Reports from the Department of Philosophy
University of Turku

CAN ORDINARY MORALITY SURVIVE THE CLIMATE CRISIS?

A Philosophical Analysis of Moral Demandingness and Climate Change

Mikko M. Puumala

Reports from the Department of Philosophy
Vol. 51

Can Ordinary Morality Survive the Climate Crisis?

A Philosophical Analysis of Moral Demandingness and Climate Change

Mikko M. Puumala

UNIVERSITY OF TURKU

SERIES EDITORS:

Olli Koistinen
Juha Räikkä

Department of Philosophy
University of Turku
FI-20014 Turku
Finland

ISSN 1457-9332
978-951-29-9425-0 (Print)
978-951-29-9426-7 (PDF)
Painosalama, Turku, Finland 2023

Written by
MSocSc Mikko Puumala
University of Turku
Faculty of Social Sciences,
Department of Philosophy, Contemporary History and Political Science, Philosophy
Doctoral Programme of Social and Behavioural Sciences

Supervised by
Professor Juha Räikkä
University of Turku
Docent Helena Siipi
University of Turku
Docent Markku Oksanen
University of Eastern Finland

Reviewed by
Docent Per Sandin
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences
Professor Arto Laitinen
Tampere University

Opponent
Docent Per Sandin
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

Chairperson (custos)
Docent Helena Siipi
University of Turku

Abstract

In this dissertation I examine how ordinary morality operates in the context of climate change, with a specific focus on moral demandingness. I will employ climate change as a conceptual stress test, to analyse how ordinary morality and its core principles can respond to climate change and the sacrifices required to mitigate it. The stress test reveals a conflict within the system of ordinary morality. On the one hand, ordinary morality's key regulative principle, called over-demandingness principle, requires that agents must not be required to perform overly demanding acts. On the other hand, ordinary morality's key moral principle, the no harm principle, requires that one must not cause unnecessary harm to others. But almost anything people do contributes to climate change, and thus causes harm to others. Not contributing to climate change would be extremely demanding. Thus, the two core principles are in conflict. I argue that ordinary morality can survive the climate stress test only by allowing more extreme demands, and I will show that this can be done without changing any of the core principles of ordinary morality. They require mere re-adjustments, although with the trade-off of accepting more extreme demands.

This dissertation consists of three interlinked and mutually supportive threads: an argumentative thread, a methodological thread, and an explorative thread. The argumentative thread builds an institutional argument from the adaptive limits of human morality, which claims that because of human moral psychological limitations mitigating climate change ought to rely on institutional approaches. This argumentative thread also forms the operational space for ordinary morality and the stress test: the moral demands that follow from the imperative to mitigate climate change are related to demandingness of complying with institutional approaches, and this compliance implies great sacrifices for the individuals. The methodological thread applies the method of wide reflective equilibrium to ordinary morality. The method is utilised to identify and analyse the background theories, principles, and considered judgments that constitute ordinary morality. The reflective equilibrium process will conclude in a new point of equilibrium where ordinary morality can accommodate more extreme demands and survive the climate stress test. The explorative thread examines the morally demanding conditions of modern world. I suggest that the world is 'morally far gone', that is, it has reached a state where following even the moral obligations that adhere to ordinary morality is extremely demanding. I argue that this moral far-goneness is not a reason to reject ordinary morality. While we may desire a morally 'clean slate', that is, a situation where most of our everyday activities are morally permissible and do not contribute to harming others, this clean slate morality should not be the end-goal of moral theorizing, rather, it should be the end-goal of moral action guided my moral theories.

KEYWORDS: Ordinary morality; Moral demandingness; Moral demands; Climate change; Reflective equilibrium

Tiivistelmä
Tässä väitöskirjassa tutkin arkimoraalin toimivuutta ilmastonmuutoksen kontekstissa, kiinnittäen erityisesti huomiota moraalin vaativuuteen. Käytän ilmastonmuutosta käsitteellisenä stressitestinä analysoidakseni arkimoraalin ja sen keskeisten periaatteiden kykyä vastata ilmastonmuutokseen ja sen torjumisen vaatimiin uhrauksiin. Tämä stressitesti paljastaa ristiriidan arkimoraalin muodostavassa uskomusjärjestelmässä. Arkimoraalin keskeinen säätelevä periaate, niin sanottu ylivaativuusperiaate, edellyttää ettei toimijoilta vaadita ylivaativia tekoja. Toisaalta arkimoraalille keskeinen moraaliperiaate, haittaperiaate, edellyttää ettei muille saa aiheuttaa tarpeettomasti haittaa. Mutta lähes mikä tahansa mitä teemme kontribuoi ilmastonmuutokseen ja siten aiheuttaa haittaa muille. Olisi äärimmäisen vaativaa olla kontribuoimatta ilmastonmuutokseen jollain tavalla. Näin ollen, nämä kaksi keskeistä periaatetta ovat keskenään ristiriidassa. Argumentoin, että arkimoraali voi selvitä ilmastonmuutoksen aiheuttamasta stressitestistä vain hyväksymällä myös äärimmäisiä vaatimuksia, ja näytän, kuinka tämä on mahdollista muuttamatta yhtäkään arkimoraalin keskeisistä periaatteista. Näitä keskeisiä periaatteita on vain hieman säädettävä, vaikkakin sillä kustannuksella, että on myös hyväksyttävä äärimmäisempiä vaatimuksia.

Tämä väitöskirja muodostuu kolmesta toisiinsa linkittyneestä ja toisiaan tukevasta punaisesta langasta, tai ajatusketjusta: argumentatiivisesta, metodologisesta ja eksploratiivisesta. Argumentatiivisessa ajatusketjussa muodostetaan institutionaalisen argumentin ihmisen moraalin adaptiivisista rajoista, joka väittää, että ihmisen moraalipsykologisten rajoitusten takia ilmastonmuutoksen torjumiseksi on käytettävä ensisijaisesti institutionaalisia ratkaisuja. Tämä argumentatiivinen ajatusketju muodostaa myös arkimoraalin ja stressitestin keskeisen toimintatilan: moraaliset vaatimukset, jotka seuraavat velvoitteestamme torjua ilmastonmuutos, liittyvät ensisijaisesti institutionaalisiin ratkaisuihin suostumiseen, ja niihin suostumiseen liittyy merkittäviä uhrauksia. Metodologinen ajatusketju soveltaa laajaa harkinnan tasapainomenetelmää arkimoraaliin. Kyseistä menetelmää käytetään tunnistamaan ja analysoimaan arkimoraalin muodostavia taustateorioita, periaatteita, ja harkittuja arvostelmia. Harkinnan tasapainomenetelmäprosessi johtaa uuteen harkinnan tasapainopisteeseen, jossa arkimoraali kykenee sisällyttämään itseensä myös äärimmäisempiä vaatimuksia, ja siten arkimoraali selviytyy stressitestistä. Eksploratiivinen ajatusketju tarkastelee nykymaailman moraalisesti vaativia olosuhteita. Ehdotan, että maailma on kaukana moraalisesti hyväksyttävästä, eli se on päätynyt tilaan, jossa jopa arkimoraalisten velvoitteiden noudattaminen on äärimmäisen vaativaa. Argumentoin, että tämä kaukana moraalisesti hyväksyttävästä tilasta oleminen ei anna perusteita hylätä arkimoraalia. Vaikka haluaisimme aloittaa moraalisesti “puhtaalta pöydältä”, eli tilanteesta, jossa suurin osa arkisista teoistamme on moraalisesti sallittuja eivätkä aiheuta haittaa muille, tällaisen puhtaan pöydän moraalin ei tulisi olla moraalisen teoretisoinnin päämäärä, vaan päinvastoin, meidän tulisi moraalisesti toimimalla pyrkiä moraalisten teorioiden avulla kohti moraalisesti puhdasta pöytää.

ASIASANAT: Arkimoraali; Moraalin vaativuus; Moraalin vaatimukset; Ilmastonmuutos; Harkinnan tasapainomenetelmä

Acknowledgments

As an undergraduate student, I struggled to maintain interest in philosophy. Although the lecturers were brilliant, I kept asking how any of this relates to anything (a common feeling among many philosophy students, I imagine). Like for many others, reading Peter Singer's famous 1972 article "Famine, Affluence, and Morality" permanently changed my relationship with philosophy. One can do practically oriented philosophy that engages with the world and yet tackle theoretically interesting and technical problems. What I liked best was the combination of a simple argument that is almost impossible to refute and its extremely demanding implications that are, at least for some, equally impossible to accept. For me, the most intriguing philosophy springs from conflicts like this. This dissertation is a study of a certain kind of conflict, namely, a conflict between ordinary morality and the limits it places on moral demands on the one hand, and climate change and the demandingness of the moral requirements to mitigate it on the other. I feel grateful that I have had the opportunity to study, research, and do the kind of philosophy that I find most interesting and intriguing.

If my aim was to show that something should be urgently done about climate change, there would have been plenty of good philosophical arguments already out there to support such a project. Moreover, there are moral theories that have no problem with extreme demands. But where's the fun, the intriguing conflict in that? Instead, I wanted to take ordinary morality, which often is perceived as a moderate orientation towards morality, and show that it *can* respond to climate challenge, and it *can* accommodate more extreme demands. If the idea that climate change ought to be stopped is taken seriously, and ordinary morality is not able to take it seriously, it would have been rather easy to just reject ordinary morality. Instead, my attempt was to adjust ordinary morality as little as possible to respect its core ideas and try to steer it towards a position where it can respond to climate change. My hope is that this approach succeeds in salvaging the sobering, anchoring, and common-sensical features of ordinary morality while simultaneously taking seriously perhaps the greatest threat humankind has ever faced.

I am very grateful to my dissertation supervisors Juha Räikkä, Helena Siipi, and Markku Oksanen for all their support, guidance, and dedication. Thank you Juha for all the important advice, for sharpening my argumentation, and for always challenging me to do better. Helena, I'm extremely thankful for all the time and effort you have put in this project, and for all the thoughtful and detailed comments that greatly improved the manuscript. You have certainly made me a better researcher. Thank you, Markku, for sparking my interest in

environmental philosophy, and for helping me find my way in this field. I have greatly enjoyed our long conversations that usually end up fantastically sidetracked. Many of those sidetracks have proved invaluable.

I'm very thankful to the dissertation reviewers, Professor Arto Laitinen and Docent Per Sandin, for their hard work and effort in examining the dissertation. Thank you, Professor Laitinen, for providing helpful feedback, and thank you, Docent Per Sandin, for agreeing to be the Opponent in the public defence.

I would like to thank Maj and Tor Nessling Foundation for a four-year research funding and a generous travel grant that has enabled me to attend conferences and build crucial networks throughout the process. I am also thankful to Alfred Kordelin Foundation, the Department of Philosophy, Contemporary History, and Political Science of the University of Turku, Doctoral Programme of Social and Behavioural Sciences of the University of Turku, and Turku University Foundation, for funding the finalization of the dissertation project.

The opportunity to travel to conferences and other events has been crucial for the research. Discussions with colleagues (of whom many have become dear friends) have been a great source of inspiration and guidance. This dissertation has directly benefited from helpful comments and questions in various events. In particular, early drafts of chapter two received valuable feedback in the NSU Nordic Environmental Ethics Winter and Summer Symposia 2021. Chapter three received important feedback in the Sicily Summer School in Environmental Humanities in Siracusa, 2022 (thank you Dale Jamieson and Marcello Di Paola for important comments), and the Congress for Doctoral Researchers in Philosophy in Tampere, 2022 (special thanks to Säde Hormio for very thoughtful and thorough comments on the manuscript, and Teemu Toppinen for insightful comments). An early draft on chapter four benefited greatly from discussion in the International Society for Environmental Ethics 2019 Summer Meeting in Eugene, Oregon (thank you Allen Thompson for important comments on an early draft of chapter four, as well as Kian Mintz-Woo for reading and commenting the draft). Thank you collectively for all the participants of these events!

I am also grateful for Allen Thompson and Marion Hourdequin, chairs of the International Society for Environmental Ethics, for giving the opportunity to organize the ISEE annual summer meeting 2021 online and the 2022 meeting in Seili island, Finland. The colleagues I met in these meetings have been a great influence for my research.

Thank you, Teea Kortetmäki for coordinating the NSU Nordic Environmental Ethics study circle with me during 2021–2023. Also, thank you, Anne Sauka and Linnea Luuppala, for carrying on the work with me. Moreover, I want to thank all the participants of the study circle. I have felt inspired by the great quality of work on environmental ethics in the Nordic-Baltic region, presented in these events.

I'm thankful for all the colleagues who have given much time and effort to read and comment various parts of the manuscript and work related to my dissertation project. Special thanks to Ilias Voiron for reading and commenting chapter three of this dissertation! Also, I am particularly indebted to all my friends and colleagues from *Metodimaanantai* ("*Methods Monday*"), a study group on philosophical methodology formed by philosophy doctoral researchers of the University of Turku. Together, we have studied and worked on philosophical methodology and methods, and our collaboration has made a great impact on my work and this dissertation. My heartfelt thanks to Jenna Aarnio, Mireille Isaro, Laura Puumala, Oskari Sivula, Tiia Topinoja, and Juho Vaiste. Thank you all for being an endless source of inspiration, for reading and commenting the whole manuscript and giving highly valuable feedback, for great times during our writing retreats in Estonia and Spain, and for making this job so much more fun! Oskari, thank you for your continuous support, ideas, and insights, and for being my partner-in-crime in countless of schemes. Also, a big thanks to Juho for helping a friend in need in a stressful situation.

It is often said that it takes a village to raise a child, and the same surely goes for doctoral researchers. I want to thank all my colleagues in the Department of Philosophy of the University of Turku. Thank you, Eerik Lagerspetz and Joseph Almog for helpful feedback in the philosophy research seminar, and all the participants of the seminars. Thank you, Polaris Koi for friendship and inspiration. Thank you, Elisa Aaltola for all the collaboration, guidance, support, and fun along the way, and for the opportunity to work with you as a postdoc researcher in your project! Big thanks to Hemmo Laiho for providing me valuable help with finalising the manuscript. Thank you, Jani Sinokki for long lunch breaks and even longer conversations, I have learned a great deal from our discussions. I also want to thank Valtteri Arstila, Corinna Casi, Thomas Crawley, Kinga Ciereszko, Stephen Gardiner, Henri Huttunen, Simo Kyllönen, Jari Kärkkäinen, Kirsi Lehto, Tony Milligan, Erik Persson, Christopher Preston, Hanna-Mari Salonen, Lars Samuelsson, and Susanne Uusitalo. Special thanks to Professor Paco Calvo and everyone at the MINT Lab for hosting me as a research visitor in Universidad de Murcia in Spring 2022.

I hope I have not failed to mention anyone who has shared and helped shape this journey with me, but if I have, my sincerest apologies. Your contribution has been valuable and valued.

Thank you, Miika for a lifetime of friendship, Mikael for always being there for me, and Siiri and Ville for quite literally giving us a home when we needed it. I want to thank Annika, Anton, Iida, Joel, Juha, Maiju, Piia, and Teemu, for friendship, support, and laughs. A special thanks to Johannes Ojansuu for sparking my interest in philosophy.

I'm thankful to my parents Raija and Railo, my brother Markus, and my whole family for their unwavering support. Kiitos äiti, isä ja Markus kaikesta tuesta ja rakkaudesta. Yliopistoon lähteminen, vieläpä opiskelemaan filosofiaa, oli varmasti meille kaikille suuri hyppy tuntemattomaan. En olisi uskaltanut tehdä sitä ilman teitä. Ilo onnistumisten jakamisesta kanssanne on ajanut minua eteenpäin. Kun on koti, mihin voi milloin tahansa palata, uskaltaa mennä niin pitkälle kuin jalat kantavat.

Finally, I want to thank Laura Puumala, my wife and companion, my closest friend and colleague, from the bottom of my heart. There are no words to describe the gratitude I feel. You have stood by me and, at times, carried me when I have needed it the most. I couldn't have done this without you, your support, help, and wisdom. Thank you for making every day exciting, and for sharing this philosophical journey with me.

Table of Contents

Chapter One. Ordinary Morality in the Face of the Climate Crisis

1.1. Ordinary Morality and Climate Change

Climate change is testing human beings in many ways. One of the tests concerns the moral nature of being a human: can morality as we know it provide guidelines both to steer us away from the climate crisis and to adapt us to inevitable changes on Earth? In moral philosophical literature, under the wide umbrella of *climate ethics*, there are many theories to explain and guide human behaviour. They tell us how to place responsibilities, share burdens, and live our lives ethically under the pressures of climatic and environmental change. This dissertation focuses on the question how climate change and ethics can affect our everyday lives, in terms of ordinary morality and moral demandingness. By ordinary morality, I refer to a common-sensical and moderate *orientation* towards morality that sets boundaries to what moral theories and prescriptions may demand from ordinary people in ordinary circumstances. Thus, ordinary morality is a *belief system* that regulates and limits the demands of morality, regardless of what specific system of normative ethics is in question. It is not as much action-guiding as it is theory-guiding, and its primary normative function is not to tell what moral agents should do but rather what normative ethical theories can and should tell agents to do. The aim is to understand the nature of moral demands made on human individuals, with all human flaws and proclivities, and how ordinary morality operates in the context of climate change. I will argue that ordinary morality must allow significantly greater sacrifices and more extreme demands than is customarily thought. From the perspective of individuals, these sacrifices and demands relate particularly to advancing more stringent climate policies and *complying* with the sacrifice-inducing policies. The challenge is to show how ordinary morality can remain theoretically intact without giving away its key regulative principles and common-sensical and moderate nature.

This research is in the field of climate ethics and moral philosophy. First, in chapter two I will analyse moral demandingness and what is meant by demandingness and related concepts. Second, in chapter three I will examine moral demandingness in the context of ordinary morality and the changing circumstances of modern environmental problems. Then, in chapter four I will consider how human moral psychology affects moral judgments and moral motivation regarding climate action. Finally, in chapter five I will argue for institutional approaches to stopping climate change (section 5.2.), suggest a

more demanding interpretation of ordinary morality (section 5.3.), and examine ordinary morality and the limits of ethics in the morally challenging landscape of today's world (section 5.4.). The research applies established methods of practical philosophy, the method of wide reflective equilibrium in particular. It will be used as a tool for analysis as well as a method of argumentation to assess the theoretical performance of ordinary morality in the context of climate change.

A significant part of the challenge with ordinary morality, climate change, and moral demandingness can be traced to the adaptive limits of human morality and how the moral circumstances have changed radically: our moral psychology has not adapted to solve modern super problems like climate change. According to the evolutionary mismatch theory, traits that were adaptive in their original *environment of evolutionary adaptedness* can lose their usefulness or become maladaptive due to rapid changes in the environment. (Buss 2013.) On an evolutionary scale, the social environment humans inhabit has changed drastically in a relatively short period of time with the introduction of agriculture, civilizations, and, more recently, machinery using fossil fuels, air travel, and the internet. To what extent are the traits constituting human moral psychology evolutionarily mismatched to the modern environment?

This question has occasionally surfaced in the climate ethics literature (e.g., Jamieson 2014, 102) and in moral philosophy in general, perhaps most famously in Ingmar Persson's and Julian Savulescu's (2012) claim that we are essentially hunter-gatherers wielding nuclear weapons and thus *unfit for the future.* Although there is sound scientific knowledge on the dangers of climate change, people are not acting accordingly. This problem is often referred to as the knowledge-action gap or motivational gap. (Peeters et al. 2015.) People may also deploy different kinds of moral disengagement strategies (Bandura 2016) to justify their inactivity and resistance, exhibiting moral corruption as they evade their responsibilities. (Gardiner 2011a, 45–48.) Consequently, even though there is good scientific evidence about the dangers of climate change and its dire effects on present and future humans and non-humans alike, the response has been slow and underwhelming. There is knowledge on what should be done, but what is lacking is effective action. This problem is often referred to as a motivational gap. (Peeters et al. 2019.) The problem leads to *moral disengagement strategies* (Ibid.; see also Bandura 2016) and moral corruption (Gardiner 2011a), as the need for action is recognized but taking responsibility is averted. Even worse, the moral corruption leads to shadow solutions that only seemingly tackle the issue. (Gardiner 2011a, 45–48.)

These challenges have many important implications for actions against climate change, and this dissertation focuses on two of them: 1) individualist approaches and their problems, and 2) the conflicts within ordinary morality. The first implications of this analysis are practical and ethical. If it is difficult for individuals to grasp the climate problem (Gardiner 2011b) and gain motivation to act (e.g., Jamieson 2006, 477; 2013, 38.), it is practically and ethically questionable to tackle climate change with individualist approaches. This is because a) individualist approaches are unlikely to work, and b) if they do not work, it is unreasonable to place responsibility on individuals. I will call this argument *the argument from the adaptive limits of human morality*. It contests the prospects and ethics of free market based and consumerist models. The argument supports institutional approaches instead. The second set of implications are theoretical and methodological. If human moral psychology is mismatched to responding efficiently to problems like climate change, it is questionable that ordinary morality could respond to climate change either. Going against ordinary morality (or the moral common sense) is often treated as a theoretical vice for a moral theory, but climate change may be a case that ordinary morality is ill-equipped to respond to. This has important moral philosophical implications, as ordinary morality can be taken as a measure of moral theoretical credibility.

Many ideas presented in this dissertation could be applied to other crises such as pandemics or biodiversity loss, and to issues like world poverty. However, I have chosen to focus on climate change as it affects all these problems by exacerbating, escalating, and intensifying them in many ways. It is important to note that different types of climate action – that is, mitigation, adaptation, and compensation – are often related to these more specific problems like biodiversity loss. When we mitigate climate change, we mitigate biodiversity loss. When we build resilience in local communities with development co-operation, we may simultaneously support adapting to climate change. Our responsibilities for these matters can also be aligned. So, for the purposes of this dissertation, climate change is an interlocutor of many global problems that individuals contribute to and suffer from. Also, most of us are both perpetrators *and* victims of these interrelated problems, to a varying degree.[1]

In the following sections I will describe the main themes, topics, and concepts of this dissertation, starting from how climate change is taken as a stress test for testing ordinary morality's theoretical performance (section 1.2.).

[1] Although I acknowledge that the use of 'us' can be problematic in moral philosophy, I think that in the case of climate change it is appropriate, as almost everyone contributes to climate change somehow, and 'we' collectively cause it.

This is followed by a discussion on how moral demandingness relates to climate change and ordinary morality (section 1.3.). After that, I will make a few remarks about the level of inquiry in this dissertation in terms of collective and individual levels (section 1.4.). Then, I will describe the methodological approach of this dissertation and how the method of reflective equilibrium is applied here (section 1.5.). Finally, I will give an overview of the chapters and main threads of this dissertation (section 1.6.).

