsibility' (2010)

'Responsibility Voids' (2011)

'An Anatomy of Moral Responsibility' (in press)

(most of which is joint work with Matthew Braham)

2. Three ingredients of responsibility

Responsibility for outcomes

1. Agency
2. Causal contribution
3. Alternative opportunity

3. Degrees of responsibility 1 (causal contribution)

- Multi agent setting (game theory)

- NESS-test:

‘I make a causal contribution to (the realization of) A if, and only if, my action is a necessary element of a sufficient set of realized conditions (‘my action was necessary for some actual event to be sufficient for A’)

- The equivalence of causal efficacy and power

Public Good Index - Bhanzaff-index – Shapley-Shubik index

4. Degrees of responsibility 2 (alternative opportunity)

To be morally responsible for A there must have been some alternative action s^* to s such that

(a) s^* is eligible

(b) $p_i(\text{not effective for } A | s^*) < p_i(\text{not effective for } A | s)$.

That is, some alternative action had, ex ante, a higher ex ante probability of i not being effective for A (had a 'higher avoidance potential').

4. Degrees of responsibility 2 (alternative opportunity)

Other things being the same, *i* bears more moral responsibility for *A* if he does *s* than if he does *s** if, and only if, *s** is eligible and has a higher avoidance potential than *s* has.

Open question: under what conditions yield the two comparisons the same verdicts?

5. Responsibility voids

A game displays a responsibility void if there is a play of the game in which no one is responsible for the outcome.

Weak transparency/Strong transparency

WT: Never voids

ST: Equivalence of moral and causal responsibility

ST + FR: Concentration of all power (dictatorial game)

(With great responsibility comes great power)

6. Conclusion

- Relation between degrees of transparency, power and responsibility
- Voids and moral luck concern situations in which (two or more of) the judgments diverge
- Implications for free will debate: depends on the nature of the probabilities