1.2. Climate Change as a Stress Test for Ordinary Morality

In *A Perfect Moral Storm*, Stephen Gardiner suggests that "if either [*political institution or philosophical theory*] does not respect the claim that failure to address a serious global threat is a criticism of it, and a potentially fatal one, then it is inadequate and must be rejected." (Gardiner 2011a, 217–218.) In this dissertation, ordinary morality is exposed to a similar test. This climate stress test (from now on 'stress test' for short) is a diagnostic philosophical tool for identifying and pinpointing theoretical problems within the system of ordinary morality by assuming that climate change requires urgent action that implies great sacrifices from individuals. The stress test is analogous to stress tests used for banks where a bank's performance is evaluated with hypothetical economic shock scenarios. (See Segal 2021.)

Ordinary morality does not necessarily provide a firm theory of what we should do, but rather a framework for assessing moral theories and their credibility. Ordinary morality gives constraints on what can be morally required from individuals, and how demanding those requirements can be. However, climate change seems to challenge some of the principles and the general moderate orientation of ordinary morality if climate action requires much sacrifice from individuals. Climate change provides a conceptual and ethical stress test for ordinary morality.

I will remain vague on the exact contents of climate action, and simply assume that whatever action is necessary for stopping anthropogenic climate change, it requires some great sacrifices from the individual. These great sacrifices do not necessarily refer to any particular sacrifice, but rather to the overall changes in lifestyle individuals must make to succeed in stopping climate change (described further in section 1.3.). Thus, for simplicity, I will often use the expression 'stopping climate change' and 'climate action' to refer to the kinds of (here unqualified) actions, policies, and institutional designs whose aim is to mitigate, adapt to, or compensate the effects of climate change so that a climate catastrophe is averted. It is the role of individuals to act upon, establish,

maintain, and comply with these actions, policies, and institutional designs. The demandingness aspects of different specific ways to stop climate change would require separate assessment, which goes outside the scope of this dissertation. Also, to commit to the stress test, I will assume that there is no easy technological solution out of the problem. What is under question in this stress test is if ordinary morality provides proper tools for effectively responding to climate change.

Exposing ordinary morality to the stress test also allows a more general assessment of ordinary morality's performance in the modern circumstances since the future seems to hold an increasing number of problems that are as wicked, complex, and urgent as climate change. Imagine global pandemics, but far more dangerous and infectious than COVID-19. Imagine a global food production system collapse. Imagine an eruption of a super volcano, and people slowly drowning in ash while the globe freezes over. Imagine life after an asteroid impact or nuclear warfare. Imagine Mars settlements and an interplanetary cold war period between Terrans and Martians. These scenarios are not mere emergencies, but more or less irreversible catastrophes that will change life for a long period of time. Climate change is not an emergency restricted to time and place like many other disasters are, but a permanent change in circumstances. It is not a gunshot wound, but a cancer that we must learn to live with, and hopefully, control and eventually get rid of. Events like these are sometimes called existential risks. They invite us to think about humanity's long-term future. These questions have received much attention recently, in the works of philosophers like Toby Ord (2021) and William MacAskill (2022). The long-term future and existential risks challenge accounts like ordinary morality and force us to re-think some of our ethical concepts, theories, and their structures. In such destructive scenarios, humanity is forced to accept a new reality, where everyday commodities cannot be taken for granted, and ethical considerations are made more complex by taking the future and future generations into account.

For this, the stress test examines how ordinary morality operates in the 'new normal' and if it provides the necessary tools for preventing or mitigating some of these events. Further, I am mostly interested in how ordinary people can be moral in such conditions, and if the so-called ordinary morality can provide guidance therein. Also, exposing ordinary morality to the stress test helps evaluate when, where, and why it fails, if it fails, in an everyday context. As the 'ordinary' life becomes 'extraordinary', should morality follow suite?

1.3. Moral Demandingness

What is it to make a *moral demand*, that is, the thing that has a varying degree of demandingness to it? A moral demand is taken to be a moral requirement made for some agent. When using phrases like 'morality requires that' or 'demandingness of morality', the dissertation will remain agnostic about the source and truth status of such claims. These claims could be read as 'one ought to do X because morality requires it', assuming some moral realist account, or merely as 'one ought to do X for the sake of being consistent with your other beliefs about morality'. I will favour the latter reading. Although this metaethical matter is interesting and important, it is sufficient to note that by the very least, they are claims about consistency and coherence in a moral belief system.[2] The question is, then, is some belief (a considered judgments, principle, or a part of background theory) consistent with other beliefs and does it fit coherently into a system formed by different beliefs. The main method, reflective equilibrium, is compatible with this approach. Although the method is often seen as coherentist, some have claimed that reflective equilibrium can also be a foundationalist method if some of the beliefs in a belief system are taken to be fundamental. (See Rechnitzer 2022, 19; DePaul 1986.) For clarity, I will avoid referring to moral truth or truth values, but I do not wish to dispute the possibility that moral propositions could have truth value, or that there could be fundamental moral propositions from which all other propositions can be deduced.

Climate change has fuelled a lot of discussion about moral demandingness and the limits of what can be morally required from individuals. (See Fragnière 2016.) Some have argued that mitigating climate change is not the concern of individuals, but rather of governments and corporations. (Sinnott-Armstrong 2005.) Others have noted that while it is questionable that individuals could have positive duties – or duties of beneficence – related to climate change, it is plausible to assign negative duties to refrain from contributing to climate change. (Broome 2012, 65–66; see also Fragnière 2018.) However, because the modern (western) way of life is very CO2 intensive, even negative duties – which are usually taken to be less demanding – could lead to highly demanding climate obligations. (Lichtenberg 2010, 558–560.) The demands could be high enough to trigger the so-called demandingness objection, which is an objection

[2] An additional question is *who* makes a demand when we say that morality demands something. Again, I remain agnostic on this. Answers can vary from other individuals to the moral community and morality itself, whatever that may be. Additionally, it could be the author of a philosophical text who can be interpreted as the one making the demands, and everyone who accepts the premises must follow to the conclusion for the sake of consistency.

made to refute a moral theory, principle, or argument due to its implying over-exceeding moral demands on the agent. According to Marcel van Ackeren and Michael Kühler (2016b, 4), such over-demandingness usually occurs when compliance with a moral demand reduces the agent's goods or standard of life below some acceptable level. The moral demand is also over-demanding if the costs are disproportionate to the benefits of complying with the demand.

This dissertation follows what van Ackeren (2018, 317–318) calls the standard view of demandingness, where demandingness is understood mainly as *costs* to an individual. Demandingness could be also understood as *difficulty* of following one's moral duties. (McElwee 2016.) However, to refine the standard view, van Ackeren (2018, 330) incorporates both difficulty and the additional demandingness factor of *restriction of options*, to costs. They are factors that increase demandingness. Sometimes for the purpose of analysis, it is useful to make a distinction between these three factors as (pure) costs, difficulty, and restriction of options, even if they all ultimately count as costs. Thus, when something is demanding even in one of these ways, it can be read generally as 'costly to an agent'.

There are many ways how climate change can increase demandingness in the sense of being costly to the agent. In the context of climate change, pure costs are the costs that fall on the agent for following a climate obligation. These are the 'costs' of cancelling a vacation in some distant paradise or the concrete economic costs of compensating the CO2 emissions of flights, 'costs' of not buying a second car (and losing 45 minutes of free time due to commuting by bus), giving up the pleasure of eating meat, or the cost of buying a patch of forest so it can remain a carbon sink. Thinking about demanding climate obligations in terms of costs is a straightforward way to determine what demands befall to the agent from complying with a given climate obligation. Climate obligations can be difficult to follow, even for ordinary people.[3] For example, it can be psychologically difficult to admit guilt in being a contributor, or one's identity can be heavily influenced by a livelihood that causes excessive amounts of CO2 emissions. Finally, there are restrictions on the options that follow from climate obligations, like not taking a much-needed vacation in some distant paradise to relax after a long stretch of stressful work. These are often very similar to costs,

[3] Additionally, to the relatively rich and powerful, who will be dubbed as *extraordinary people*, the demands can be even greater. The level of demandingness is highly dependent on the different capacities of different agents (Carbonell 2016). The extraordinary people in this context are, for instance, major contributors to climate change (owners of oil companies, large-scale cattle farmers) or in an important position of power (politicians, high profile social media influencers and celebrities).

as they can be read as opportunity costs, but it can be useful to separate them from costs that directly affect one's available resources.

There is one more important distinction to be made regarding demandingness and moral philosophy, namely the distinction between morally demanding principles and morally demanding moral demands. Following Shelly Kagan's (1989) terminology on minimalism, extremism and moderation, Brian Berkey identifies both *minimalism/moderation/extremism about principles* and *minimalism/moderation/extremism about demands*.[4] For example, extreme moral principles do not necessarily generate extreme moral demands. In fact, Berkey claims that moderates have methodological difficulties to show that moderate principles lead only to moderate demands. Instead, in the modern world, things being as they are, even moderate principles can lead to extreme demands. (Berkey 2016, 3018–3019, 3033.) For example, a simple no harm principle can lead to extreme demands if we consider the New Harms, such as the harms that we contribute to with our mundane and everyday choices like buying groceries or flying to visit a friend abroad. (Lichtenberg 2010, 572–573.) If I am morally obligated to avoid causing harm to others, my options would indeed be very limited because almost anything I do contributes to climate change, and hence, causes harm to others. Yet, it does not make sense to call the no harm principle in itself extremist, but rather it follows from the circumstances that this very moderate principle produces extreme demands. Then, the demandingness objection could not be used directly against the principle.

In a sense, Brian Berkey has provided the blueprints for much of the discussion on ordinary morality in this dissertation. Berkey (2012) has discussed moderation about demands and examined moderate principles, and later (2016) developed these ideas further and made important distinctions about moderate demands and principles. Berkey shows the argumentative route for showing how ordinary morality can and should allow more extreme demands in certain circumstances. Furthermore, climate change construes such circumstances. These ideas form the basis for chapter three. Berkey (2014) also has discussed

[4] Throughout the dissertation I will follow the classification of minimal/moderate/extreme morality, and, respectively, moral minimalism, ordinary morality, and moral extremism. This classification comes from Kagan (1989) and is also adopted by Berkey (2016). These labels are like the small currency symbols next to a list of hotels in a travel guide: one €-sign for budget, two for mid-range and three for expensive. Similarly, the prefix minimal/moderate/extreme will indicate how costly it is for an agent to follow that kind of morality, that is, how demanding the morality in question can be.

intuitions about demandingness and climate related duties and made an argument about unreliable intuitions. This reliability of intuitions will be discussed here in chapter 4. I will test and confirm some of Berkey's ideas and provide a further analysis of moral demandingness and ordinary morality, as well as a diagnosis of some of the problems Berkey raises.

1.4. Individual Level and Collective Level

Relating to the individual and collective level, I will consider two approaches to reacting to climate change. The first is a broad group of what can be called *individualist* approaches. By individualist approaches I refer to the general idea that we should leave it up to individuals to react to climate change. This could also be called a consumerist approach, or free market environmentalism, but the individualist approaches I have in mind also include spontaneous grassroots level action coming from civil society. Thus, they can also be bottom-up approaches.

The second is perhaps an equally broad group of what can be called institutional approaches. Again, I have no distinct set of policies in mind, but rather the general idea that we should leave it up to the government or other officials to react to climate change. This could include restricting certain freedoms by law, but also softer and even market-based (although not *free* market) approaches of directing the behaviour of individuals through climate taxes, climate nudges, or even environmental education. The key to these institutional approaches is that they are designed for the purpose of mitigating, adapting to, or compensating climate change and its many effects. These can be characterised as top-down approaches.

There is a third approach presented in the literature, namely the cultural or culturalist approach (Oksanen 2014). There is no doubt that culture significantly affects individuals' behaviour and changing some aspects of a culture could be an efficient driver for change at the population level. For simplicity, however, I will omit this culturalist approach here but remain open to the possibility that culture mediates reactions to climate change. In such cases, I will treat culturalism alongside institutional approaches as the relevant operational mechanism of both approaches is top-down and both culture and society can impose demanding costs on the individual.[5]

[5] I am not claiming that culturalism is purely a top-down approach. Individuals contribute to culture, and both influence each other. But this is also true of many parts of society, especially in democracies. Individual citizens elect their representatives who make the laws individuals then comply with. What is important for the inquiry at hand is that there are forces external to

In addition to understanding the moral philosophical aspects of humanity's current moral predicament, a more applied goal of this research is to assess ways to justify directing people's behaviour in situations in which unprompted action is unlikely or challenging for moral psychological reasons. I will argue that the individualist approaches to stopping climate change are not likely to succeed and might also place an unreasonable burden on individuals. These challenges to individualist approaches follow from our moral psychology. Instead, institutional approaches can rise to this challenge. What is left, morally, for the individual is to comply with the institutional designs. This, however, is not unproblematic either and can also be highly demanding. This dissertation assesses these demands of compliance and how much can be morally required from the individual. Climate change is a difficult problem in this context: the reasons it occurs and the means to end it are well known, but the collective seems to lack political will and proper or just mechanisms to take efficient and necessary measures to mitigate it. One of the aims of this dissertation is to find ways to justify directing people's behaviour to respond effectively to climate change. In this task, my problem-centred moral psychological focus is on the individual, while the solution-centred focus is on collective solutions to a collective problem. This task is taken in the framework of ordinary morality and its prospects of supporting collective solutions.

While the problem of climate change is a collective one and seems to call for collective solutions, there are at least three reasons to pay attention to individuals in this context. Firstly, individuals are ultimately the ones who make the decisions. Surely, these are culturally embedded individuals who are forced by many social and structural forces, and often they must make their decision in liaison with other individuals, hopefully in a co-operative manner. A politician must think about the next election (and other so-called political realities), the executives of companies must answer to the shareholders, and so on. But, even so, if anything effective is ever to be done, much of it must be done by individuals. Interestingly, the politically powerful and economically privileged individuals are in a key position to make extremely good decisions. I will call these individuals the 'extraordinary people' to mark a difference to 'ordinary people' who do not possess such resources or political power.

Second, even the actions of those individuals with less political and economic power are not completely inconsequential. Even if one is not able to fix the bulk of the problem, if there is a chance to do even a little good, there

---

the individual, out of the direct control of individuals, which are also in many ways costly to the individual. Hence the treatment of both as 'top-down', even if there are some important elements coming from the bottom level and vertical interaction among individuals.

may be substantial moral reasons to do it. If I am standing on a beach and there are twenty children about to drown, I must wade into the water and save as many as I can even if I know I cannot save all or even most of them. The demands of morality seem to all but diminish by the severity of a moral problem. If it did, then, unintuitively, the bigger the problem the less anyone would need to do about it. Following Peter Unger's (1996, 41) reasoning, one is not exempt from the moral responsibility to save a drowning child just because saving one child does not fix the general problem of there being drowning children in the world. Similarly, even if reducing my CO2 emissions does not stop the climate change, there may be some demand on me to reduce my emissions, nonetheless. However, a sacrifice should be measured against the achieved benefits, and in this sense climate change differs from drowning children. Saving a child is more consequential and tangible and the benefit is far easier to identify, while with climate change this is far less clear. Yet, the consumption occurring in individual households is sometimes seen as a low-hanging fruit for reducing CO2 emissions. (See Vandenbergh et al. 2008; Peeters et al. 2019, 427.) In such views, individuals are made to bear the burden. This makes individuals an interesting target for moral philosophical inquiry about the acceptable level of demandingness. This leads us to the third point.

Thirdly, even if the actions and omissions of individuals were inconsequential in mitigating climate change, individuals bear the burdens of effective climate action – namely more taxes, higher costs of many goods, unemployment due to dying industries, and less luxuries to have. Even worse, these individuals should be the ones to endorse these costly and unpleasant policies, or at least not actively protest them. (See Fragnière 2016, 808–809.) This double responsibility to endorse and comply with something that has tangible, self-directed, and immediate negative effects, and only long-term, partly invisible, and other-directed positive effects, can be morally extremely demanding. Although I argue for institutional approaches in working against climate change, I will consider the immediate effects they have on individuals. Regarding this, moral demandingness is one question, but the feasibility of a policy is another important one. Climate action is cumbersome, so we should be interested in how the individual fares under strict climate policies. So, in short, the focus of this dissertation is on the individual, but in relation to collective solutions.

1.5. Methodological Overview of Ordinary Morality in a Wide Reflective Equilibrium

This dissertation utilizes the method of reflective equilibrium. Reflective equilibrium has been used in many ways and taken many forms. In its simplest form, it is a process of reflecting back and forth between considered judgments and principles, until a coherent, non-conflicting, and consistent set of beliefs is formed. When such coherence and consistence within a belief system is found, a reflective equilibrium has been reached. This is sometimes called the *narrow* version of reflective equilibrium. *Wide* reflective equilibrium includes a third level of beliefs in the form of background theories. (Daniels 2020; Paulo 2020; Rechnitzer 2022, 18.)

The method of reflective equilibrium is associated with John Rawls (1971), who in turn based it on Nelson Goodman's (1955) work. The method has developed much since, and recently the components of the method have changed so that the reflection happens between commitments and a system in the foreground, grounding it on background theories, information, and assumptions. The main difference with the former usage is that commitments and the system denote different functions rather than certain types of content or form. The commitments can include beliefs, considered judgments, emotions, or even non-propositional content, while the system will work as a systematized framework for the commitments. Also, the background theories are taken to be more fixed, whereas in Norman Daniels' (1979) formulation the background theories are also reflected on and changed when necessary. (Rechnitzer 2022, ch. 2.) Another development has been the introduction of a double-wide reflective equilibrium. Instead of adding a new level of beliefs, it assigns contents to the background theories which function to eliminate or re-evaluate certain types of considered judgments based on their reliability. (Greene 2016 140.) The inquiry in this dissertation will start with the general framework of a wide reflective equilibrium as it provides the tools for identifying and analysing the contents of ordinary morality on the three levels of considered judgments, principles, and background theories. Later, the reflective equilibrium process proceeds towards a double-wide reflective equilibrium where certain considered judgments are eliminated or re-evaluated based on the background theories discussed in this dissertation.

In this dissertation the method of reflective equilibrium will be used more explicitly than is typical. Tanja Rechnitzer (2022, 5–6), citing Beauchamp and Childress (2013), notes that while some do declare that they use this method, it is not often used very explicitly, nor are there many examples in the literature of its explicit use. The benefit of using the method explicitly is that it helps

analysing the contents of ordinary morality from the perspective of moral demandingness. It also gives better access to assessing the theoretical cost of maintaining different beliefs on different levels in the system. Finally, it helps adjusting the system so that it is consistent and helps identifying and potentially eliminating conflicting contents. An additional benefit is that this helps communicating the different findings and observations and discussing their implications and problems. It is expected that communication will also be easier to a multidisciplinary audience, as it is easier to tell which contents are more philosophical or normative, and which are based on empirical research or are descriptive. The inclusion of background theories makes it also easier to accommodate empirical facts and theories to the system. Another reason for using (explicitly) reflective equilibrium is that some of the key literature this dissertation relies on has also referred to the method. For instance, Berkey (2016) takes reflective equilibrium as a framework for assessing the relation of principles and demands.

There are a few distinctions to be made between different uses of the method of reflective equilibrium. As Rechnitzer (2022, 6) notes, there are many ways to use reflective equilibrium and it would probably be more correct to speak about methods of reflective equilibrium, in plural. It can be, for instance, used as a method for justifying beliefs. Here the approach is to use the method as a general framework for philosophical inquiry, so that it provides structure for discussion. Another, related distinction between philosophical methods as argumentative methods and analysis methods also can be made. The argumentative use of reflective equilibrium is related to the justificatory use of reflective equilibrium. If a system reaches a point of reflective equilibrium, it gives at least some reasons to accept it. As an analysis method, reflective equilibrium is taken as a general framework for analysing the relations of different beliefs on different levels of inquiry, and how compatible and coherent they are. Further, this analysis reveals the core ideas of ordinary morality on the three levels of reflective equilibrium. I believe philosophical methodology has this dual-use nature that also applies more generally. For instance, thought experiments or analogies can be both used for argumentative purposes, or merely as part of analysis. Sometimes analysis precedes the argumentative approach. Here, I will opt for taking the more general framework approach, along with the analysis use of reflective equilibrium, especially in section 3.3. to identify the initial position for ordinary morality. However, sometimes steps towards argumentation are taken. In particular, throughout section 5.3. and specifically in 5.3.4. this argumentative use will be applied when arguing for a new point of equilibrium.

These methodological choices support the aims of this dissertation. The aim is not to argue for ordinary morality, to show that it is the best orientation to morality out there, or even that it is an epistemically justified position. My aim is much more limited. Rather, I want to show that one can consistently and coherently commit to ordinary morality, but in order to do so, one must accept that ordinary morality not only allows more extreme moral demands, but in fact requires them in the context of climate change. The initial position (discussed in section 3.3.) does not allow this kind of move, but I argue that the new point of equilibrium does (discussed in section 5.3.4.). Reflective equilibrium will be used for analysing ordinary morality, to identify its initial contents, and then proceed with the reflective equilibrium process to show that if one wants to be consistent and reach the equilibrium in their beliefs, they must also accept that ordinary morality can be morally more demanding than it is typically considered to be. If ordinary morality is the last bastion for defenders of more moderate demands in times as dire as present, I want to show that it can be breached and overtaken. However, this does not mean that I am arguing against ordinary morality. On the contrary, I am sympathetic to the view that people should not have to sacrifice much to be moral, but in pressing circumstances it may be necessary, and moral theories should be able to respond to threats like climate change. They should pass the climate stress test.

There are some elements in Rechnitzer's account that will be utilized here as well. Firstly, Rechnitzer provides a helpful list of criteria for reflective equilibrium that provide structure for the analysis. In a reflective equilibrium:

1. "The resulting commitments and the system are in agreement;
2. The resulting commitments and the system are supported by background theories;
3. The system does justice to the relevant theoretical virtues;
4. The resulting commitments respect the input commitments adequately;
5. The resulting commitments have independent credibility; and
6. The resulting position is at least as plausible as all available alternatives." (Rechnitzer 2022, 35, 40.)

In what follows, I will show how the project at hand seeks to fulfil these criteria, although in a slightly modified way. Rechnitzer (2022, 20–21), citing also Van der Burg and Van Willigenburg (1998, 12) notes that there are many *methods* of reflective equilibrium, so the method can be used in a multitude of ways, and with different goals. I will also try to show what kind of goals the method applied in this dissertation has, and how it will be applied.

First, a few words about terminology. Rechnitzer has adopted a terminology of commitments and systems from Brun (2013; 2016; 2020), Elgin (1996, 2017), and Baumberger and Brun (2017; 2021) instead of the perhaps more classic "Rawlsian" terminology of considered judgments, principles, and background theories. 'Commitments' resemble the level of considered judgments, but they could also include beliefs and even non-propositional contents like emotions. The function of the 'system' is to clarify and systematize the commitments so that they do justice to the different pragmatic-epistemic goals. (Rechnitzer 2022, 22–23.) The important difference between commitments and the system is in their function in the reflective equilibrium, not their content or form. 'Agreement' between commitments and the system refers to coherence and the possibility to infer commitments from a system. (Rechnitzer 2022, 18–19.) While I do appreciate their conceptual decisions to opt for terms that describe the different functions rather than content or form, in this dissertation I will retain with the more traditional scheme of background theories, principles, and considered judgments. There are a few reasons for this. I am interested in considered judgments and their reliability. For the purposes of this dissertation, the literature it relies on, and the observations I aim to make, focus on considered judgments is more suitable. Commitments are too broad a class to be discussed because I want to point out the problems *in* considered judgments, even if they are only one type of a commitment. Considered judgments are formed either by use of reason or by intuition.

I will limit this inquiry to having two input commitments that the resulting considered judgments, principles, and background theories should respect. They are based on two basic intuitions discussed by Berkey (2014), called the *Mitigation-Obligation Intuition* (MOI) that there is a moral obligation to mitigate climate change and *Anti-Demandingness Intuition* (ADI) that morality should not be overly demanding and. Accordingly, the first commitment is that climate change ought to be stopped, and the second commitment is that morality should not be excessively demanding. Reasons to hold the first commitment have already been provided in this chapter, but the second commitment requires some explanation. A reason to respect input commitments in the first place is that they make sure that the subject of inquiry is not abandoned during the process of reflective equilibrium. (Rechnitzer 2022, 28.) The first commitment, that climate change ought to be stopped, risks abandoning the subject – ordinary morality – and going for more effective, less constrictive approaches. Thus, the second commitment safeguards the subject of this dissertation, because non-excessive demands are at the core of ordinary morality, as will be seen in chapter three. Also, because the aim is to show that ordinary morality

must be able to accommodate even extreme sacrifices to pass the stress test, and can be extremely demanding in the context of climate change, the commitment to non-excessive demands is there to reassure the proponents of more moderate morality that ordinary morality's core ideas are respected throughout the project. The term *excess* is key here. The commitment does not say that morality cannot be extremely demanding, but only that it cannot be excessively so. Excess has to do with proportionality of costs, and not just thresholds, as will be seen in chapter two. Because both commitments, that climate change ought to be stopped, and that morality should not be excessively demanding, seem to be widely endorsed in moral philosophy, I take them to have independent credibility.

The chosen theoretical virtues that the resulting position, the new point of reflective equilibrium, should do justice to are consistency, stability, and frugality. These are based on Michael Keas' (2018) discussion on theoretical virtues. In Keas' account, internal consistency is part of the class of coherential virtues, in addition to internal coherence and universal coherence. I take it that the reflective equilibrium process itself is guided by an aim to greater coherence between different beliefs that support each other in a belief system. By consistency I refer to three things. Firstly, the resulting beliefs in the system of ordinary morality should be consistent with one another. Secondly, they should be consistent from case to case if the cases are sufficiently similar with one another. Thirdly, the resulting beliefs should remain consistent through changes in a case if the case remains qualitatively similar.

This is related to the theoretical virtue I call stability. This is close to Keas' (2018) account on durability which belongs to the virtue class of diachronic virtues, together with fruitfulness and applicability. Durability refers to a theory's ability to survive testing by new data. In my account, stability in the reflective equilibrium process refers to this testability in the sense that the belief system, and the beliefs in all three levels, should hold their ground as long as it is viable. When a reflective equilibrium is reached it stays stable unless new discoveries are made (the background theories change) or significant qualitative changes in the circumstances emerge (the considered judgments change).

This, again, relates to the theoretical virtue I call frugality, which means that new principles are introduced, and old ones are discarded only when new types of problems emerge. It comes close to Keas' (2018) account on simplicity, which belongs to the class of aesthetic virtues along beauty and unification. Simplicity refers to a theory's ability to explain same facts as rival theories but with less theoretical content. I take it that the reflective equilibrium process should proceed with as few principles as possible, but that it also should resist

coming up with new ones as long as is viable. Change in the severity of a problem, for instance, is usually not a reason for coming up with a new principle, if the same principle can be applied even if it is more demanding when matched to the severity of the problem.[6] Thus, the gist of frugality is not merely the more positive aim to operate with as few principles as possible, actively eliminating unnecessary ones, but a more negative and conservative attempt to limit new principles from being introduced without particularly weighty reasons.

At times, I will refer to theoretical costs of maintaining some beliefs. The talk about costs denotes that some move in the process of reflective equilibrium is costly in a way that it endangers the balance, threatens to cause conflicts and incoherence, or is in some other way problematic. Rechnitzer's (2022, 40) account refers to weights, so that for example some commitments can outweigh others, or different weights can be assigned to different commitments. While this is an elegant approach and allows putting different beliefs in ordinal scale to assess the overall justification of a belief system, here assigning such weights would only overcomplicate things, since the purpose is not to show that ordinary morality is justified. So, I will retain the much blunter tool of talking about theoretical costliness.

The method of reflective equilibrium has also been criticized. For instance, Singer questions the trustworthiness of intuition and goes as far as to question the methods of reflective equilibrium, as it relies too heavily on intuition. (Singer 2005.) Others have criticized the method on similar grounds. (See Paulo 2020.) This dissertation takes a different approach, following Joshua Greene's (2016, 140) idea of a *double-wide reflective equilibrium*. Instead of abandoning the method of reflective equilibrium because of unreliable intuitions, it will be adjusted to take the unreliability of intuition better into account.

With this methodological approach, there are a few dangers that should be addressed first. Firstly, one can ask whether ordinary morality is merely a strawman that no one really subscribes to. However, this project is not an argument against ordinary morality. Rather, I argue for changes in the system of ordinary morality, but I try to steer as close to the original as possible. This is a project of running diagnostics on a certain set of beliefs I believe are

[6] The theoretical virtues of consistency, stability, and frugality applied here do not add anything new to the list of theoretical virtues typically present in philosophy. (For a fuller list, see Keas 2018.) Rather, they are hybrids of multiple theoretical virtues, or slightly modified theoretical virtues, to match this project. Rechnitzer (2022, 31) notes that theoretical virtues can also be very specific, and I have made some of the general theoretical virtues more specific to fit the purposes of this dissertation.

characteristic of ordinary morality and flagging its main challenges. The goal of such troubleshooting is to salvage what is salvageable.

Secondly, one could claim that the resulting new point of equilibrium is just my favoured position that supports certain pre-selected principles and outcomes I had in mind in the case of climate change. This accusation is not entirely false. The research question is about how much sacrifice morality can require from an individual to stop climate change. The goal is just that – stopping climate change – and the same goal is included in the input commitments. However, there are already full accounts that detail what to do about climate change and that put no limits to how much morality can require. Against those views, the demandingness objection can be raised, and usually such objections are anchored in some system of ordinary morality. By taking ordinary morality as a starting point for the reflective equilibrium analysis, I stay committed to those anchoring, sobering qualities of ordinary morality. However, my worry is that ordinary morality, at least in its initial form, is impotent in answering to the threat climate change poses. I start the diagnosis by identifying and assuming the background theories, principles, and considered judgments characteristic of ordinary morality, and then begin to question whether they can all be held in the reflective equilibrium against the stress test of climate change.

1.6. Overview

This dissertation has three interlinked threads, developed throughout the chapters. Together, the three threads expose the need for re-adjusting ordinary morality and provide a pathway towards a new position on ordinary morality that allows more extreme demands. The first thread is *argumentative*. There is an argument that I call *the institutional argument from the adaptive limits of human morality* developed throughout the dissertation and supported directly or indirectly by separate arguments presented in the ensuing chapters. Some arguments will support the institutional argument directly by forming its premises. Others will be more indirect, lending support by increasing the argument's soundness and plausibility or explaining away some of the confusion or counterintuitive aspects of the argument. Most of the argument's premises come from moral psychological literature, discussed in chapter four, and the institutional argument is presented in the full in chapter five. With this first thread, I argue that climate change ought to be stopped relying first and foremost on institutional approaches because individualist approaches are inefficient, unlikely to succeed, and over-demanding. Institutional approaches

can also be highly demanding, but this demandingness is argued to be compatible with ordinary morality. Thus, institutional approaches are also compatible with the input commitments that climate change ought to be stopped and that morality should not be exceedingly demanding. For the overall aims of this dissertation, one of the upshots of the argumentative thread is that even if the individualist approach is not taken, there remains extreme climate related moral demands for the individuals. This clarifies the operational space for ordinary morality and shows that there remain extreme demands that ordinary morality must be able to encounter somehow.

The second thread is *methodological*. The method of reflective equilibrium will be deployed as an analysis method that identifies philosophical elements for a common, yet often underdefined and underdeveloped, framework for moral philosophical theorizing, the so-called ordinary morality. These elements will be analysed on three levels: the level of considered judgments, principles, and background theories. The aim is to show that ordinary morality can survive the stress test of climate change only if it accepts more extreme demands. The reflective equilibrium process shows how this position is coherently and consistently reached. With this second thread, I argue that ordinary morality passes the stress test only if it can accommodate more extreme demands, and that it can do so without changing any of its core principles. The new point of equilibrium developed through the reflective equilibrium process can pass the stress test and respect the two input commitments. This route is taken to respect the input commitments and do justice to the theoretical virtues. Adjustments in ordinary morality are not taken lightly, and thus it is important to first understand what ordinary morality is, what are its core principles and ideas, how they relate to each other, and what are the most subtle adjustments sufficient yet necessary for ordinary morality to survive the stress test and better accommodate extreme moral demands.

The third thread is *explorative*. The chapters of this dissertation will explore, explain, and exhibit how it has become increasingly demanding to behave morally in the modern world. These are not direct arguments, although they provide indirect support for the institutional argument, and for the shift in the point of equilibrium. These explorations will include the role of demandingness and related concepts in moral philosophy, the demands specific for climate change and climate action, how the world has rapidly changed, how, consequently, humans are mismatched to this change, and how, further still, ordinary morality is mismatched to this change. This thread will increase the understanding of our current predicament. It will be concluded that the world is 'morally far gone', and this has implications for moral theorizing as well. With

this third thread, I argue that the end-goal of moral theorizing should not be a "clean slate morality" in the sense that all moral theories are matched to the prevailing circumstances so that they do not become over-demanding. In my view, this kind of approach to moral theorizing is problematic because it adjusts moral demands so that they are mostly moderate, and thus seems to offer most agents a clean slate – no extreme demands regardless of the state of the world. Rather, a "clean slate morality" should be the end-goal of moral action (guided by moral theories) in the sense that the world is shaped according to the moral theories. If something is judged to be extremely demanding, it is more of an observation about the state of the world and how the moral theories operate therein, rather than a normative claim that there is something wrong with the moral theories themselves. The more morally far-gone the world is, the more demanding the moral theories are likely to be.

Chapter two makes a general overview of some of the recent literature on moral demandingness, demandingness objection, and related concepts like the principle of ought-implies-can, the class of supererogatory acts, and feasibility. Each concept is also discussed in relation to climate change. The chapter describes what kind of moral demands and demandingness issues are related to climate change, for whom, and with what intensity. These issues are also discussed on the level of individuals and collectives. The demandingness concepts discussed and developed in chapter two will provide grounds for the rest of the dissertation. Demandingness is taken to be a key concept for understanding ordinary morality, and the challenge climate change poses for it. Climate action, which is taken to comprise of mitigating, adapting to and compensating of climate change, may require great sacrifices from individuals. Ordinary morality is aversive of high moral demands. If these sacrifices are morally required from an individual, ordinary morality may have problems in responding to climate change. Understanding this conflict and its source is important for assessing the demandingness of the institutional argument of this dissertation, for the reflective equilibrium analysis, and finally, the demandingness conditions of a morally far-gone world.

Chapter three analyses ordinary morality and forms the initial position, starting the reflective equilibrium process for ordinary morality on the three levels of background theories, principles and considered judgments. This analysis forms a basis for the final chapter's proceedings with the reflective equilibrium. It is suggested that the background theories should incorporate scientifically informed views on climate science and moral psychology, that the principles should be divided into moral principles (proper) and regulative principles. Moreover, that demandingness objection's proper target is on the

level of principles, not on considered judgments, which are more properly targeted by demandingness complaints. It is noted that ordinary morality's moral principles are mostly negative, which reflects its moderate spirit. However, climate change challenges this because even negative duties can generate extremely demanding moral demands. Brian Berkey's (2016) distinction between minimalism/moderation/extremism about principles and minimalism/moderation/extremism about demands is deployed to save ordinary morality from either collapsing into minimalism or extremism. Rest of the chapter explores how ordinary morality responds to changes in circumstances, especially in cases where initially moderate principles begin to generate more extreme demands.

Chapter four discusses the nature of climate change, human moral psychology, and the adaptive limits of human morality. It takes Stephen Gardiner's (2011a) idea of climate change as a perfect moral storm, and Dale Jamieson's (2014, 102–103) idea of human limitations to respond reliably to climate change as the hardest problem. It treats these as two complementary stories that help understand the full extent of the challenge climate change poses. Climate change produces a motivational problem, and a reliability problem for moral intuitions. These make it both very difficult and unlikely that individuals are able to respond effectively to climate change. To understand this problem, Joshua Greene's (2016) dual process theory of human moral psychology and moral judgment is utilized. Because intuition suffers from tribalistic biases, it is unreliable, and because climate change is a modern and unfamiliar problem, we lack the necessary experience that could train our intuitions to respond adequately to such problems. Further, humans seem to be morally mismatched with the modern environment. (Buchanan and Powell 2018, 245, 248–249; Persson and Savulescu 2012.) The chapter concludes that there are adaptive limits to human morality, and this makes responding to climate change particularly difficult.

Chapter five concludes this dissertation. It brings together the three interconnected threads developed throughout the dissertation to weave together a general understanding of the moral arena of modernity. The chapter consists of three parts. The first part assembles the key argument of this dissertation, the institutional argument from the adaptive limits of human morality, that concludes that it ought not to be left for individuals to stop climate change, but rather to institutions. The second part makes the full reflective equilibrium analysis and produces a new point of equilibrium for ordinary morality which has a principled stance against changes in circumstances that is better suited to respond to modern problems like climate

change. The third part paints a larger picture of a morally far-gone world and discusses how demanding it can be for ordinary people to be moral in this world, and what are this dissertation's implications for moral theorizing.

Chapter Two. Moral Demandingness and Climate Change

2.1. Introduction

There is an urgency to respond to the climate crisis. If humanity keeps emitting CO2 at the rate of year 2022, only nine years is left of the carbon budget that could keep global warming within the 1.5 degrees increase. (Friedlingstein et al. 2022.) A carbon budget is used to demonstrate the estimation of how much CO2 can be emitted until a relatively safe limit, 1.5 degrees warming of global average temperature from pre-industrial times, is breached. (Hoegh-Guldberg et al. 2022.) To keep humanity on track with the 1.5-degree limit, something needs to change in how people live and conduct their everyday lives. To commence the climate stress test, described earlier in section 1.2., it is assumed that stopping climate change requires significant sacrifices in material wellbeing, and a significant change for the modern way of life. Further, to keep in line with the first input commitment that climate change ought to be stopped, there are climate related duties individuals must follow. This puts pressure on ordinary morality, as following climate duties creates moral demands, and their level of demandingness is likely to be high due to the urgency and potential scale of climate action. This chapter examines moral demandingness in the context of climate change.

Climate change and moral demandingness has received attention recently in the related philosophical literature. For example, Augustin Fragnière (2016; 2018) and Brian Berkey (2014; 2019) have discussed the demandingness and nature of climate related duties. There has also been a growing interest in issues with moral demandingness in particular (e.g., Chappell 2009; Berkey 2016; McElwee 2017) and limits of morality in general (e.g., Kagan 1989; van Ackeren and Kühler 2016a) ever since Peter Singer's famous "Famine, Affluence, and Morality" (1972) appeared. Also related concepts like feasibility (e.g., Gilabert and Lawford-Smith 2012; Kenehan and Katz 2021), supererogation (e.g., Benn 2016), and the principle of ought-implies-can (e.g., Stern 2016) have received much attention, together (e.g., van Ackeren and Kühler 2016b; 2016b; Benn 2016) and separately.

One of the main issues with moral demandingness and climate change is this: There is great urgency to mitigate, adapt to, or compensate the effects of climate change, but it is costly and requires sacrifices from some people. (Caney 2014.) At the same time, ordinary morality holds that people should be able to pursue their life goals and live out their ordinary lives. Efficient climate action

and ordinary morality seem to conflict. This also puts the input commitments, that climate change ought to be stopped, and that morality must not be exceedingly demanding, in conflict. To understand this conflict, this chapter examines moral demandingness and its related concepts.

For the wider methodological thread of this dissertation, this chapter seeks to answer what kind of factors affect demandingness, and how climate change relates to demandingness. These factors are then incorporated to the moral theoretical background theories that are part of ordinary morality. The chapter lays the groundwork for future chapters, particularly chapter three, which asks if it is possible to both take seriously the threat of climate change *and* keep ordinary morality from becoming overly demanding. If not, there may be grounds for increasing the theoretical cost of maintaining some of the judgments implied by ordinary morality, perhaps shifting the point of equilibrium towards a more extremist position. This calls for a re-evaluation of some core concepts and principles, so that a new equilibrium fit for the age of climate change can be reached. For ordinary morality, if a system of moral beliefs leads to overly demanding obligations, the principles and judgments that are very demanding can be seen as cost-increasing factors that either need to be justified or eliminated in the reflection process. But taking climate change seriously makes it impossible to eliminate these cost-increasing factors, so something else must be changed. The aim of this chapter is to provide conceptual tools for better grasping the moral demandingness issues pertaining to climate change.

This chapter begins by examining what demandingness is and who it concerns in the context of climate change. There seem to be both individual and collective accounts to climate duties, and while effective responses to climate change happen on the collective level, it is claimed that a plausible case for some individual climate duties, especially for certain groups of individuals, can be made. For everyone else, there is still a duty to comply with climate policies, so it is concluded that mitigating climate change nevertheless affects individuals and requires sacrifices from them, thus making demandingness concerns relevant. After that, the so-called demandingness objection is analysed in the context of climate change, and whether there is a restriction on climate related sacrifices. The chapter concludes with a brief overview of related concepts, namely the principle of ought-implies-can, supererogatory acts, and feasibility, which are all assessed in the context of climate change and in relation to moral demandingness. After this conceptual work with demandingness, the wide reflective equilibrium process for ordinary morality can begin.

2.2. What Is Demandingness?

Sometimes following one's duty or doing what is morally required comes with sacrifices. In fact, it seems that almost any meaningful moral act (and omission) requires at least some effort or is somehow costly to the agent.[7] In everyday life situations these efforts and costs can be small and almost unnoticeable, but living in a world of climate change, military conflicts, natural disasters, biodiversity loss, production animal suffering, and absolute poverty adds things to the moral to-do (and not-to-do) list. When these things are considered, it can be more *demanding* to be morally good. This moral demandingness is the focus of this chapter. The topic is usually associated with demands that are particularly high, unnecessary, disproportionate, or impossible to fulfil.[8] Claiming that one has a duty to follow through with such demands is often considered over-demanding. However, demandingness and over-demandingness are separate issues, although the latter conceptually relies on how the former is defined. (Van Ackeren and Kühler 2016b, 1–2.)

Demandingness issues are concerned with morality demanding something from an agent, for instance when there is a conflict between the agent's self-interest or wellbeing and demands of morality. Demandingness issues also concern the nature of this conflict. (Van Ackeren and Kühler 2016b, 2.) Issues about over-demandingness are concerned with *when* does morality become too demanding and what is an acceptable level of demandingness. This way notions about over-demandingness set limits to what is acceptable for a normative theory, and what it can reasonably demand from individuals. The question is then should normative theories that are exceedingly demanding be changed some way or be outright rejected. (Van Ackeren and Kühler 2016b, 2–3.) This section makes a general overview of the main issues with moral demandingness, examines what are the sources of demandingness, and what

[7] This is not to deny that for some people being good to others in their everyday lives can be so fulfilling and joyful and comes so automatically that no effort or cost is needed – they give a smile to the bus driver, buy only organic fair-trade products, and help their neighbours paint the fence without giving it a second thought. However, as is soon noted, even their actions cause CO2 emissions, and being nice to others in a world like this is not probably going to be enough. These instances of everyday goodness seem superficial when considered in the larger scheme of things. Or perhaps someone feels great satisfaction with living a completely carbon neutral, even carbon negative, lifestyle. However, these kinds of preferences are treated as an anomaly in this dissertation.

[8] Proportionality is also important for the second input commitment, that morality should not be *exceedingly* demanding. Excess here is relative to costs and benefits, and something is exceedingly demanding when costs far outweigh the benefits.

forms demandingness takes. Issues with over-demandingness (when morality is *exceedingly* demanding) are discussed in more detail later.

As a typical example of extremely demanding morality, many writers (e.g., Berkey 2014, 165; McElwee 2016, 19–20; van Ackeren and Kühler 2016b, 3; van Ackeren 2018, 316; Fragnière 2018, 647) mention Peter Singer's famous "Famine, Affluence, and Morality" (1972), which sparked much debate, and many threads of discussion on demandingness can be traced back to it or as reactions to it. Singer (1972, 231) starts with a simple principle:

> "If it is in our power to prevent something very bad from happening, without thereby sacrificing anything morally significant, we ought, morally, to do it."

Then proceeding to an argument by analogy, Singer compares saving a life of a drowning child to a child one could save by donating money to charity. If the cost (muddy clothes) of saving the drowning child clearly is not a morally significant sacrifice, then neither is a small donation a significant sacrifice. But there are countless children in desperate need of help, and for each it is true that a small donation is not a morally significant sacrifice. When iterated as recurrent opportunities to help (equivalent to real life), the implication of the main arguments made in Singer 1972 is that following the principle which is by itself very intuitive and difficult to refute makes morality extremely demanding. Demandingness often concerns individual acts – namely, it is a question of the most demanding demand morality can reasonably make. However, in addition to magnitude or degree, it can also concern frequency. (Van Ackeren and Kühler 2016b, 2.) For example, Singer's case is not problematic until iterated. (For discussion, see Sin 2010.)

Demandingness objections are often associated with consequentialist theories, like Singer's, and especially with act-consequentialisms that are good-maximizing and assume impartiality. (Van Ackeren 2018, 316; Berkey 2016, 3016.) Maximizing theories require that the agent always chooses the morally best course of action, which in the case of act-consequentialism is the act that produces the best outcome. Impartiality adds to it that the agent must not differentiate between their own or their loved ones' interests and the interests of others, as they all merit equal consideration. However, as van Ackeren (2018, 316) notes, more recent studies have associated demandingness also with other normative ethical theories such as contractualism (Hills 2010), virtue ethics (Swanton 2009), and Kantian or deontological ethics (Pinheiro Walla 2015; van Ackeren and Sticker 2015). Demandingness, then, is not solely an issue for

different forms of consequentialism, but for any normative ethical theory or moral prescription that asserts moral demands that require some sacrifices from the agent.

There are many sources of demandingness that also increase the overall demands of morality. For example, van Ackeren (2018, 316) lists climate change, world poverty, future generations, and animal rights. These could also be summarized as sustainability issues. An additional layer of demandingness comes from balancing between problems with climate change and world poverty. A typical example of this is reliance on fossil fuels: humanity needs to stop using them to mitigate climate change, but simultaneously many people are dependent on cheap fossil fuels. (See Shue 2014.) Humanity must manage both issues at once, adding the layer of difficulty of balancing between planetary boundaries and wellbeing of people and other living things. If this is a prerequisite for living sustainably or making societies sustainable, does it mean that a sustainable way of life is also highly demanding?

Including animals in moral consideration increases demandingness as the number of moral patients increases. There are more beings[9] whose wellbeing should be considered, and thus additions to the list of morally required and forbidden acts. Peter Singer (1981, 120–124) has conceptualized this as the expanding circle of morality, when morality expands to new groups of beings. Acknowledging the moral considerability of non-human animals and ecosystems has required new conceptual and ethical frameworks for accommodating these new groups to old ethical theories. This is sometimes called ethical extensionism. (See Newman et al. 2017, 233.) Intergenerational ethics has included future generations to the moral frame. (See Nolt 2016.) The recently surfaced theory of longtermism intensifies this trend and its demandingness even further. The core idea of longtermism is that if future generations have moral value, and we can affect far-future generations, and the size of future is in expectation extremely vast, then the morally best or worst things we can do often concern future generations. (See MacAskill 2022.) Even if only future human generations are considered, longtermism increases moral demandingness remarkably. It is increasingly demanding to behave morally in this world. In many ways, ordinary morality seems outdated, like a last remnant of the pre-industrial world as the moral circle is not only expanding but exploding.

[9] Recently there has also been discussion on including plants (e.g., Kallhoff, Di Paola and Schörgenhumer 2018) and widening the sphere of animal ethics to include insects, as well. (See Mikhalevich and Powell 2020.)

One way to frame the sources of demandingness is dividing them into negative duties and positive duties. Fragnière notes that positive duties – or duties of beneficence or goodness – like the duty to save the child and donate to charities in Singer's case, have been the typical source of concerns about exceedingly high moral demands. Negative duties – or duties not to harm others, or duties of justice – on the other hand, are not the typical suspect of being overdemanding. Yet, the world has changed so that even innocent-seeming everyday actions can harm others,[10] for example by exacerbating life-threatening climate change. (Fragnière 2018, 647–648.) If there are climate related negative duties, things intensify even further. Climate change threatens all abovementioned groups: future generations of human and non-human animals, plants, and ecosystems. If contributing to climate change harms others and there is a stringent negative duty not to harm others, it may turn out to be excruciatingly demanding to be moral.[11] Additionally, negative duties are often considered perfect duties, that is, they are always obligating, whereas positive duties are considered imperfect and thus obligating only in special circumstances. Having a perfect duty not to harm others can become extremely demanding in the context of climate change, as the duty is always obligating. (See Lichtenberg 2010, 558.) Also, from the perspective of political philosophy, perfect duties are sometimes seen as enforceable, so they can be justifiably enforced by society.

In addition to different sources of demandingness, there are different demandingness factors to consider. As mentioned in section 1.3., van Ackeren (2018) identifies three main demandingness factors from the literature: demandingness as cost, demandingness as difficulty, and demandingness as restriction of options. The cost factor is very straightforward: Demandingness increases as the costs of complying with a moral prescription increase. In this case, the sacrifice one must make to follow a moral demand include things like resources or diminishing of wellbeing. For instance, following a negative climate duty could mean using public transportation to get to work which costs time, or investing on a new climate friendly heating system.

The difficulty factor refers to the effort or skills required to successfully execute an action. Fulfilling an obligation may be difficult for the agent, for example, because it requires a high level of willpower (see Chappell 2017) or

[10] Here Fragnière (2018, 648) refers to Lichtenberg's (2010) concept of New Harms. The concept is further discussed in chapter 3 and section 3.4.1.

[11] However, negative duties might not be as stringent as they seem. (See Fragnière 2018, 661.) This topic will be returned to in section 2.3.1.

enduring immense pain. Some difficult[12] actions can be costly because they are difficult, because of the painfulness, feelings of frustration and insecurity, or opportunity costs related to them. (Van Ackeren 2018, 319; McElwee 2016, 25–26.) Others are difficult *because* they are costly,[13] for example for the effort or motivation required. (Van Ackeren 2018, 319.) There are also difficult but beneficial actions like filling a crossword puzzle that are *costless difficult actions*, but it is not likely that they can be seen as source of demandingness in the sense that this kind of demandingness could be used to question the plausibility of a moral demand. (Van Ackeren 2018, 319, 322–323; McElwee 2016, 25–26.) Climate change increases moral demandingness in terms of difficulty in many ways. A much-discussed difficulty is related to moral motivation (see e.g., Peeters et al. 2019), the main issue being that climate change has a very complex nature (see Gardiner 2011a) and it is difficult to understand one's responsibilities or contributions pertaining to it. These features will be discussed in more detail in chapter 4. Also, mitigating climate change can require letting go of many things people find important or joyful, or require changing their habits. Special difficulties are involved if a way of life is challenged because of climate change, or if one's livelihood becomes vilified because it contributes heavily to climate change.

Restrictions of options as demandingness factors are especially interesting in the context of climate change. They make omissions a central aspect of demanding climate duties. It is not only what individuals (positively) must do, but what they (negatively) are *not* supposed to do. Van Ackeren (2018, 327) identifies three ways that restrictions can be demanding:

> 1) "by prohibiting actions that agents want to pursue and that would increase their well-being more than other possible courses of action, in which case the prohibition is directly costly";
> 2) "by limiting the scope for changing or developing our desires, preferences, intentions, projects and the like, and making our decisions about this more profound"; and
> 3) "by making us live in a less open society".

For example, even simple joys in life like Sunday drives may cause harm to others because they contribute to climate change, and thus one should avoid

[12] In van Ackeren (2018, 319) and McElwee (2016, 25–26) these are labelled as difficulty costs, but here it is sufficient to speak of difficulties regardless of their being costs or not.

[13] In this way difficulty increases demandingness either as an independent factor or an additional cost factor. (See van Ackeren 2018, 321.)

them. (See Hiller 2011.) Restricting the option to take a nice relaxing Sunday drive can decrease one's wellbeing, becoming an opportunity cost. Following van Ackeren, even if one does not like Sunday drives, restricting Sunday drives in general bar the individual from developing a habit of Sunday drives. Perhaps seeing other people do it makes them wonder if Sunday drives could after all be their thing as well. Similarly, a society becomes less open if things like Sunday drives are restricted, forbidden, or face moral judgment by others, for example with climate shaming (See Aaltola 2021.)

Why would frivolous things like Sunday drives be of any concern for moral philosophy, let alone from the perspective of demandingness? Admittedly, there are more pressing moral problems in the world, and a multitude of ways individuals can commit far worse moral wrongs. But such mundane things like Sunday drives are the kind of things people generally care about in their everyday lives. If Sunday drives, vacations abroad, or eating cheese and the like are somehow restricted, it severely restricts the options agents can have. Taken together, giving up all these seemingly innocent life pleasures becomes considerably demanding. Also, adding to the demandingness, things that did not seem to be of moral concern before have suddenly become morally questionable. (Lichtenberg 2010; discussed further in section 3.4.1.)

The latter two factors can also be reduced back to costs. For example, van Ackeren (2018) defends the so-called standard view of demandingness, which holds that all types of demandingness can be ultimately understood in terms of cost to an agent.[14] If the view is correct, difficulty and restriction of options can be translated into costs, and there is no source for demandingness apart from costs. (Van Ackeren 2018, 318.) However, van Ackeren (2018, 330) also recognizes the usefulness of viewing difficulty and restriction of options *as costs*, and there are indeed benefits of having difficulty and restriction of options as part of the analysis. So, for the purposes here, it is not important whether difficulty and restrictions translate back into costs or not, but rather that they are key factors to be considered in any careful analysis on the demandingness of climate related duties and obligations. Regardless of how these factors translate back into the standard view, demandingness will be analysed in terms

[14] Some, like Brian McElwee (2016), have argued for a larger set of sources. In McElwee's hybrid view, as van Ackeren calls it (2018, 318), both cost and difficulty are considered as independent sources of demandingness. McElwee (2016, 25–27.) holds that difficulty is a source of demandingness independent of cost because it grants its own reasons for blameworthiness and praiseworthiness. In short, McElwee claims feelings of blame are not appropriate in cases where an agent fails to fulfil an obligation because the task was too difficult for them to execute successfully.

of 1) *pure* costs, 2) difficulties, and 3) restrictions of options, as part of a theory on demandingness. Using the phrase 'pure cost' marks a difference between the cost of standard view where all demandingness is taken as a cost to an agent and the kind of direct costs that are not derived from difficulty or restriction of options.

2.3. For Whom Is Climate Action Demanding?

In addition to questions about what demandingness is, there is a related question of what is *too* demanding. Carbonell (2016, 36), however, suggests that an important additional question is too demanding *for whom*, as demands can (and should) be differential between agents. Before going in more detail to the limits of demandingness, termed the over-demandingness issue, I will examine these differential demands in the context of climate change in terms of individuals and collectives, the so-called *extraordinary* people who are able to considerably contribute positively or negatively to climate change, and all those whose individual actions do not count much towards mitigating or causing climate change, but who have to bear the burden of complying with climate policies.

Moral prescriptions can concern different kinds of agents (see Lawford-Smith 2013, 247), for instance individuals or collectives. However, there are many ways to arrange and define collectives. For example, they can be groups of individuals collectivized in some meaningful way[15] (Lawford-Smith 2013, 247), companies, different kinds of associations, societies, and organizations, nations, and nation states. They have different sets of duties, responsibilities, rights, and moral permissions. Hobby groups generally do not have taxing rights, and nation states generally have duties towards their citizens. Individuals can also have different kinds of roles, based on profession or some other social status. University professors, politicians, CEOs of multinational companies, soldiers, plumbers, journalists, psychiatrists, and bureaucrats all have different sets of duties, liabilities, rights, and so on, assigned to them.

Accordingly, moral demands concern different kinds of agents in different ways. In short, there are differential demands. (Carbonell 2016.) To different agents the same things are differently demanding. According to Carbonell (2016, 38), in the (non-ideal) real world there is no such thing as a general limit of demandingness that applies to everyone in the same, generic way. Instead, demandingness assessments should be done individually, they should be

[15] Lawford-Smith (2013, 247) excludes merely "uncoordinated aggregates of individuals" that are temporarily formed by, say, mere accident or coincidence.

properly situated, and also measured against the level of control agents have in the conditions they find themselves in. Carbonell (2016, 37) identifies three factors that differentiate demandingness for different agents: Factors that are never up to the agent, those that are partially up to the agent, and, thirdly, the knowledge agents possess.

Factors that are never up to the agent include the circumstances they are in, and the compliance of others. (Carbonell 2016, 38–41.) In the context of climate change, one can have a different set of duties than others based even on where they live. For example, living in a Nordic country, where heating during the cold winters is necessary, if there is a duty to compensate one's emissions, following this climate duty is costlier in Nordic countries than it is somewhere with milder winters. Also, if there is a moral urgency to mitigate climate change, and others do not curb their emissions, their noncompliance means that the compliant agent must give up on more than their fair share. (Caney 2005, 766–767, 769–772; 2014, 135.)

Factors that are partially up to the agent include their resources, roles and relationships, and psychological constitution. (Carbonell 2016, 41–45.) There are features in human moral psychology, discussed in more detail in chapter 4, that can make gaining motivation to mitigate climate change particularly difficult and burdensome. Also, knowledge, broadly construed as including things like skills and know-how, that people can draw from varies greatly, creating differential demands. (Carbonell 2016, 45–48.) For example, the responsibilities of climate experts are different than the layperson's, in that the former have a responsibility and potentially a perfect duty to inform the politicians and public about the threat, while the analogous burden for ordinary people is likely more limited in scope.

One particularly important and interesting problem that relates to differential demands is determining the ones who are responsible for climate change and those who can do something about it. In the context of climate change, having more resources might imply having a stronger duty to mitigate climate change. This could mean a greater share of burdens, as the Ability to Pay Principle states, but also a more forward-looking duty that is related to avoiding harm. (Caney 2014, 125, 142.) According to Caney (2014, 134–135), agents have *first-order responsibilities* to mitigate, enable the adaption to, or compensate the harms caused by climate change. However, it is very unlikely that enough people will comply with their first-order responsibilities, so there are also *second-order responsibilities* to ensure that others comply with their first-order responsibilities. Second-order responsibilities include tasks like enforcing compliance, incentivization of compliance, enabling compliance, creating

norms for compliance, undermining resistance to compliance, and civil disobedience if the government is non-compliant. Caney (2014, 136–141) also notes that different actors can pursue different tasks and in different ways, partly based on their traits or certain skills. For example, the role of a politician could imply second-order responsibility to struggle harder for more ambitious climate policies by enforcing others to comply through new legislation. On the other hand, because of such higher political position, it would be less (differentially) demanding to see such changes through. An average citizen might have to campaign for years to achieve something that people with sufficient administrative power and position can do in two hours.

Mitigating climate change is a gargantuan task that no one can achieve alone. The following sections examine whether it should be individuals or collectives, the extraordinary people who have most resources and power, or just ordinary people in terms of complying with climate policies who should strive to achieve it. Caney (2014, 139–140) assigns second-order responsibilities to both collective and individual agents, but what I call the extraordinary people include only individual agents who do share the complete list of tasks Caney mentions. Why would the extraordinary have a duty to do anything about climate change? Caney provides an answer for that as well, but first let us see how climate duties and associated demandingness is distributed in a more general level.

2.3.1. Demandingness for Individuals and Collectives

There are many proponents of the view that climate change is a collective moral problem, and some have gone as far as to claim that there are *no* important climate duties for individuals. One motivation for taking these positions is that one individual can do very little to mitigate climate change. If so, it would seem odd to address demandingness in the context of individuals. Instead of relying on individuals to act, institutional approaches should be preferred since they are more effective, efficient, and fair.[16] For example, Sinnott-Armstrong (2005) has claimed that since the individual's emissions are inconsequential to causing or mitigating climate change, it is the duty of governments, not individuals, to take responsibility. For instance, an agent has no duty to withhold taking a Sunday drive on a gas-guzzling sports car for fun, because it makes no difference, as it is not necessary nor sufficient for causing global warming or

[16] Of course, institutional approaches can also be unfair, but they seem to have a better prospect of being fair at least in the sense that they can reduce freeriding, they can place burdens more equally, and so on.

climate change. (Sinnott-Armstrong 2005, 289.) It is inconsequential if an average individual buys off some rainforest for carbon sinks or stops eating meat and flying to a distant paradise island twice a year, but if it is done in a coordinated fashion (e.g., everyone stops flying) it is much more efficient, and fairer because it is more likely to ensure that others comply as well. (Fragnière 2016, 808.) Some have argued that while there may be climate duties for individuals, they are mostly negative rather than positive duties, that is, they are duties concerning what an individual ought to omit doing rather than doing. (Broome 2012, 50–54; 100.)

The ineffectiveness claim can and has been challenged, however. Individual's lifetime emissions stack and stay in the atmosphere for a long time, causing harm to other people in the long term. For example, John Nolt (2011, 9) has calculated that the lifetime emissions of an average American amount to harm that is equal to two deaths of future people. Avram Hiller (2011, 21) makes similar claims about particular actions like Sunday drives instead of lifetime emissions. If these calculations about causing lethal harm are correct, surely there must be stringent negative duties to avoid such harm, even if it is costly?

However, these calculations do not necessarily lead to extremely demanding climate duties. Fragnière points out that these calculations seem to assume that the effects of one's lifetime emissions concentrate on two future individuals, resulting in their (otherwise avoidable) deaths. This is not the case. Instead, the harm is spread across future generations, causing but a tiny fraction of harm to each affected future individual. (Fragnière 2018, 649, 653.) So, taking up an ascetic lifestyle to avoid fractures of harm seems to be pushing the limits of moral demandingness, because it would be highly disproportionate to the benefits. The case Fragnière makes for lesser demands based on spread harm seems plausible. Fragnière (2018, 656) acknowledges that individual's climate duties nevertheless can be significant, even if not in the ways suggested by Nolt (2011).

The individualist approach to assigning duties to mitigate climate change to individuals seems an ineffective and daunting task. Should the focus then be shifted from individuals to collectives? Brian Berkey (2019) examines this attempt to shift the burden of solving large-scale problems from individuals to collectives, especially in cases where it is done based on high demandingness. Berkey (2019, 130) claims that it is problematic to attempt avoiding demanding individual duties by referring to collective duties if one simultaneously holds that collective problems such as climate change ought to be mitigated. If mitigating climate change would be the impartially best thing to do for the collective, it might require significant sacrifices from the members of the

collective, shifting the demands back to individuals. Thus, collective duties can be even more costly to individuals than mere individual duties. (Berkey 2019, 129–130.)

Even if it is the collective that does the heavy lifting, it is its individual members who feel the effects. Another way to stress the importance of individuals is to note that it is ultimately the individuals who make climate related decisions even if as a member of some collective. While most individuals are not in a political or other relevant position to take such decisive action, some individuals are. Both ideas are examined further in the next two sections.

2.3.2. Extraordinary People

Even if mitigating climate change primarily would not concern ordinary people (although this is debatable), there is a group of individuals that is particularly interesting in respect to mitigating climate change, and to whom the debate on individuals and collectives does not pertain to similarly. Namely, the people with extraordinary resources, power, or influence, and people whose lifetime emissions are particularly high due to their profession or even lifestyle (although, great resources and high emissions do not necessarily overlap). This group can be called the *extraordinary people*. This group of people may have special duties others do not have.

Befitting the extraordinary people, Caney (2014, 141) presents a principle that with power comes responsibility, called *Power/Responsibility Principle*, which is supported by four assumptions. Firstly, there is an emergency: climate change is threatening the lives of innumerable people and we are running out of time to prevent it.[17] The second assumption is effectiveness: some agents (like the extraordinary people) can make a difference in getting people to comply with their first-order climate responsibilities. Thirdly, they have a crucial and privileged causal role: if they do not do something about climate change, climate change will not be mitigated. The fourth assumption is that there are no sufficiently weighty countervailing considerations. It could be argued that governments have special responsibilities to promote the interests of their citizens, but Caney argues that such responsibilities are not absolute, that many agents with second-order responsibilities do not have these kinds of special responsibilities anyway, and even governments' special responsibilities to their citizens can converge with mitigation policies. (Caney 2014, 141–144.) Caney anticipates another objection to the second-order responsibilities, namely that

[17] I will discuss emergencies in sections 3.3.2. and 3.4.4. and argue that climate change does not count as an emergency.

they may impose excessive costs to agents. This objection is important for the present study, as it relates to concerns about demandingness. Caney claims that second-order responsibilities are not that costly, but it seems that this undermines the sacrifice some agents have to make to promote the first-order responsibilities of others. For example, politicians may risk losing the elections if they promote too aggressive climate policies.[18] Caney admits that some costs will remain, but these costs are lesser than the costs of inaction. (Caney 2014, 145–146.) This comes close to Sobel's (2007) idea that costs to moral patients (or harm-bearers) should be included in considerations about demandingness, but this idea is presented in the context of duties of beneficence instead of negative duties to avoid harm and is also otherwise problematic. (McElwee 2017, 95–97.) I will return to this in section 2.4.3.

With respect to this group of extraordinary people, the view that mitigating climate change concerns *only* collectives like governments can be challenged. Some individuals can have both negative and positive climate duties. There are individuals who *can* mitigate climate change or at least have a significant role in mitigating it. The extraordinary are either in possession of resources that are helpful in mitigating climate change, or they can stop emitting major amounts of greenhouse gases. Thus, it seems that they can have first-order responsibilities to mitigate climate change. Also, the extraordinary people can have a chance to affect public opinion. These are individuals like politicians, but also educators, social media influencers, and pop stars. The duties these extraordinary people have are akin to the second-order responsibilities described by Caney (2014).

On the other hand, expecting lesser outcomes from ordinary people does not mean that morality demands less effort from them (see Fragnière 2016, 809; Cripps 2013, 143). The matter must not be entirely shifted to the hands of the few. A similar problematic scenario is discussed by Carbonell (2016, 47), as some individuals have more knowledge and thus more demands, leading to the stratification of morality to certain educated elites of the society. Next section examines the role of ordinary people in climate change and its mitigation.

2.3.3. Promotional Duties and Demandingness of Compliance

In addition to duties related to reducing one's emissions, there are the so-called promotional duties or duties to promote and support collective action. Even if effective, efficient, and fair climate action happens on a collective level, when

[18] Interestingly, the politician also takes the risk of failing to achieve the climate policy in the near future if pushing for it too hard creates a public backlash.

there are no such collectives or institutions or policies to promote climate action, it is the promotional duty of individuals to put them in place. Promotional duties can also be a source of endless demands, thus increasing the moral burden of individuals. It is also mentioned that promotional duties include compliance with the regulations and refraining from undermining them. (Fragnière 2016, 799, 807–809.) This compliance can also be a source of extreme demands. Interestingly, even if the promotional duties to promote effective climate policies were successfully carried out, compliance may still remain as a source of demands. This makes compliance particularly important for the stress test, because even in an ideal situation where effective climate policies are in place the duty to comply can affect the moral landscape. Thus, of all the promotional duties, I will mostly focus on compliance.

There are ways in which collective-level mitigation of climate change can be morally very demanding for ordinary people. (See Berkey 2019, 130.) If the collective solutions are to work, individuals must comply with the changes made on the collective level. It is individuals who bear the costs of increased taxation on meat and air travel, for instance. And in this sense, morality can be demanding because complying with such policies means loss of resources for the individuals affected by them. It becomes increasingly costly to maintain a certain standard of living or way of life. When making the claim that second-order responsibilities are not very costly to people, Caney (2014, 145) notes that their outcomes can be costly to those affected by them – namely, the holders of first-order responsibilities.

The costs of complying with policies that cause radical changes in one's life can range from diminished resources to losing one's identity, although the latter can be seen as difficulty, as well. Compliance with effective climate policies can affect one's identity or the personal narrative of how people want to live their lives. Consider animal farmers. Suppose that the institutional approaches would involve increased taxation of animal products with the (intended) consequence of decreasing the consumption of animal products. Suppose that this outcome is achieved, and it will further lead to considerable constriction in animal farming as it has become too costly to maintain. But life in the countryside, perhaps continuing the family farm, and maintaining traditions associated with animal farming can be very important constituents of one's identity. Would it not be very demanding if one ought to *comply with* demands to give up on such important parts of one's identity and culture? Even more so if there nonetheless is no duty to *actively* pursue the goal of ending animal

farming. The psychological difficulty[19] of complying with these changes can be extremely demanding especially if it involves negative and potentially harmful feelings like shame (Aaltola 2021 discusses *climate shaming* more generally, but the costs of shame are relevant also here). In these ways even collective efforts for efficient climate change mitigation can demand very much from individuals. Consequently, it should be noted that acknowledging highly demanding individual climate duties does *not* imply individualist approaches. Demanding compliance shows that merely being a part of a system that makes a transition towards more sustainable practices can be very costly for individuals. Even a moral requirement to simply comply with such changes and related policies makes climate change mitigation demanding for individuals.[20]

There are at least three reasons to focus on individuals in the case of climate change.[21] Firstly, one could argue that it is ultimately individuals who make the decisions that lead to climate action. It could be objected that there are cases where an already set climate policy can dictate what a collective agent can do, but then again it is ultimately individuals who set *that* climate policy. However, there are clearly situations where individuals do not possess the power to make *any* kind of decision, so perhaps it suffices to say that there are instances where individuals matter, but their power is not limitless. Also, there are some extraordinary people whose decisions count more than the others', and they may have special or more demanding climate duties. Secondly, everyone contributes to climate change in some way, so that at least negative duties not to harm, even if weak, make individuals important for the discussion. Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, it is ultimately the individuals who must suffer the sacrifices required to mitigate climate change. If nothing else, complying with effective climate policies and the radical changes they pose can be highly demanding for the individual.

Thus far the focus has been on different sources of demandingness, different agents with differential demands, and the level in which demandingness should be assessed. Fragnière notes that most climate ethicists agree that there are some individual climate duties, be they directly related to reducing individuals' own emissions or promotional duties to set up effective institutions and policies to mitigate climate change and to comply with them.

[19] Such difficulty can encourage relying on so-called moral disengagement strategies, where one denies responsibility or even the existence of the problem or finds excuses not to change their behaviour. (For discussion, see Peeters et al. 2019.) These moral disengagement strategies will be discussed in more detail in section 4.2.2.

[20] Individualist and institutional approaches will be further discussed in section 5.2.

[21] As noted earlier in section 1.4.

They disagree with respect to the stringency of these duties. (Fragnière 2016, 809.) What is the acceptable level of sacrifice? When the personal costs of compliance or reducing one's emissions are too high, one may have grounds to object against a duty that assigns such demanding individual obligations. This is usually called the demandingness objection, which is the focus of the next section.

2.4. Demandingness Objection

Criticizing or ruling out a moral philosophical theory or moral prescription comes by many names: demandingness objection (McElwee 2016), overdemandingness objection (van Ackeren and Kühler 2016b), or demandingness complaint (Berkey 2019). Their main concern is that sometimes moral demands are exceedingly demanding. As we have seen, there are multiple factors at play, starting from the varying dispositions of the agent to the different forms and sources of demandingness. Making a demandingness objection (DO for short, from now on) is a philosophical way of saying "enough is enough, morality cannot require this much!" For DO, I will suggest the following work definition:

> *Demandingness Objection (DO):* An objection against a moral prescription, belief, argument, principle, or theory based on its excessive demandingness.

Defined like this, DO is an objection against excessively demanding moral requirements (or moral demands) from agents. DO can be targeted against a wide spectrum of moral prescriptions and entire theories like act-utilitarianism. DO against a moral belief contests its validity, truth, or plausibility because it holds or entails exceedingly demanding claims about morality. DO against an argument contests the conclusion of an argument because of its demandingness, while DO against a principle contests the plausibility of a principle because following it consistently leads to excessively high demands for an agent. DO against theories is a more complicated matter, as the target can be the core principles of the theory or some implications the theory might have.

Berkey (2016, 3016) notes that although the most typical target of demandingness objection is act-utilitarianism, it finds its target in any theory of normative ethics that accepts impartiality (or rejects partiality). Accepting moral impartiality can lead to situations where one ought to sacrifice one's own good for the sake of others, sometimes total strangers, up to a degree that is overly

demanding on part of the agent. It is not necessary, then, to accept any good maximizing principle to get extreme moral demands. To avoid these kinds of demandingness concerns, some normative theories have been amended with special permissions to give special attention to one's own desires and those of their loved ones, such as agent-centred prerogatives. (See Scheffler 1994.)

2.4.1. Demandingness Objection and Thresholds

Plausible reasons for DO are instances when, for example, demandingness breaches some threshold or when a sacrifice is disproportionately high compared to the derived benefits. (Van Ackeren and Kühler 2016b, 4.) The theoretical challenge in this case is to show what are the criteria for a threshold and what is an acceptable level for the threshold. Could sacrificing one's own life, for example, be such a threshold that it can never be crossed, even if it saves a billion lives? Or is the threshold somewhere below requiring that people stop heating their apartments, flying for holidays, and eating meat to mitigate climate change in the long run? There can be a wide variety of sacrifices required to stop climate change, ranging from simple comforts of everyday life to higher taxes, important life decisions like having children or giving up a livelihood, finally all the way to the more radical ideas of controlling the size of human population. Against these requirements, it can be difficult to find a satisfying criterion for the threshold. If it comes to that, it might be permissible or even required that individuals could at least *sometimes* be forced to bear great sacrifices if necessary for ensuring the survival of present and future generations.

2.4.2. Demandingness Objection and Proportionality

A more flexible approach to demandingness objections is to make a cost-benefit analysis. Costs to the agent are always relative to context. (McElwee 2017, 95.) Hence, it is not likely that there is a certain 'degree of cost' which is below the threshold and reasonable to require. The theoretical challenge for a cost-benefit analysis is to determine the acceptable ratio of costs and benefits. A moral requirement to sacrifice one's life for a stranger, even ten strangers, seems overly demanding, but if it saves a whole city from a terrorist attack, it is not as great of an overstretch to say that it is morally required. Similarly, if it makes a difference, many individuals should give up on their comfortable standards of living to help mitigate climate change. If it does not make a difference, and individual Sunday drives remain inconsequential to global warming and

climate change, the cost of missing out on some fun is arguably disproportionate to the minuscule benefit of mitigating climate change.

However, determining the acceptable cost is very difficult in cases where an outcome is almost infinitely desirable. These cases resemble Pascal's Wager,[22] where a promise of an eternal afterlife in paradise is infinitely good, while an afterlife in eternal damnation is infinitely bad. Even with extremely small likelihoods, if the outcome is desirable enough, the cost pays off. With (near-)infinite desirability, almost anything goes.[23] Is mitigating climate change almost infinitely desirable in this sense? Climate change threatens the good of countless beings and accelerates mass extinction. Environmental philosopher Holmes Rolston III (1988, 144) has called causing extinctions "super-killing", as they definitely wipe out entire species. It seems that preventing a wave of extinction is extremely desirable and far more important than the comfort of living in a heated house, or not being able to travel abroad. When future generations are considered, the desirability of mitigating climate change becomes higher still. Yet, there is something alarming with infinitely desirable outcomes. Infinitely desirable outcomes, like averting catastrophic climate change, twist our normative concepts and make cost-benefit analyses difficult or impossible. If we find cases with a structure of Pascal's Wager implausible, we might have reasons to doubt the reliability of any cost-benefit analysis in the context of climate change unless we can show that mitigating climate change is more moderately desirable. On the other hand, we can accept the wager, bite the bullet, and conclude that just about anything goes. Then the role of DO in the context of climate change is limited to making sure that costly but ineffective actions are not morally required. Consequently, DO would guard proportionality.

Infinitely desirable outcomes cause a methodological challenge for the reflective equilibrium process. If any sacrifice is automatically to be judged as acceptable, it will eventually affect the whole belief system and its principles. Ordinary morality would end up looking very different, and it would be difficult to maintain the second input commitment of non-exceeding demandingness. Infinite desirability has the ability to twist our theories. One approach to counter this problem is to introduce a mechanism I call the *theory*

[22] If there is a chance that believing in God grants access to eternal afterlife in paradise, whatever costs of being a believer in this life are far outweighed by the chance (or risk) of certain kind of afterlife – and the risk that there is no afterlife.

[23] Although desirability is not mentioned, Balfour (2021) demonstrates how similar reasoning works with risks.

twister detector[24] to the system of ordinary morality. It detects anomalies in moral theory that seem to twist the theories to give unreliable or implausible results. Extremely high desirability is such a theory twister. If something is extremely desirable, sacrificing almost anything to acquire it would be proportionate. So, when a theory twister is detected, high costs can be assigned to related considered judgments that would otherwise radically change the whole system of beliefs. If climate change is such a theory twister almost any sacrifice required to stop climate change would be proportionate because the benefits of stopping climate change would be extremely desirable. If something is proportionate, it probably is not overly demanding. Hence, sacrificing almost anything to stop climate change is not overly demanding. Consequently, using this detector to note that considerations about climate change are of such nature that they twist our theories, might provide a counterstrategy against the climate stress test.

However, if the high desirability of stopping climate change is detected as a theory twister, it becomes reasonable to ask if such detection is done in a self-serving way. It seems just too convenient to disregard, for instance, considered judgments supporting climate related sacrifices, especially if it is the case that almost anything is worth sacrificing to stop climate change. This kind of move is susceptible to moral corruption. (See Gardiner 2011a.) Further, the problem with infinite desirability can be a problem for moral intuition, and climate change causes many similar problems to intuition. It may be the case that our intuitions about it are systematically false or unreliable. These moral psychological problems are discussed further in chapter 4.

Demandingness objection has grounds when morality becomes exceedingly demanding. The question is what counts as 'exceeding'. The underlying idea is that there is an appropriate level of demandingness that varies by circumstances, and moral demands should not breach it. If they do, a demandingness objection can be made. Not everyone agrees, of course, that there are ever grounds for demandingness objections, or that the level of over-demandingness should be set particularly low. Nevertheless, demandingness is an issue a moral philosophical theory should address somehow, even if by showing why it should be disregarded.

[24] I do not want to claim that all considered judgments regarding things that have extremely high desirability should be ruled out automatically. Instead, the function of these "detectors" is to alarm that there is a heightened risk of forming unreliable considered judgments, and one should proceed with appropriate caution. In other words, when a detector goes off, there are additional reasons to disregard such considered judgments (similar reasoning applies to another detector, a moral corruption detector, which I will introduce later in section 4.2.2.).

2.4.3. Costs that Count Towards Demandingness Objection

Another thing to notice about proportionality and cost-benefit analysis is the quality of the cost. It is important to understand what kind of costs are involved when a theory is said to be too costly. In the case of climate change, it seems to matter morally what kinds of things people are morally required to sacrifice. Henry Shue's (1993) distinction between luxury and subsistence emissions is particularly useful here. Of all the things that contribute to climate change, luxury emissions – emissions from things we do not biologically need but desire – should be omitted prior to cutting down on subsistence emissions – emissions from things we biologically need to survive. It follows from this difference between basic needs and desires that moral demands regarding subsistence emissions count more towards DO than moral demands regarding luxury emissions.

Not all costs count towards DO. Fiona Woollard identifies three types of costs from the literature that do not count towards grounding a DO. These are 1) patient costs (opposed to agent costs), 2) allowing harm (opposed to doing harm), and 3) infrequent demands (opposed to frequent demands). (Woollard 2016, 92, 98, 102.) The context of this discussion seems to be more closely associated with duties of beneficence or positive duties, while climate duties seem to be mostly negative. However, of the types of costs discussed in Woollard 2016, especially patient costs and infrequent demands are interesting in the case of climate change and DO.

As an example of the first type of costs, Woollard offers David Sobel's thought experiment where a moral agent could save someone's life by donating their kidney but refuses to do so. Typically, a view holding that the agent does something wrong when refusing to donate a kidney is seen as over-demanding. Sobel, instead, claims that such a view is highly demanding for the patient, because it leads to the patient dying instead of someone merely losing one of their kidneys. (Woollard 2016, 91–98; Sobel 2007, 3.)

If a DO could be targeted towards views that allow people to keep their resources instead of reducing death and suffering, it would be an easy victory for proponents of stringent climate duties. Not engaging in efficient climate mitigation would imply serious costs to those who are left without help. They could invoke the DO on behalf of the people negatively affected by climate change every time someone suggests that morality should leave room for personal projects and comforts.

However, according to Woollard, DO cannot be applied this way. DO can only be grounded on the demands for the agent, not those that are made for the patient, because of a structural difference between agents and patients. Only the

agent must choose between accepting the cost of complying with the moral demand or failing to comply with the moral demand and not paying the cost. The patient makes no such decisions, so the DO cannot target patients. (Woollard 2016, 94–95.)

McElwee (2017, 97) argues that any account of DO should be able to show why patient costs do not count towards DO. McElwee, akin to Woollard (2016), notes the different structure of agent's costs and patient's costs. Costs to the agent are self-imposed. McElwee continues by appealing to appropriate responses like blame or guilt if an agent fails to pay the cost. Only agents are assessable for blameworthiness for failing to follow their obligations, while patients are not. Only agents can comply with moral demands – and fail, thus meriting blame – while patients cannot. Therefore, the costs that patients must bear do not count towards DO. (McElwee 2017, 97–98.)

For the frequent and infrequent costs, Woollard argues that frequent or common costs count more towards DO than infrequent costs, such as those that are imposed in rare emergencies. One-off sacrifices should be distinguished from repeated sacrifices. In case of emergencies, it is more acceptable that agents might have to make large sacrifices to save others, but in normal circumstances this is not the case. (Woollard 2016, 90, 104–105.) Climate change is characterized often as an emergency or a crisis. People living in a state of constant crisis may have to make significant sacrifices more frequently, but Woollard (2016, 105) suggests that such assumption should be re-evaluated. On Woollard's account, it seems that frequency adds something to the demandingness. This would imply that if two cases include the same extent of sacrifices, but in case A the sacrifices are frequent and in case B they are infrequent, then case A can be more demanding for the agent than case B. Thus, when crisis becomes a common state of affairs, frequent sacrifices made in such circumstances start to count more towards DO again. For the case of climate change this feels unsatisfying, however, because people are also the ones causing the crisis. Also, it is not clear that frequent sacrifices always count towards DO more than infrequent sacrifices. For instance, if the total extent of sacrifice is particularly high, it might be *less* demanding to the agent if smaller doses of sacrifice are inflicted upon the agent frequently rather than all at once.

***

One can identify three groups of philosophical positions on demandingness: the minimalist, the moderate, and the extremist. (See e.g., Kagan 1989; Sin 2010) In short, the minimalist allows no or very little moral demands towards an agent,

the moderate allows some and the extremist allows very high or any level of demands. Extremism is much more tolerant to great sacrifices, so it is expected to be a more frequent target of DO's. However, even extremism can have a threshold that should not be crosses, although it is likely to be a lot higher than for moderates. (Sin 2010, 7) Extremist principles always accept full impartiality, while moderates usually accept some level of impartiality but might insist on some partiality like agent-centred prerogatives. Minimalists reject impartiality altogether. (Berkey 2016, 3019–3020.) What could be added to extremism is that it is also more allowing of moral infringements as long as they bring about (impartially) better outcomes.

During the last few decades, extremism seems to have become more acceptable and even enjoys some support. There are movements like Effective Altruism that take the challenge of moral demands seriously. Peter Singer (2016) notes this change in the moral philosophical atmosphere in the preface of the book version of their famous "Famine, Affluence, and Morality" (1972), the article that has been a focal point in the discussion on (over)demandingness and DO. Singer writes that philosophy students used to read his paper as a challenge, teachers urging them to find a mistake in it. More recently, however, students have started to embrace the extremely demanding duties suggested in the paper. They have started to take seriously the idea that as affluent people have unprecedented power to save lives in the poorest areas of the world, they have a duty to do so. (Singer 2016, xii–xiii; Singer 1972, 231.) Simultaneously, the affluent have started to cause much harm in the world, with a high standard of living that is also heavy in CO2 emissions. The negative duties to avoid harm seem almost equally demanding, and some have attempted to make a Singerian case for climate duties. (See Hiller 2014.) This raises serious problems for ordinary morality, which will be further discussed in the following chapter. Before going to the next chapter, some related concepts to demandingness and DO are explored first.

2.5. Related Concepts

Demandingness is not the only way to evaluate the sensibility of moral theories. There are other concepts that are utilized for paying attention to similar issues. These include the principle of ought-implies-can (OIC), the category of supererogatory acts, and (political) feasibility. These concepts have received much attention, increasingly so recently, and sometimes also together. In *The Limits of Moral Obligation* (edited by van Ackeren and Kühler 2016a), the relationship of ought-implies-can and moral demandingness is examined in

detail. In the same book, Claire Benn (2016) discusses supererogation and demandingness. Holly Lawford-Smith (2013, 253) mentions that some senses of feasibility are like OIC. Nicholas Southwood (2018) discusses all three noting that they are similar but distinct issues, adding the ideal/non-ideal theory distinction to the discussion. (See also Valentini 2012.)

Because the above concepts are closely related to moral demandingness, they will be referred to throughout the dissertation when applicable. Although from different aspects and with different scope, they all set limits or constraints to theories in moral and political philosophy, and the moral prescriptions and political proposals they entail. And, ultimately, with a few qualifications they can tell what and how much can be sensibly required, morally or justly, from the agent.

2.5.1. Ought-Implies-Can

The principle of ought-implies-can enjoys wide acceptance in moral philosophy. (Stern 2016.) OIC holds that if something is to be morally required from the agent, it must also be possible for the agent. In other words, if an agent cannot do something, they cannot be morally required to do it. (Van Ackeren and Kühler 2016b, 5.) Demanding something that an agent cannot do is both *pointless* because it does not make pragmatically sense, and *unfair*, if an agent is blamed or otherwise held responsible for failing to do something that they could not do. (Stern 2016, 102.)

OIC seems like a rather blunt tool, used for merely pointing out the obvious: if something is impossible, one cannot be morally expected to do it. The demands of morality must obey laws of physics and logic. (Van Ackeren and Kühler 2016b, 8–9.) But there is more to OIC. Van Ackeren and Kühler (2016b, 5–12) analyse each part of the concept: what 'ought' means, what counts as 'can', and what 'implying' does in OIC. There is much more to OIC than merely staying on this side of supernatural.

Van Ackeren and Kühler (2016b, 5–6) note that not all 'oughts' imply can. Ideals, for example are something that sometimes are not possible to fully realise, if they ever are. Even if it would be impossible to be perfect at one's profession (e.g., a perfect physician), ideals of excellence tend to play a role in everyday practices and routines, and we strive towards them. Thus, ideals are not pointless, although they do not abide by OIC, as they guide, motivate, and even inspire action. (See Stern 2016.) However, it seems unfair if one is held blameworthy for not achieving an ideal. Yet, totally failing to strive or even

attempt something morally ideal might count as blameworthy. For instance, not even bothering to try to be a perfect doctor sounds morally dubious.

The notion of possibility is important for different accounts of what counts as 'can'. Van Ackeren and Kühler (2016b, 8–9) make a distinction between objective and subjective possibility. The former means abiding by the laws of physics and not demanding something that is logically impossible. This is an overly narrow understanding of OIC. It would not only be overly demanding but also weird if an agent had an actual duty to save a drowning child even if they cannot swim, although swimming does not break the laws of physics and is not logically impossible. Therefore, the subjective account of possibility seems more promising. It considers the agents' skills, capacities, and circumstances, considering things like the ability to swim. However, van Ackeren and Kühler (2016b, 5–6) note that impossibility does not always count towards breaching OIC. There is a diachronic sense to 'can' that is relevant to feasibility as well: even if the agent cannot do something instantly, the agent can have the capacity to bring themself to do it later. Even if it is subjectively impossible for the agent to swim *now*, they can acquire the skill later. Or, in a shorter timeframe, if the agent does not have a fire extinguisher currently at hand, they can run and get one and so become able to fulfil their actual duty to put out a fire and save the day.

An especially difficult question with 'can' is whether psychological difficulty counts towards 'ought not'. If someone is a terribly lazy person, for instance, would it make them less blameworthy for not doing their chores? It seems that psychological 'cannot' is easier to defend when there is, for instance, a serious phobia (Haji 2002, 22), or some great sacrifices like sacrificing one's life to save others. (See Griffin 2015, 30–35.) For climate change, motivational issues are important. Issues with motivation and other psychological difficulties pertaining to climate change are discussed further with feasibility in section 2.5.3., and later in chapter 4.

A related issue also especially interesting in the context of climate change, is that sometimes the agents themselves intentionally cause the circumstances that make abiding by their duties impossible. (Van Ackeren and Kühler 2016b, 5.) A friend who intentionally does not set an alarm clock and misses a meeting is still blameworthy for sleeping in, even if it was impossible to consciously control when one wakes up. If people keep releasing CO2 to the atmosphere up until the point where it is impossible to avoid catastrophic climate change, are they still not morally responsible? It would be strange if messing things up beyond repair would ultimately make the agent less blameworthy compared to how blameworthy they were at an earlier point when things were still fixable.

Paradoxically, in situations like this, it seems that the worse the world gets the less blameworthy people are for not fixing it. These kinds of situations are discussed further in section 3.4.2. There is an interesting tension here, because Sinnott-Armstrong's (2005) and similar cases that play on effectiveness seem compatible with OIC – if individuals *cannot* mitigate climate change, they do not have an obligation to do so. However, at least a part of climate change was knowingly caused by roughly the same generation of individuals who at some point during the decades could have done something efficient more easily. It could be replied that *tactically*, because of effectiveness, mitigating climate change should be left for governments and other collective agents – who can, and so, possibly ought to effectively mitigate it – but there may be residue moral blameworthiness for causing the problem for which individual people are responsible. It is difficult to tell if holding individual people blameworthy is unfair in that case.

Finally, a few words on 'implying'. Van Ackeren and Kühler (2016b, 9) discuss three possible interpretations for 'imply' in OIC: conceptual implication, conversational implicature, and normative claim. The first holds that ought conceptually implies can. They claim that without qualifications this breaks Hume's law, which is easy to see in the contraposition 'cannot implies ought not' where a normative claim is deduced from descriptive claim.[25] This can be remedied by making the conceptual implication analytical or semantical, so that 'ought' analytically implies 'can' in a similar sense that 'bachelor' implies 'unmarried', or that an 'ought' without 'can' would be semantically meaningless. However, van Ackeren and Kühler (2016b, 9–12) note that claims breaching the OIC are not incomprehensible nor meaningless in a way that analytical falsehoods and semantical nonsense are. Instead of conceptual interpretation, one could hold that 'imply' in OIC is a conversational implicature, but it seems to collapse to the third interpretation, a normative claim. Here the implication is a practical notion, that an agent should be able to do what they ought to do, lest it be unfair. This normative interpretation fits well with the idea that one can be blameworthy even in circumstances where it is impossible to do something, especially if the agent has caused the circumstances on purpose.

[25] Perhaps this problem could be countered by noting that one can always introduce a bridging normative premise "If one cannot X, it is not the case that one ought to X", but this approach faces two problems. First, it risks begging the question to add an OIC principle as a bridging premise when the nature of the 'implication' in OIC is in question. Second, it is not clear that 'ought conceptually implies can' and also that 'ought conceptually implies a bridging normative premise'.

The normative interpretation leaves room for situations where something is not strictly speaking impossible for the agent, but the agent is still unable to do it. Here van Ackeren and Kühler refer to Smith's (1961) example of a student being hit by a truck and missing an appointment with a professor. While it is not strictly speaking impossible for the student to crawl their way to the meeting, it would be excruciatingly painful, and hence it is plausible to say that the student was unable to make it in time. Claiming otherwise might be unreasonable. Indeed, OIC's relatedness to demandingness objection seems to depend on the different interpretations of OIC. The normative interpretation of OIC is more closely related to demandingness than the conceptual interpretation. In fact, the normative interpretation seems to make (breaching) OIC only an extreme case of over-demandingness. (Van Ackeren and Kühler 2016b, 12–13.) The two are not completely aligned, however. There are grounds for demandingness objection without breaching OIC. An action can be possible to execute and yet be so costly that morally requiring it would be overdemanding and thus provoke the demandingness objection.

Even though an objective interpretation that leaves OIC only with physical and logical possibility seems very narrow indeed, but when accompanied with demandingness as an evaluative tool, this limited role might be functionally satisfying for OIC. If OIC is conceptually too close to DO, it is not clear what conceptual benefit there is in referring to OIC – or, vice versa referring to demandingness objection, if only OIC is left in the philosophical vocabulary. When taken together, their conceptual division of labour ensures that there is a place for OIC while issues related to high costs of 'can', like immense pain for the student hit by a truck, can be assessed in some cases as making unreasonable demands due to their high demandingness.

The two concepts are related, but it is not possible here to determine how closely and to what end. However, OIC can be seen as a tool for categorically ruling out certain kinds of moral prescriptions, namely those that are impossible, akin to technical feasibility discussed shortly. For instance, OIC does not seem particularly good at comparing different theories, since things are either possible or impossible, and OIC seems to be neutral about modal notions like likelihood or risks. Demandingness, however, makes evaluations of moral theories based on their difficulty, costliness, riskiness, and likelihood of success so that the sacrifices remain proportional to the benefits. In this sense, demandingness has a similar function in moral philosophy that feasibility has in political theory. (See Lawford-Smith 2013.) I will return shortly to feasibility, but first another closely related concept, supererogation, is examined.

2.5.2. Supererogation

Supererogatory acts are morally good acts that go beyond one's duty, they are good but not required. (Feinberg 1961; Urmson 1969; Benn 2016, 69.) The main issue with supererogatory acts is whether there can be a category of acts that are good (or the best actions available) which nonetheless one is not required to commit. The question is central especially to maximizing consequentialist theories, for if good must be maximized, how can there ever be an occasion when the action with best outcomes is not required. That is, how could supererogatory acts exist or be accommodated. (Benn 2016, 69–70.) The question about the existence of supererogatory acts relates closely to the question whether there are ever grounds for making a demandingness objection; can moral requirements ever be so high that they seize to obligate If so, then there may be situations where one is not morally required to take the morally best course of action. Especially for maximizing theories, this is unacceptable. What remains for maximizing consequentialism is what Benn[26] (2016, 76) calls the Tripartite View, that there are only morally required, morally forbidden, or morally indifferent acts.

However, this is problematic, because if morality requires maximization the very best actions (i.e., that produce the best outcomes) must be taken. As morality requires the very best, the best acts are morally required, and every other act is morally forbidden. Consequently, maximizing consequentialism is not overly demanding only because it may posit extreme sacrifices, but rather because it confines the possible actions an agent can commit. It is this over-demandingness associated with abandoning the possibility of supererogation and confining morally permissible choices to those that are required that makes maximizing consequentialism overly demanding. (Benn 2016, 76–77.) Non-trivial sacrifices alone do not make an act supererogatory. There can be morally required actions with extreme costs if enough is at stake. Similarly, there may be supererogatory acts with minuscule costs if the benefits are morally insignificant enough. (Benn 2016, 69–72.) Here supererogatory acts share the circumstantial nature with demandingness. Accordingly, it should be noted that moral extremism does not imply the denial of supererogatory acts. If the theory is very tolerable of great sacrifices, the limit between required and supererogatory acts is then set extraordinarily high. Moral extremism is not a specific moral philosophical theory, but more like a set of preferences what a moral philosophical theory should look like. Moral minimalism, on the other

[26] Borrowing from Horgan and Timmons (2010, 29) and based on Urmson (1969, 60).

hand, seems to imply supererogatory acts, placing most good actions into that category.

Much of the debate in climate ethics can be summarized as a question about supererogatory acts: when is it supererogatory to mitigate climate change? Is it ever beyond one's duty to help the survival of humankind, the animal kingdom, the biosphere, or to bring future generations into existence? For example, one could argue that Caney's (2014) second-order responsibilities are supererogatory if they take up too much of an agent's time. The class of morally forbidden acts is also noteworthy. Even if individuals' climate duties are mostly negative instead of positive (see Broome 2012) and one should simply not cause harm to others, if a climate friendly way of life makes most everyday activities (like those Sunday drives) morally forbidden, it seems very demanding. It is demanding if our current way of life and many mundane activities related to it are morally forbidden.

Acts that are morally bad but not forbidden are called suberogatory acts. (Driver 1992.) When is it suberogatory not to abstain from acts that cause harm to others? If the threshold for what counts as suberogatory is set very low, it might be challenging with respect to motivating efficient responses to climate change. Especially moral intuitions pertaining to ordinary morality might set the bar too low because of its default preference for moderate principles and requirements. Instead, it could be that the world is morally so 'far-gone' that fixing it in these extreme circumstances we have ended up in have come to require acts that are normally seen as suberogatory. It is difficult to determine whether to lift the threshold so that many even highly demanding climate-positive acts are not suberogatory or to concede that saving the world is in fact supererogatory. If supererogatory acts exhibit heroism or saint-like behaviour, it seems that the Anthropocene has become the age of heroes and saints.

2.5.3. Feasibility

Questions of demandingness in ethics are in many ways theoretically like questions of feasibility in political philosophy. Both demandingness and feasibility can be used for evaluating moral or political theories. In some cases, both can also be used for ruling out certain types of moral prescriptions or political proposals. The similarities have been noticed in the literature on feasibility (e.g., Southwood 2018), but there are also important differences. While demandingness and feasibility can both be used in a descriptive manner, informing how costly something is for an agent or what is politically achievable, they differ in what kinds of claims can be derived from them. DO is a normative

notion, objecting that something ought not be required from an agent because it is too demanding. Noting that there is a feasibility constraint, however, remains descriptive. It only tells that some political proposal cannot or will not likely succeed.

Some have suggested that feasibility and the so-called political feasibility are different concepts (Räikkä 1998), while others put them on the same continuum where feasibility lies somewhere between political and technological feasibility (Miller 2013). Generally speaking, political proposals are politically feasibility if it is politically possible to implement them – that is, if the political atmosphere is ripe for the proposal or if proposing it does not lead to defeat in the next election, and so on. Some have noted that limiting political theory to politically feasible proposals is overly conservative (Räikkä 1998, 34; Miller 2013, 19) and represents 'cynical realism' (Gilabert and Lawford-Smith 2012, 819). Some, in the context of climate change, have endorsed something similar to political feasibility as a criterion by noting that climate policies and international climate agreements should serve the self-interest of different countries. Infeasible proposals are argued to be counterproductive, leading to less action. (Posner and Weisbach 2010; Weisbach 2021. See Gardiner and Lawson 2021 for counterarguments.)

Technical feasibility, on the other hand, limits political theory to proposals that are possible, technically speaking. (Miller 2013, 37.) In other words, they must obey laws of nature, be logically possible, and so on. This way technical feasibility resembles what Gilabert and Lawford-Smith (2012, 813) call *hard constraints*. Hard constraints are such that they are not expected to change, at least not in the foreseeable future.[27] Logic and laws of physics are easily identified as hard constraints, but human biology is already a lot less certain factor, for example because of possibilities in the development of human enhancement. It is also difficult to tell whether human psychology counts as hard or soft constraint. The factor of human psychology will be examined more thoroughly in chapter 4. Soft constraints, on the other hand, consist of things like economic, political, sociological, and cultural facts. (Gilabert and Lawford-Smith 2012, 813.)

Hard constraints function as a binary test in political theory. Political proposals either satisfy or do not satisfy the hard feasibility constraints, and proposals that break the hard constraints should be ruled out. (Gilabert and Lawford-Smith 2012, 815; Lawford-Smith 2013, 252.) Hard constraints resemble

[27] For example, new technologies can change what counts as a hard constraint by opening up new possibilities. Hard constraints can also be time-sensitive and agent-relative. (See Lawford-Smith 2013, 253.)

OIC in moral philosophy – impossibilities should be ruled out. (Lawford-Smith 2013, 244, 253.) Like OIC in the context of moral philosophy, feasibility too would be a blunt tool if only hard constraints would be considered. Soft constraints remedy this. They function as a scalar test, comparing different proposals in terms of their feasibility. (Gilabert and Lawford-Smith 2012, 815.) In the soft sense, feasibility concerns are circumstantial and depend on social, institutional, and political factors, among others.

Gilabert and Lawford-Smith (2012, 819) hold that feasibility is a separate matter from the more normative matter of desirability. However, according to Räikkä (1998, 34) weak constraints (which are in many respects similar to soft constraints) can include a normative component, namely that the moral costs of a changeover from one social arrangement to another should not be greater than the benefits. Gilabert and Lawford-Smith (2012, 816–817) explicitly deny that feasibility has this kind of a normative component. If weak constraints are nevertheless accommodated in ordinary morality, they and accompanying considerations of moral costs of a changeover also add to the circumstantiality of feasibility. Considering the moral costs of changeovers, weak constraints seem especially applicable to the discussion of just transitions in climate change. (See, e.g., Newell and Mulvaney 2013.) Weak constraints are also highly relevant when considering the desirability of mitigating climate change. Namely, the moral cost of just about any changeover seems smaller than the benefit and moral desirability of averting catastrophic climate change. Here feasibility and demandingness both seem to face similar problems: as moral desirability approaches infinite, normative concepts start behaving strangely.

If something cannot be done immediately, this does not necessarily mean that there is a hard constraint working against it. A political proposal does not have to be implementable right away to be feasible. An *ability* to implement a proposal can be synchronic meaning that it is immediate, or it can be diachronic meaning that it is implementable later, or after some other thing is implemented first. (Gilabert and Lawford-Smith 2012, 811, based on Jensen 2009.) This resembles the diachronic nature of 'can' in OIC. (Van Ackeren and Kühler (2016b, 5–6.)

Like demandingness, where different theories have been categorized as minimalist, moderate, or extreme depending on how much and what level of demands they accept, the discussion on feasibility has operated with similar categories. Political proposals can be divided into realist and utopian (e.g., 'cynical realism' in Gilabert and Lawford-Smith 2012, 'economic realism' in Gardiner and Lawson 2021), depending on how strict feasibility constraints they are willing to accept. Recently and more colourfully they have also been divided

into utopophobes and factophobes depending on their relation to facts of 'the real world'. (Valentini 2017.)

It seems a mistake to place a requirement to mitigate climate change and related necessary climate policies into the category of utopias. Effective climate policies are not utopian, because they do not pursue a perfect world but rather seek to eliminate injustices. Thus, they are merely *anti-dystopian*, avoidant of dystopias, seeking to keep this imperfect world habitable and tolerable for a little longer. It is a separate matter to make utopian claims about perfect justice, equality, world without borders, and so on, and while some climate policy proposals can imply utopian elements, they are not by any means essentially utopian, even if radical. New ideas like 'green growth', 'degrowth', or 'Green New Deal' can be deemed utopian, but only because they incorporate other elements that are not directly necessary for climate change mitigation. The distinction between anti-dystopian and utopian is not always easy to make, but it can be made. There should be nothing utopian in promoting mere survival. It is indeed very cynical to see a world where basic needs are met, or where humanity does not recklessly drive itself and other species to extinction, as utopian.

When considering the hard, soft, and weak feasibility constraints, it is important to consider certain facts about the world. On a theoretical level, moving on the continuum between political and technical feasibility, the question is how fact-sensitive these theories should be. (See Miller 2013, 33.) We have already seen that demandingness and related, concepts including feasibility, are very circumstantial and depend on the facts about the world. Should moral philosophical and political theories be made regardless of how the world is? Or should they be made to adjust it? This question will be further examined in the next chapter, along with ordinary morality, and the changes in what counts as 'ordinary' circumstances.

2.6. Conclusions

This chapter explored different aspects of demandingness and related concepts in the context of climate change. Climate change seems to be a major source of demandingness. It could even be called a demandingness intensifier, making it more costly, difficult, and restrictive of options to be moral in ordinary, everyday circumstances. Somewhat paradoxically, negative duties of avoiding harm are an important cause of high demandingness. While it seems that one individual cannot do much, and it is more effective to tackle climate change on a collective level, there is much for individuals to do. Especially the

extraordinary people, individuals with both first and second-order responsibilities, can be under extremely demanding moral obligations. This can give grounds for demandingness objection (DO) but lacking a clear threshold or limits of what can be required morally from an agent, it is difficult to appeal to DO. One of the reasons is that mitigating climate change is so desirable that almost any cost of effective action becomes acceptable – climate change must be avoided no matter what.[28] The proportionality of costs is still important, and if individuals – other than the extraordinary – are not able to effectively do much about climate change, their role might be mostly to comply with climate policies, that in turn can demand significant sacrifices.

The principle of ought-implies-can (OIC) is very similar to DO, adding a class of actions that cannot be reasonably required from the agents – namely, those that are impossible. However, if the impossibility of some otherwise requirable action is caused by the agent themselves, OIC does not apply; if I break my car on purpose and thus cannot help being late from a meeting, I am not morally off the hook). So, even if it is impossible to turn the tide with climate change, pleading to OIC might be inappropriate concerning anthropogenic global warming. While it is not reasonable to expect that ordinary people alone stop climate change, they each can have a responsibility to contribute to that goal. Or, when a collective scheme for stopping climate change is at place, they ought to comply with it.

It is also doubtful that effective climate action would necessarily be supererogatory, good but not required. It is also doubtful that contributing to climate harms is suberogatory, bad but permissible. Allowing strong demands, like the moral extremist would, does not imply denying the existence of these classes of actions.

In addition to considerations about demandingness, one should consider feasibility of climate policies. Understanding what is feasible requires an understanding of the world, as some hold that political theory should be fact-sensitive. Both demandingness and feasibility are thus highly circumstantial. Without appropriate feasibility constraints, political theory can be accused of being utopian. However, mitigating climate change or proposing radical climate policies are not necessarily utopian. Rather, they are anti-dystopian, steering us away from catastrophe, not towards paradise.

Ordinary morality is *prima facie* not comfortable with extreme demands. Yet, climate change gives grounds for making extreme demands and intensifies the demandingness of already existing duties. The methodological thread of this dissertation is to assess this demandingness with the method of wide reflective

[28] Unless, of course, something even worse would follow from such climate action.

equilibrium. On what level should readjustments, re-evaluations, or eliminations of background theories, principles, and considered judgments be made to accommodate extreme demands or demandingness? So far, the familiar concepts of ordinary morality that have kept morality's demands in check have not been challenged in this dissertation. Climate change does not challenge them so that key concepts would need to be changed. OIC seems intact, the category of supererogatory acts still exists, and DO and feasibility have maintained their functions. For individuals, the ordinary people addressed by ordinary morality, compliance with climate policies is likely to be the greatest singular source of demandingness. It induces costs, difficulties, and restriction of options. Additionally, the second-order responsibilities can be demanding. The importance of stopping climate change, however, makes it plausible that a DO cannot be raised even against highly demanding climate duties.

As already noted, demandingness concerns have often revolved around different forms of consequentialism, although recently similar concerns have been raised of other normative ethical theories. DO is often the centrepiece of such concerns. It is easy to see why especially maximizing act-consequentialisms raises them. Only the actions with best expected outcomes are acceptable and by the same token, required. Consequentialism is an easy target of DO because it makes an affluent lifestyle morally questionable. It can go against ordinary morality to say that morality requires abandoning such lifestyle. Interestingly, consequentialism puts the affluent in morally extraordinary circumstances while they may feel like ordinary circumstances. But this idea can be contested with a claim that the affluent do not live in ordinary circumstances. They have, historically speaking, extraordinary powers and resources, and these are extraordinary times with extraordinary dangers. Nothing is 'ordinary' in the way the world is and in our relationship to it, so why should morality be? In the next chapter, ordinary morality and its relationship with the modern world is examined further.

Chapter Three. Ordinary Morality and the Changing World

3.1. Introduction

It is advantageous for a moral theory to match well with people's moral perceptions. While morality should guide people on how to live their lives, it must not overpower every aspect of their lives. Even to be morally good, one should not have to make extreme sacrifices in everyday situations. There should also be room for different life decisions, personal projects, and narratives. In short, morality should leave moral agents at least reasonable freedom about how to live their lives. These kinds of views about morality are characteristic to ordinary morality. In this dissertation they are discussed in relation to moral demandingness. Moral demandingness refers to the costliness of being moral, or the costliness of following moral theories, principles, and prescriptions. This costliness is taken to be objective, but demandingness as an experience is also acknowledged, as subjective psychological perceptions of difficulty can also be interpreted as costs. Ordinary morality holds that our moral duties should not be too costly to follow. One should not have to sacrifice most of their goods to help others, being moral should not be a constant strife, and morality should not be too restrictive of options. (Van Ackeren 2018.) This way, demandingness is an important parameter for ordinary morality.

In a world of climate change, ordinary morality is under great demandingness-related pressure: people cannot just go about their business, as ordinary morality would normally have it. Quite the opposite, climate change occurs because people have gone about their business, unchecked for too long. From the perspective of ordinary morality, demandingness quickly becomes an issue when considering ethical questions concerning climate change. It depends partly on the agent how demanding something is. (Carbonell 2016.) A climate policy can be more demanding for some agents than for others, all things considered, but it can also *feel* more demanding for some agents than for others. People judge demandingness differently. Ordinary morality – as a common-sensical and moderate orientation towards morality – should be able to say something general about the demandingness of climate ethics while remaining sensitive to perceived and experienced demandingness, and how demanding something is judged to be.

A good example of a demanding approach to climate change that goes against ordinary morality, discussed by Dale Jamieson (2014, 156), is an equal per capita emissions approach. In this approach, each person is given a personal

quota for emissions. However, the quota would have to be very low to be effective; 2.7 tons of carbon dioxide per year per person until 2050. This is so low that it would be extremely difficult for most affluent people not to exceed it. Now suppose that climate change is a human rights issue and going above the quota is thus a human rights violation. This would imply that most affluent people are human rights violators. But, as Jamieson notes, most people do not feel like they are human rights violators. Many times, people do not have the means, like public transportation, to emit less even if they wanted to. (Jamieson 2014, 152–156.) The equal per capita emissions approach and the climate change as a human rights violation view together would certainly go against ordinary morality. Ordinary morality does not allow these kinds of approaches, because they make morality overwhelming as it dictates too much how people should live their lives. People also would have to make extreme sacrifices to be moral.

Yet, climate change calls for action. The main research question in this chapter is if ordinary morality can provide grounds for effectively responding to climate change. To answer this, climate change will be taken as a stress test for ordinary morality, as described in the first chapter, to test how it fares against the challenge of climate change. Ordinary morality should be able to take climate change seriously enough to permit demands that are necessary for mitigating, adapting to, or compensating the effects of climate change on the one hand, while limiting the demands of morality so that they do not become exceedingly burdensome for individuals on the other. The aim is to identify where ordinary morality seems to fail in responding to climate change, and whether it can be amended or altered somehow so that it still holds much of its intuitive appeal, and yet gives tools for responding to climate change. This may require allowing also extreme moral demands. Importantly, the failures of ordinary morality are not measured against some normative theory like utilitarianism, but against a practical goal of responding effectively to climate change.

Stopping climate change seems to require sacrifices that do not fit easily together with ordinary morality. There is a conflict between demanding more effective climate action and ordinary morality. This chapter will put the climate stress test to use and see how ordinary morality can respect the two input commitments of stopping climate change and non-excessive moral demands. The stress test begins the reflective equilibrium analysis, and a process towards a new point of equilibrium for ordinary morality. First, I will offer a tentative definition for ordinary morality. Based on moral philosophical literature, I will outline some key boundaries ordinary morality makes for moral theorizing. Then, I will discuss the contents of ordinary morality on the three levels of

background theories, principles, and considered judgments. This discussion will form the initial position for ordinary morality. Then, I will demonstrate how the stress test will produce an internal conflict to ordinary morality as a system of moral beliefs. Here I will closely follow Brian Berkey's (2016) discussion of a similar conflict between moderate demands and principles. I will conclude that ordinary morality must be altered so that it allows extreme demands, at least in the case of climate change. The initial position is shown to be unstable, and the applied reflective equilibrium process takes ordinary morality to a more extremist direction.

3.2. What Is Ordinary Morality?

When discussing demandingness in ethics, philosophers sometimes refer to ordinary morality.[29] Yet, it is often left without clear content or definition. (See Berkey 2016, n15; Murphy 1993, 273.) To understand ordinary morality, it is useful to start by observing how it is used and for what purpose. Philosophers may define ordinary morality by marking a distinction from some proposed, usually highly demanding account on morality, and what ordinarily or typically would be seen as an acceptable level of demandingness. 'Acceptable' could here mean anything from 'intuitive' to an estimation of what people in fact think is acceptable or what they believe others would think of as acceptable, to more theoretical notions of what kind of demands a moral theory can make. In short, ordinary morality should function as a reference point for judgments providing them reasonability and plausibility. For instance, ordinary morality is often referred to when making a demandingness objection, typically against some consequentialist theory. (See Berkey 2016, 3016; van Ackeren and Kühler 2016b, 4.) It is then assumed that going against ordinary morality is a flaw in one's theory, a clear signal that something needs to be altered or amended. It is almost like an argumentative or methodological move, trusting that ordinary morality grounds theories in a way that ensures they never stray too much. Thus, ordinary morality is not an all-encompassing action-guiding moral theory like theories such as consequentialism is.[30] It is something that theories like

[29] There are other sets of considerations about ordinary morality that will not be addressed here. For instance, ordinary morality can be referred to as a metaethical belief system that accepts some kind of moral realism (see Kulp 2019), or it can be referred to when making a distinction between ordinary morality and professional morality, where the former is something that holds for everyone, and the latter is reserved for people practicing certain professions (see Martin 1981).

[30] Perhaps one could formulate a version of ordinary morality that is a full-fledged, action-guiding theory of normative ethics. However, this is not the project of this dissertation. One of

consequentialism are often checked up against. Their plausibility is weighed against ordinary morality. This way, ordinary morality anchors moral theorizing and gives guidance especially on how demanding morality can be.

3.2.1. Ordinary Morality: A Definition

I suggest the following definition for ordinary morality:

> df. *Ordinary Morality*. A common-sensical and moderate orientation towards morality that sets boundaries to what moral theories and prescriptions may demand from ordinary people in ordinary circumstances.

This definition connects ordinary morality with common sense and moderation about morality. *Common sense* is taken to be the main method of deriving and assessing beliefs for the system of ordinary morality. Here common sense is understood as a combination of (layperson) moral reasoning and intuition, although the latter might play a greater role, because things usually quite instantly *feel* common-sensical. However, this close relationship to common sense does not make ordinary morality an intuitionist account, because at least in principle a belief[31] system can harbour counterintuitive beliefs that otherwise are consistent and cohere with other beliefs in a way that even helps explain and support other beliefs. Also, as far as intuitionism is a metaethical theory about how to derive or know moral contents, it is not coextensive with ordinary morality, which does not necessarily account for the origins of moral contents. Additionally, some considered judgments, even if intuitive, can be subject to

---

the reasons for not taking ordinary morality as a theory of normative ethics like utilitarianism or deontological ethics is that there seems to be something else at play when philosophers refer to ordinary morality. When utilitarianism, for instance, is accused of not adhering to ordinary morality, it is a different kind of accusation than accusing utilitarianism for not adhering to deontological ethics. The debate between utilitarianism and deontological ethics is which theory is the correct and authoritative one, but criticising either one because they fail to adhere to ordinary morality suggests that ordinary morality has a *meta* level authority over theories of normative ethics. Pursuing this goal would lose this characteristic feature of ordinary morality. In my view, ordinary morality is more theory-guiding than action-guiding.

[31] 'Moral belief' here is not taken to assume an agent-independent objective moral reality from which the contents of the beliefs are derived from. This dissertation remains agnostic on such metaethical matters, and it suffices to note that the contents of a moral belief can come from what people believe to be a moral fact, a social fact, or merely something that gains its truth status (of sorts) from being consistent with other beliefs in a system of moral beliefs.

elimination or correction in the process of reflective equilibrium if they are not consistent with well-established and common-sensical principles.

From the perspective of reflective equilibrium, common sense is the entry point for many considered judgments. It also plays a regulative role on the level of principles, and it limits the content of background theories and how they can be understood. But it is not the only method of deriving and assessing beliefs, and all the beliefs are not necessarily in tune with common sense. Common sense is still important, because going against it significantly raises the theoretical cost of accepting a belief, a principle, or even a background theory as part of the moral belief system of ordinary morality.

Moderation, on the other hand, is taken to refer to an orientation towards morality in general. It gives guidance to how much morality can demand from individuals: usually not extremely much, and not minimally little. According to Berkey (2016, 3020),

> "Moderation about Demands is the view that, in circumstances like ours, morality is not significantly more demanding than most of us ordinarily take it to be, or, we might say, than common-sense morality takes it to be."

A moderate position on morality, as opposed to extremist and minimalist positions, is compatible with ordinary morality.

The different boundaries and limitations mentioned in the definition will be further discussed later in this chapter, as well as the notion of 'ordinary circumstances.' It is debatable whether modern world construes the conditions of ordinary circumstances, especially if considered from the long-term perspective of human species' existence and conditions on this planet. The changes in circumstances, and how ordinary morality fares with those changes, are also later discussed in this chapter. For now, it is sufficient to assume that ordinary circumstances refer to the circumstances ordinary people usually find themselves in in their everyday lives, in contrast to special circumstances like those of an emergency. It is also not clear whether modern affluent western people count as 'ordinary', but for now this ordinariness is posited in contrast to the *extraordinary people* mentioned in the previous chapter.

The concept of ordinary morality gives access to discussing the circumstances of moral theorizing. It is possible to evaluate whether we are in 'ordinary' circumstances, and who are 'ordinary' people. This is suitable for a project of examining the acceptable level of demandingness of being moral in a world like this, a world of life-threatening climate change. It also gives grounds for discussing the changes in those circumstances, and whether we no longer

are in 'ordinary' circumstances, or if we should aim for more 'ordinary' circumstances. I will return to issues related to ordinariness of people and circumstances later in this chapter, but before that, I will first discuss some related concepts and the boundaries ordinary morality sets for moral theorizing.

3.2.2. Related Concepts: Common-Sense Morality, Moderate Morality, and Positive Morality

Ordinary morality is closely linked, and sometimes treated synonymously with common-sense morality and moderate morality. In some instances, they are treated separately but in close relation with each other. For instance, Kagan (1989, 5) depicts a 'moderate' as someone who defends ordinary morality, and Berkey (2012, 4) notes that part of the attractiveness of a moderate view is its close tie to common-sense morality. However, 'ordinary morality' has slightly different connotations from 'common-sense morality' and 'moderate morality'. A *common-sense morality* is a belief system that is entirely comprised of beliefs derived and assessed by common sense, and its systematization.[32] In such a belief system each considered judgment, principle, and background theory would be common-sensical, or must pass the test of common sense. For this, ordinary morality and common-sense morality are not coextensive, if still often closely related. A *moderate morality*, on the other hand, by definition seems to be incompatible with all extreme demands. If moderate morality outright excludes extreme demands, it would be too limiting for the discussion in this dissertation. If the climate stress test even occasionally requires extreme moral demands, moderate morality would automatically fail the stress test. I also suspect that moderate morality's input commitments would be different. In this dissertation the second input commitment is that morality should not become exceedingly demanding. Moderate morality seems to be committed to the stricter idea that there should not be no extreme demands at all, even if they were not over-excessive in a particular situation. Non-excessive does not mean non-extreme, because excessiveness has to do with proportionality (discussed in section 2.4.2). Such a strict commitment would be even more directly in conflict with the first input commitment, that climate change ought to be stopped. It would be difficult to proceed respecting the first input commitment with such a strict commitment to non-extreme demands without abandoning the subject – how ordinary morality fares under the stress test – in the reflective equilibrium

[32] This way of constructing a common-sense morality resembles the process of codification in the juridical context.

process. (See Rechnitzer 2022, 28.) Thus, I find it more suitable to operate under the conceptual framework of ordinary morality instead.

There is one more distinction that is important to make to avoid confusing different topics. Ordinary morality is sometimes characterised as the belief system that 'most of us accept'. (Singer 1991, 625.) Even though this is an important characteristic of ordinary morality, ordinary morality does not entail the contents of the so-called *positive morality*, although one can expect some overlapping between the two. Positive morality refers to the set of moral beliefs and their behavioural expressions people in a given society seem to factually hold and perform. (See, e.g., Hart 1963.) Positive morality is a sociological construct that is derived from a sociological study of what people factually believe (and do) about morality. Ordinary morality is an abstract philosophical construct that is mainly based on philosopher's own personal experiences, perceptions, or alike constituents. Thus, ordinary morality can be, although rarely, in dire conflict with positive morality. For example, in the 1930s, many people in some European countries believed in things like fascism that ordinary morality holds utterly unacceptable. Another distinguishing feature is that positive morality, depending on the research focus, can be observed also by how people act and not just what they believe, while ordinary morality as a philosophical construct concerns moral beliefs. There can be, and often is, an action-value gap[33] between how people behave and what people believe how they should behave.

Positive morality is not irrelevant to considerations about demandingness. Especially, when it comes to a closely related concept feasibility, we have to pay close attention to it, because if something is considered too demanding then it can be considered infeasible, too. The concept of feasibility is a close relative to demandingness. As discussed in the previous chapter, what people believe (the general political atmosphere) is a soft constraint to policy proposals. The public advocacy of human rights in a totalitarian system might not be politically feasible. However, some might object that taking empirical claims (such as those of positive morality) into account makes political theory far too conservative. (See Miller 2013, 19.) This is even clearer with moral philosophy. Advocating human rights in a totalitarian system might be politically infeasible, but even if the positive morality approves of such a repressive regime, one could still hold the moral conviction that human rights should be respected. Moral philosophy is not and sometimes ought not be constrained by positive morality, although it often might be inspired by it. However, positive morality is a demandingness factor. For instance, in a widely popular totalitarian system it would be far more

[33] For discussion, see Kollmuss and Agyeman (2002) and Godin et al. (2005).

difficult to advocate for human rights than in a liberal system. Because ordinary morality has close ties to demandingness and related concepts, positive morality can be relevant to it also this way.

3.2.3. Boundaries: Options and Constraints

Ordinary morality sets boundaries that limit what moral theories can demand from ordinary individuals in ordinary circumstances. In *Limits of Morality* (1989), Shelly Kagan ascribes two important features for ordinary morality – as a position defended by the moderate – that can also be understood as such boundaries. Firstly, ordinary morality usually leaves room for *options* for the agent. Importantly, moral agents are not required to always choose the morally best or optimal option. In other words, it is morally permissible to sometimes do things that are not morally best, for instance, things that do not produce the best possible outcomes. This leaves room also for supererogatory acts. Secondly, ordinary morality includes *constraints* about what moral agents can do, even for the greater good. In other words, there are instances when it is not permissible to behave morally optimally from the perspective of moral theory. Accommodating options and constraints render maximizing moral theories incompatible with ordinary morality. If maximizing some value was required, then only the best available action would be permissible, and all others forbidden. This would severely reduce the number of options available to the agent. (Kagan 1989, 9.) Options and constraints also exclude full impartiality. Arguably, one should have the option to prefer their own projects, for example in terms of agent-centred prerogatives. (See Scheffler 1994; Berkey 2016, 3026.) Ordinary morality constrains impartiality so that it would be inappropriate to prefer the well-being of complete strangers instead of one's next of kin or those who depend on the agent, at least sometimes.

Options and constraints are in many ways central to the climate debate. Questions about both range from individual level to the level of institutions, politics, and the society. For options, it is important to ask what kind of lifestyles are morally permissible for individuals, or how much the government may limit the everyday choices of individuals. A moral belief system that forbids most of the things that average affluent people enjoy on daily basis could be considered extremist, as could a system that permits or requires a regime that heavily controls what individuals can do. These beliefs do not fit the scheme of ordinary morality. Similarly, central is also what is permissible for climate action, or how much the rights and freedoms of individuals can be limited for tackling climate change. Lifting constraints on what individuals can do to others' private property, like sabotaging a highly polluting power plant, or what society can decide on behalf of its members easily go against the spirit of ordinary morality.

This way, ordinary morality regulates both first and second order climate responsibilities. (Discussed in the previous chapter, see Caney 2014.) As far as the more direct, first order climate responsibilities go, individuals have constraints on how to follow them through while they are still left options on how to live their lives. Constraints and options are also important for the second order climate responsibilities. Promoting the first order responsibilities, or complying with different institutional approaches to climate change, should still leave room for options and include constraints.

Simultaneously, restricting some of these options or even lifting some of these constraints may be necessary for effective climate action.[34] Because of the great harm for present and countless future generations, ordinary morality should require that *something* is done to mitigate, adapt to, and compensate the effects of climate change. The challenge to ordinary morality is to resist extremism while trying to avoid minimalism. (Kagan 1989, 6.) At the same time, there are elements in ordinary morality that require effective climate action, like duties to avoid harming others, but the actions necessary to do it are not morally permissible or otherwise conflict with the other principles typical to ordinary morality. Hence, in the outline of ordinary morality, there seems to be a conflict between moral permissions and requirements.

The following sections will take a closer look to background theories and whether climate change and certain human deficiencies in responding to it are taken seriously enough, and what kind of principles might work against permitting effective climate action.

3.3. Initial Position for Ordinary Morality

So far, I have sketched some outlines for ordinary morality. It is moderate in the sense that it accepts some sacrifices but leaves room for options and sets constraints on what can be morally required from agents. It adheres to common sense, it is not maximizing, and it allows partiality. Additionally, it should be separated from the more empirical account of positive morality. This section discusses the *contents* of ordinary morality, analysing them in accordance with

[34] Of course, such circumstances where seriously limiting people's freedom or infringing their rights should be avoided as far as possible, and such measures should only be a last resort. Here it is impossible to determine whether humanity already finds itself in such circumstances, but it is assumed that at least it is theoretically useful to ask *what if* we are in such dire circumstances. How does ordinary morality fare in a such scenario? The dire and catastrophic climate change is thus at least a theoretical, if not even a practical stress test for ordinary (or any human) morality.

the three levels of reflective equilibrium. The outcome forms the initial position of ordinary morality. After having the initial position set, we have access to better understanding how ordinary morality can operate under the stress test of climate change, and where and why it seems to fail.

3.3.1. Background Theories: Folk Views versus Scientifically Informed Views

Identifying the background theories is tricky business. One cannot simply include everything that is known about the world, as there are numerous competing theories that have different implications for the altogether system. Also, being too inclusive risks muddying the waters unnecessarily. On the other hand, too limited set of background theories risks biasing the project towards some predestined direction. The two input commitments are helpful here, because they ensure that the initial project is not abandoned. Also, the options and constraints, and the moderate and common-sense orientations to morality can be included in the background theories as moral theoretical notions on what morality should be about and what kind of demands it can produce.

The project itself should illuminate the desiderata for background theories. The subject is ordinary morality and its ability to function in a world of life-threatening climate change. So, what is required are theories about the nature of morality that fit together with ordinary morality. The discussion on moral demandingness and related concepts, as moral theoretical components, can be added to the background theories for ordinary morality. For instance, demandingness can be read as costliness to the agent. In addition to this more general theoretical content, some theoretical limits were already set for ordinary morality in the previous section. Ordinary morality tells us that for moral theorizing, one should leave options and include constraints for individual's actions. Thus, also, morality should be non-maximizing and allow partiality. The class of supererogatory acts fits well together with these limits. It ensures that the best action available is not *always* required.

In addition to these moral theories and views, the background theories should account for the state of the world. Additionally, it is important to understand the human condition, and how humans can operate with ordinary morality in a world like this. The reasoning behind these two latter desiderata is that we should be able to learn something about 'ordinary *people* in ordinary *circumstances*.' Thus, the background theories should include something about human moral psychology and climate change. Moral psychology gives information about 'ordinary people' and what they are like and what kind of behaviour can be expected from them. Theories and research on climate change

give information about much of the 'ordinary circumstances' people currently find themselves in.

There are at least two alternative ways to incorporate these theories to the level of background theories. The first is to develop a viewpoint that seems to flow more directly from ordinary morality, a *folk view*. The other is to take the best available knowledge, on empirical moral psychology and climate science, as part of the background theories. This can be called the *scientifically informed view*. Ordinary morality gravitates towards moderation, and it operates within the guidance of common sense. It seems that this reliance on common sense makes ordinary morality compatible with rudimentary level beliefs about the world, the nature of society and its fundamental features, international relations, laws of physics, human psychology, and so on. The level of detail it takes into account is of great importance. Because of its close link to common sense, ordinary morality could assume *folk views* about the world and humans in general. This way background theories would be compatible with common sense. For example, the views about physics might be Newtonian rather than more complicated current theories, such as string theory or quantum theory as sometimes the best available scientific knowledge and understanding of the world goes against common sense or feels counterintuitive. For instance, folk views about biology probably would not acknowledge humans as holobionts, beings composed of multiple species. (See Kramer and Bressan 2015.) Folk view regards humans as individuals and does not take into account the potentially profound ontological implications that the holobiontic theories may have. This is just a rough example, but it demonstrates how background theories are closer to folk views rather than rigorous scientific knowledge with potentially great ontological implications.

Ordinary morality considers common sense to be a reliable and trustworthy guide to morality, and with folk views[35], also about the world. For moral psychology, the folk views might hold that our moral psychology is quite reliable, at least in the everyday context. This would reflect all the way down to considered judgments, so that the theoretical cost of going against them is set quite high. For instance, if some principle produces implications that are not

[35] This reliance on folk views on the level of background theories resonates interestingly with the ordinary morality's aversion to the best possible outcomes. It seems that according to ordinary morality, people can behave on the basis of, say, high school level knowledge of the world, even if there was more detailed and accurate knowledge available. Recall Kagan (1989, 2) differentiating ordinary morality from extremist morality by noting that ordinary morality resists the thought that people should always choose the morally best course of action. It seems to be the case that ordinary morality also resists the thought that people should always act on the basis of best knowledge available.

common-sensical, the principle would be the first suspect and more easily eliminated from the system. With respect to climate change, it seems that people's common sense differs on what to make out of it. Even if outright climate denialism would be excluded as too extreme for common sense, the problem with climate change is that it is not directly and immediately observable. For instance, people often do not feel that they are doing something wrong when they contribute to climate change. (Lichtenberg 2010, 562.) To abide by common sense, should it on these grounds be concluded that people are not thereby doing anything wrong? If that is the case, respecting the first input commitment of stopping climate change becomes difficult.

Although folk views are very compatible with common sense, it is not clear whether background theories should be systematizations of common sense and the common-sensical considered judgments. Rechnitzer (2022, 33) notes that background theories should be relatively independent in the process of reflective equilibrium, while the process itself takes place in the 'foreground' between commitments and the system – or in this more classical application of the method, between considered judgments and principles. I have opted for the more typical scheme of wide reflective equilibrium where background theories are equally part of the process of reflective equilibrium. But I argue that a more scientifically informed view is still compatible with ordinary morality and its background theories, perhaps even more so than folk views for it is common-sensical to trust the experts on matters that fall under their expertise, even if sometimes what they say goes against one's common sense. For example, people usually consult a physician and not their next-door neighbour when it comes to health issues. It would not be common-sensical to consult the neighbour. Of course, it would go against the moderate spirit of ordinary morality to leave all aspects of one's life to experts. It can still be common-sensical not to consult an interior designer when decorating your home, especially if other concerns like costs are considered. Then again, it is even more common-sensical to trust the expert when the matters are grave enough. If the physician's opinion is that you have a serious disease that requires immediate medical attention, it is common-sensical to listen to the doctor even if you feel fine. Here *not* listening to the expert and their advice would be extreme. Arguably, climate change is grave enough to make listening to the community of climate scientists closer to consulting the physician than the interior designer.

This raises important questions about expertise and the authority of experts. Common sense has a limited capacity to tell who the experts are, and why they should have the kind of epistemic authority they are regularly granted. The question about expertise is a difficult one and cannot be settled

here. However, a few rudimentary notions can be made. There are different kinds of expertise. For instance, an astronomer's expertise is different from that of an astrologist. Yet, both are experts in something, and their expertise flows from a long tradition of attaining and practicing that art of expertise. Here common sense might point out that the astronomer's expertise and epistemic authority comes from the scientific practice and being part of the scientific community. The scientific method has produced reliable and testable knowledge which has resulted in many inventions that work and make our lives easier. Medical doctors have the ability to provide treatment for cancer, and engineers can design buildings that are safe and energy-efficient to live in. Reliance on science and technology made it possible to send people to the Moon. There is plenty of observable evidence that science works. This way, it is at least pragmatic to grant science authority, and acknowledge the expertise of those who adhere to the practices of the scientific community.[36] However, a climate denialist might want to refer to someone's expertise who takes part of these scientific practices but denies the anthropogenic climate change. Getting a second opinion might be often common sensical but relying on the expertise of a small minority of scientific community in a self-serving way is not. It could be then added that if the vast majority of scientific community believes in something, it is common sensical to trust that vast majority.

The folk views are problematic from a moral perspective because they do not take climate change and other environmental problems as seriously as climate and environmental sciences would imply. There are still traces lingering from the past way of treating the natural environment as if there are no ecological boundaries, allowing limitless growth. The gravity of the situation might not then translate to the level of principles, or to considered judgments, because the folk view about nature does not communicate it forcefully enough.

This takes us to moral psychology, where a more scientifically informed view would have major practical and theoretical implications for ordinary morality in the context of climate change. People may have an unfounded faith in their moral intuition(s) and reasoning. Unless in special circumstances, the considered judgments based on intuition are taken to be trustworthy. However,

[36] There is also the question about moral expertise. Should people rely on moral philosophers for moral expertise, and does this make ordinary morality redundant? First off, trusting philosophers' analyses and theorizing about morality is not the same as following some philosophical normative theory to the letter. There might be a wide consensus that one should not derive an ought from an is, for instance, but the consensus breaks down when the theories get more complicated and comprehensive. Also, even if it is sometimes common sensical to consult philosophy on moral matters, the work of moral philosophers often leaves plenty of room for the moral agent to make a variety of personal moral decisions.

empirical research on moral psychology shows that humans are highly biased in their judgments. For example, Joshua Greene (2013, 69) has written about our tribalistic tendencies. Humans prefer the in-group at the expense of the out-group and are also highly myopic in their judgments. This is problematic, because climate change, from the perspective of the affluent in-group of the Global North, affects mostly the out-group, the Global South, and future generations. (For the problematic nature of climate change, see Gardiner 2011a.) Again, because of the gravity of the situation, if moral psychology helps to understand or solve the problem better it would not be common-sensical not to listen to the experts.

There are aspects to the world that do not feel common-sensical because they are not readily available for perception and everyday observation. On a freezing cold winter's day, it does not feel like the globe is warming. If relying on daily observations (and not long-term statistics), there is something dangerously common-sensical about climate denialism.[37] Against this background, it is no wonder that ordinary morality might forbid very heavy climate action. But when climate change and its disastrous effects are taken seriously, not giving access to effective climate action becomes a worrying impediment for ordinary morality. This way, resisting the folk views about climate change is the first important step in understanding the flaws in ordinary morality. It would be very arbitrary to hold on to the folk views only to accommodate the kind of principles and considered judgments we seem to fancy.

If folk views shape the background theories of ordinary morality, it is problematic because it slows the responses of ordinary morality to changes and new knowledge, and overestimates the resilience of natural environment, and human moral psychological abilities. In more stable circumstances this might not be problematic, and certain stability could even be considered a theoretical virtue, but the world has changed very rapidly. The very function of background theories in a method of wide reflective equilibrium is to root a system of beliefs firmly to the real world, otherwise we would only have all kinds of coherent belief systems devoid of any applicability. The principles and judgments need to cohere with what we know about the world. The folk views in ordinary morality should thus be rejected, and a scientifically informed view should be adopted instead. To understand ordinary people and the ordinary circumstances, ordinary morality should rely on scientifically informed views and include climate science and moral psychology to its background theories.

[37] Although, worryingly, this can slowly change as people start to feel and see the effects of climate change in their everyday lives.

The content of these background theories and their implications will be further discussed in the following chapters. One of these implications is that some considered judgments, especially those pertaining to climate change, might be eliminated based on their unreliability. Here I follow Joshua Greene (2016, 140), who has suggested a double-wide reflective equilibrium that assumes a moral psychological background theory that helps root out potentially biased judgments. This will have important ramifications for ordinary morality.

3.3.2. Regulative and Moral Principles

For the level of principles in ordinary morality, I suggest the distinction between regulative principles and moral principles proper.[38] This distinction is based on their different functions. The regulative principles are associated with issues of demandingness, or more generally, what, and how much ordinary morality can demand from agents. While typically moral principles give action-guidance on what one morally ought and ought not to do, their main function here is to denote the kind of moral principles that any given normative theory such as utilitarianism should subscribe to if it is to remain in accordance with ordinary morality.

The main regulative principles that are important for the discussion at hand are what can be called the *over-demandingness principle*, and the *ought-implies-can principle*. They are based on the notions of demandingness and related concepts that were discussed in the previous chapter and incorporated to the background theories about the nature of morality. Here is an outline of both:

> *Over-demandingness principle:* Agents must not be required to perform overly demanding acts.
>
> *Ought-implies-can principle*: Agents must not be required to perform acts they cannot perform.

Additionally, to confirm that a class of supererogatory and suberogatory (Driver 1992) acts are accepted as part of ordinary morality, there could be the following principle:

[38] This is distinction is similar to Cohen's (2003) principles of regulation and ultimate principles.

Principle of Super-/Suberogation: Agents must not be required to perform supererogatory (good and permissible, but not required) acts, nor must agents be forbidden to perform suberogatory (bad but permissible) acts.

The over-demandingness principle ensures that only moderate moral principles are included in ordinary morality, thus regulating the contents of moral principles. It is a common-sensical principle that reflects the moderate spirit of ordinary morality and supports and gains support from considered judgments about overly demanding moral demands in particular cases. Additionally, over-demandingness principle grounds demandingness objections and gives them their power against over-demanding moral theories, principles, and moral prescriptions. The ought-implies-can principle, on the other hand, ensures that morality does not require acts that are impossible to perform. This principle seems to be implied by the over-demandingness principle, but there are cases where an act that would not in itself be very demanding or costly is for some reason unavailable to the agent. It is not very costly to prevent a house from burning down by switching off your coffee maker, but if you are locked in a basement, it would be impossible to do so, and thus it cannot be required from you. The two principles also serve different functions, as the ought-implies-can principle operates categorically because something is or is not impossible and the over-demandingness principle operates by degree as something is more or less demanding.

These regulative principles are in a sense more important than any fixed set of moral principles, because they govern what kind of moral principles can be accepted in the system of ordinary morality. This way the regulative principles ensure that ordinary morality remains in spirit moderate. Additionally, they gain their common-sensical characteristics from considered judgments about particular cases that intuitively seem overly demanding.

To demonstrate the interplay of regulative and moral principles, consider Singer's principle, that there is a duty to prevent death and suffering when doing so comes with no morally significant cost, and the shallow pond case. Singer seems to expose the principle to a test of intuitiveness and common sense with the shallow pond case. If you come across a child drowning in a shallow pond and could easily wade in and save the child with the cost of muddying your clothes, intuitively, you ought to save the child regardless of the cost. (Singer 1972, 231.) The principle passes the test and seems compatible with regulative principles that govern the overall demandingness of a moral belief system. However, when cases like shallow pond are iterated, the principle becomes problematic. (See Timmerman 2015.) There are millions of people (and

animals, plants, ecosystems, and future generations) in desperate need of help that one could provide as easily and with as little sacrifice as saving a drowning child. For each, up to a point where one's wellbeing would be reduced to similar level, the principle holds that one ought to help. It can be argued then that it is over-demanding to ultimately require agents to end up giving almost all their income, time, and energy to helping others. These implications of Singer's (1972, 231) principle make it susceptible to demandingness objections. It is merely supererogatory to donate money to charity, but not morally required, because otherwise people would have to donate most of their income to charity. However, ordinary morality would usually hold that saving the drowning child is morally required.

Ordinary morality seems to accept the act-omission doctrine. (See Persson 2013, ch. 3.) It holds that acting towards some good/bad outcome is generally better/worse than omitting to do something bad/good.[39] Therefore, letting a distant stranger die by omitting to help is morally less bad than actively killing someone. This is reflected in ordinary morality's tendency to promote negative rather than positive duties. (Rajczi 2007, 16.) One of the reasons might be that negative duties are generally perceived as less demanding, or some kind of a moral minimum. Positive duties, or the duties of beneficence, are deemed *extra* – good, but not required, supererogatory. According to Alex Rajczi (2007, 16), the positive duty to promote good is limited in ordinary morality to four circumstances: (generally,) when we have agreed to do so; (often,) to those we have close or familial relations; (generally,) when the cost of doing great good is very small and convenient; and for the worst off, we must spend some time and resources. Other than that, we can do whatever we want unless it harms others. So, according to this layout, there are only limited circumstances where ordinary morality sets positive duties. Among others, we should help when the cost is small and helping is convenient. These are the circumstances of the shallow pond case. But with *all* the children of the world requiring our help, the cost is too great and inconvenient. Still, the challenge for ordinary morality is to show why the drowning child and famine relief are not morally analogous, so that there is a morally relevant difference between the two cases and Singer's principle applies to drowning children but not world poverty and similar problems.[40] Another option is to rely on more restricted principles that would

[39] This is akin to moderate morality, which accepts the distinction between doing and allowing. (See Berkey 2012, 9).

[40] For instance, Unger (1996) makes and compares multiple thought experiments to show that there is no morally relevant difference between these kinds of cases. These thought experiments will be examined in section 4.3.2.

be consistent with saving a drowning child but not helping distant strangers. But the reasoning behind this is nevertheless based on the regulative principles. This way, the regulative principles keep the demandingness levels of ordinary morality in check, and they are more essential to ordinary morality than any fixed set of moral principles proper.

In turn, the negative duty to refrain from harming others is known as the no harm principle. My purpose here is not to give a full list of moral principles that are compatible with or included in ordinary morality. However, the no harm principle[41] is so central to ordinary morality that it is worth singling out. One version of it goes:

No harm principle: One must not cause unnecessary harm to others.

The no harm principle can be considered as a moderate principle. Without it, ordinary morality might collapse into minimalism, because almost anything would be morally permissible. No harm principle puts constraints on agents, but simultaneously leaves a wide array of options. Also, the notion of *unnecessary* harm keeps it mild enough for ordinary morality. It is rather common-sensical to think that there are cases where one can do harm to others. I can cut the line if that is the only way for me to make it to a connecting flight, even if it causes minor annoyance to others. A dentist can cause pain to a patient if that fixes their teeth. A dangerous criminal can be put to prison even if that restricts their options significantly. One can conjure numerous cases where the principle gets support from considered judgments. As with assessing the level of acceptable moral demandingness, notions of proportionality and thresholds are important when assessing the necessity of harm. There should be special reasons to cause harm, and usually they have to do with some benefit that outweigh the harm clearly enough. Also, it is plausible to think that there are some thresholds one can never cross, most likely related to severe harms like murdering or torturing others. On the other hand, it would be over-demanding to never be able to cause any harm to others, when reasons are good enough. This respects the input commitment of non-excessive moral demands.

There are circumstances where even the regulative principles must give way to heavy demands. In special circumstances like times of war, natural disasters, or extreme economic depression the options and constraints typically associated with ordinary morality are reconsidered. Options become more restricted, and constraints are lifted. But these are not ordinary circumstances, thus not applicable to ordinary morality. This is probably the easiest

[41] Often associated with John Stuart Mill (2010, originally 1859). (See also Feinberg 1984, 11.)

explanation about differing considered judgments about the shallow pond case and famine relief. The former counts as a state of emergency. This possibility to suddenly change rules altogether can be integrated to the ordinary morality framework: it is plausible that among regulative principles is some kind of *ICE* ('In-Case-of-Emergency') *principle*. Such ICE principle gives access to an altogether alternative set of ethics, like that of *supreme emergency* in military ethics (Walzer 2015; see also Sandin 2009), or a system of *emergency ethics* in climate ethics. (See Joronen & Oksanen 2012.) They share the logic of the so-called threshold deontology, where dire enough circumstances prompt changing a deontological normative ethics to a consequentialist one, if only momentarily. (See Moore 1989, 327–332; Sen 1982, n8.) The problem with emergency ethics is that it is reserved for a limited time frame.[42] However, the on-going climate crisis is too chronic and creeping to count as an emergency.[43] The question is, then, whether climate change can activate the ICE principle and put ordinary morality on-hold for the time being or whether climate change becomes merely a new normal. How should ordinary morality respond to circumstantial changes, and especially radical ones? Present circumstances do not yet contain cues that would tell us that this is an emergency, and thus they fail to give reasons for assuming another set of ethics, sometimes called emergency ethics, where the rules for permissible, required, and forbidden actions change. This is a very theoretical consideration, occurring between different levels ordinary morality. Another thing to consider is that even if the folk view about the state of the globe did contain cues for emergency, people still fail to act accordingly. This alternative explanation for inaction is called a knowledge-action gap. (See Kollmuss and Agyeman 2002.) The puzzle here is why people do not act although they *know* about the dangers of climate change. Another puzzle emerges if people believed that they *ought* to stop climate change (perhaps because it is dangerous and causes much harm) and still do not act accordingly. This is called the motivational gap. (Peeters et al. 2019.) These closely related gaps between what people do and what they know or think they ought to do is explored further in the next chapter.

3.3.3. Considered Judgments and Common Sense

There is no straightforward answer to what a considered judgment is, what it is made of, and what it contains. Rawls' (1971, 47) account holds that our (moral) considered judgments are "judgments in which our moral capacities are most

[42] It is assumed here that the concept of emergency functions similarly to the concept disaster, which refers to short-term and more locally occurring events. (See Lindell 2013.)

[43] For discussion on chronic horrors and emergencies, see Unger 1996, 42–45.

likely to be displayed without distortion". Because they are *considered* judgments, they exclude mere prejudice or gut feelings that cannot stand further philosophical scrutiny and thus cannot be components of moral theorizing. (Rawls 1971, 46–47.) Intuition seems to play a crucial role in the formation of considered judgments, and sometimes 'intuition' and 'considered judgment' about particular cases seem to be used interchangeably. (Daniels 2020.) On the other hand, a conceptual relative, moral judgment, is sometimes taken to be either the product of reasoning (Kohlberg 1969; see also Arnold 2000, 367), intuition or emotion (Haidt 2001), or both (Greene 2016).

I assume that a considered judgment can include a broader range of content than a moral judgment, for instance descriptive content (e.g., "moral prescription X was extremely demanding"). Here it is also assumed that both intuition and reasoning play a role in the formation of moral judgments and considered judgments. Intuition, for instance, can be taken as the main access point or source to moral contents, and it is the role of reason to sieve out those intuitions that cannot count as 'considered'. It seems, however, that intuition and emotions, the processes that can be contrasted to effortful and conscious reasoning as non-effortful and immediate responses to moral cases, are more dominant. (Haidt 2001; Prinz 2016.) This aspect of considered judgments, and how they play out in the context of climate change, will be the topic of next chapter.

It would be folly to attempt to give a full list of considered judgments relevant for ordinary morality. Instead, I will say something general about what kind of judgments I assume to characterise ordinary morality, and what kind of judgments fit well together with and influence the system of ordinary morality. Firstly, two important groups of judgments for the present topic are what Brian Berkey (2014, 164–165) calls *Anti-Demandindngess Intuition* (ADI) and *Mitigation-Obligation Intuition* (MOI), which are the basis of the input commitments in this dissertation. The first one says that there are limits to the demandingness of morality. The second judgment is that there is an obligation to mitigate climate change. Both judgments are, respectively, compatible with the regulative over-demandingness principle and the moral no harm principle, discussed above. The regulative over-demandingness principle seems to be derived from particular considered judgments about an appropriate degree of demandingness. Consider the iteration of shallow pond cases from the perspective of reflective equilibrium. Background theories about the world tell us that in reality there are numerous cases like the shallow pond, where we could help easily and with low personal costs. Quickly, a considered judgment about over-demandingness presents itself. In similar cases where some

principles lead to weighty moral burdens and similar considered judgments about over-demandingness appeared, soon a systematization of these considered judgments becomes available: a regulative principle holding that moral principles cannot lead to great moral burdens, that is, they must not become overly demanding. In these considered judgments, common sense plays an important role. The principles should be intuitively acceptable, feasible, and overall representative of morality for ordinary people.

Secondly, from the perspective of reflective equilibrium, it is important to note that considered judgments are not only judgments about particular cases people face, but also about the system of morality itself. These considered judgments could be called *evaluative judgments*. They evaluate whether a principle or another belief is sound or common-sensical. One factor affecting their soundness is demandingness. It is sometimes difficult to evaluate a principle's demandingness in abstraction, and often they reveal their demandingness in particular cases, like with the New Harms.

In some sense, demandingness objections are such evaluative judgments. Demandingness objections can be plausibly raised against extreme principles, for example if they are impartial or maximizing by nature. However, one should be careful about demandingness objections against particular instances, where moderate principles produce extreme demands. Here the extremeness is circumstantial. Fittingly, in a more recent article Berkey (2019) talks about demandingness complaints instead of objections. Arguably, demandingness complaints belong to the level of considered judgments. I suggest the following distinction between demandingness objections and demandingness complaints: Demandingness objections are grounded by the over-demandingness principles, while demandingness complaints are particular judgments about particular instances. One can report that something is overly demanding but fail to gain theoretical support from the over-demandingness principle. This is important, because the changes I have in mind for ordinary morality are most dramatic on this level. Additionally, if the background theories are firmly grounded in science, it is possible to increase the theoretical cost of maintaining some considered judgments. Knowledge about climate change encourages urgent action, and knowledge about moral psychology points out that moral judgments are often biased and tribalistic. There are good grounds for eliminating considered judgments that make a demandingness complaint against stopping contributing to New Harms, because in the overall system, these judgments create much incoherence.

3.4. Ordinary People in Ordinary Circumstances

So far, I have discussed the definition of ordinary morality, some concepts related to ordinary morality, what kind of boundaries it sets, and, with a wide reflective equilibrium analysis, some of its characteristic contents. There is still one important aspect of ordinary morality left to discuss, which relates to the *ordinariness* of ordinary morality. Recall the provided definition:

> df. *Ordinary Morality*. A common-sensical and moderate orientation towards morality that sets boundaries to what moral theories and prescriptions may demand from ordinary people in ordinary circumstances.

This definition sets an operational space for ordinary morality: it pertains to ordinary people, whoever they may be, in ordinary circumstances, whatever they may be. On a more theoretical level, reference to ordinary people distinguishes ordinary morality from professional ethics (see Martin 1981), and on a more practical level, it excludes certain groups of people who may otherwise be in a special position so that they cannot be considered 'ordinary'. For example, this could include the extraordinary people discussed in chapter two, who have special resources or are in special positions of power which gives them extraordinary responsibilities. Similarly, on a more theoretical level the reference to ordinary circumstances rules out ethical theories that are designed for special circumstances like emergencies or times of war (see, e.g., Walzer 2015; Sterri and Moen 2021), and special topics like bioethical concerns of human cloning (see Maimets and Lõuk 2016) that ordinary people do not typically encounter in their everyday lives. On a more practical level, it distinguishes special circumstances like emergencies that may call for specifically designed ethics from those that ordinary people encounter on a daily basis.

It is important to treat these two notions in conjunction with each other, because everyday circumstances of, say, a billionaire or an active-duty military medic can be ordinary from their respective perspectives, but are far from the ordinary circumstances of ordinary people. Also, power and resources that average affluent people have relative to the rest of the world's population can seem comparatively extraordinary (we will return to this issue later), but as long as the majority of the affluent do not possess the kind of powers and resources that allow them to significantly change the world, they remain ordinary people in the relevant sense, and thus their everyday lives count as ordinary circumstances. For instance, an average Nordic person has greater power and

resources relative to the world average, but they still do not have it in their power to end homelessness in their hometowns or decide (individually) whether their municipality becomes CO2 negative in the following ten years. This conjunction of ordinariness of people and circumstances is important, because otherwise ordinary morality would not apply to the affluent, and instead some kind of extraordinary or affluent morality might be more suitable for them. I wish not to contest this possibility. For the purposes of present inquiry, it is reasonable to assume that even the vast majority of affluent people are within the scope of ordinary morality. Ordinary people and ordinary circumstances fall between the two extremes of being in possession of significant resources or being almost entirely dispossessed of resources, so that it would automatically be unreasonable to require any further sacrifices.

However, there is a certain relativity to ordinariness. In addition to the diversity of subjective perspectives, ordinariness seems to be relative to time and space. What seems ordinary now would not have seemed ordinary three hundred years ago. Certain things that are ordinary in Finland would not be ordinary in China. This makes ordinary morality sensitive to changes. Changes in circumstances or the resources, power, or roles a person can have can turn the ordinary into extraordinary and vice versa. Circumstances and people can seize to be ordinary, or they can return back to ordinary. Thus, understanding the operational space of ordinary morality requires understanding the changes in the world.

The world has changed rapidly since the beginning of the industrial revolution in the late 18th century. These changes raise the question whether morality has changed or should change as well. For instance, the rise of environmental philosophy could be seen as a delayed philosophical reaction to the changes caused by humans in their surrounding natural environment and the effects of these changes on human and non-human life alike. Some newly identified and acknowledged environmental philosophical problems have been met with so-called extensionism, that is, the extension of applying classic anthropocentric moral philosophical theories and principles to new entities and areas of philosophical inquiry. (See Newman et al. 2017, 233.)[44] This way, the circle of morality (Singer 1981) expands as new beings are included to the sphere of moral considerability without requiring new principles or expiring the old ones but rather extending their area of application. On the other hand, the changing circumstances can also bring about novel problems that require novel

[44] This is not to say that people did not have beliefs or even principles that extended moral status beyond other humans before. Rather, what seems new is the acquisition of non-anthropocentric views into the systematic, academic practice of philosophy.

principles. For instance, relatively recently acquired ability to clone animals (see Häyry 2018), bring extinct species back to life (see Oksanen and Siipi 2014), or genetically modify organisms (see Ahteensuu 2017) can be considered novel problems that humans have never encountered before. In these cases, genuinely new principles may be required, or the old principles may need some revisioning.

Thus, also the contents of ordinary morality can change with changing circumstances, if there are novel problems that require novel principles as responses. Understanding these changes is important for ordinary morality, firstly because it gives an idea of the operational space of ordinary morality, and secondly because it can directly affect its contents. As already discussed, if the changes in circumstances are radical enough, ordinary morality can be even replaced with another set of ethics like those of emergency ethics.

3.4.1. Failing the Climate Stress Test: The Challenge of New Harms

The climate crisis is arguably one of the greatest and most pressing change in human circumstances. It is possible that climate change affects the operational space of ordinary morality, especially if it brings about novel moral problems. For instance, the rhetoric of climate emergency suggests that the circumstances are at least somehow extraordinary. Hence, it is worth considering whether ordinary morality can operate within such circumstances.

Judith Lichtenberg's (2010) concept of New Harms seems to capture these changes in the world particularly well. New Harms refer to the harms people cause collectively to strangers distant in both time and place, most importantly the future generations and the Global South. Globalisation being the main driver of change, people have become contributors to many international and intergenerational problems. The food that we eat and the clothes that we wear produce CO2 emissions or may have been produced in unacceptable working conditions. Just about anything people do contributes to these kinds of problems. Suddenly, it seems that even simple everyday things like shopping groceries contribute to many harms from climate change, water scarcity and nature's chemicalization to human rights issues and child labour and wage injustice. Many of these problems are interlinked in many important ways. The inevitable consequence of New Harms is that one cannot avoid harming others, and the whole way of life from which these harmful behaviours spring becomes

morally culprit. Lichtenberg notes that with New Harms, even negative duties become highly demanding. (Lichtenberg 2010, 558–560.)[45]

New Harms constitute much of the current ordinary circumstances and are something that ordinary people arguably might have to avoid in their everyday lives. Thus, ordinary morality should be able to address them. The no harm principle can accomplish this, but because of the pervasiveness of New Harms, following the principle becomes extremely demanding. Thus, even negative duties can produce extreme demands. (Lichtenberg 2010, 558–559; Fragnière 2018, 648.)[46] The regulative over-demandingness principle does not allow this. That the regulative principles start to restrain even minimal negative duties and principles like the no harm principle is a serious challenge to ordinary morality. In other words, the challenge presented by New Harms demonstrates in practice how ordinary morality, because of its regulative principles, is in danger of collapsing[47] either into minimalism if it rejects the no harm principle, or to extremism if it allows extreme demands that the no harm principle in this context implies. Therefore, there is an internal conflict between regulative and moral principles. Thus, these changes in circumstances question the operability of ordinary morality, and it seems to fail the climate stress test.

3.4.2. Berkey's Distinction

A possible key to solving this conflict between regulative and moral principles in ordinary morality can be found in Brian Berkey's distinction between morally demanding principles and morally demanding moral demands. Berkey identifies both *minimalism/moderation/extremism about principles* and *minimalism/moderation/extremism about demands*. (Berkey 2016, 3018–3019.) These prefixes (minimal/moderate/extreme) designate how costly it can be for an agent to be moral. Theoretical boundaries can give guidance on how to determine what makes a principle minimalist, moderate, or extreme. With the distinction between extreme principles and extreme demands, the conflict between regulative and moral principles could be avoided. It allows that even

[45] The concept of New Harms is not entirely unproblematic, one of the key issues being the questionability of their novelty. (See Peeters et al. 2019.) This problem has some interesting implications for the discussion at hand, and they will be discussed shortly. Meanwhile, let us take the concept for granted, as it captivates essential features of modern times.

[46] Avram Hiller (2014) makes a similar case based on Singer's "Famine, Affluence, and Morality (1972) and argues that deontological views that accept a no harm principle become very stringent because of climate change.

[47] Kagan (1989, 6) also notes that ordinary morality easily collapses into extremism or minimalism.

moderate principles can produce extreme demands in the world that we live in without changing the moderate status of the principle itself. (Berkey 2016, 3033.) If this is the case, then in the world that we inhabit now, things being as they are, even moderate principles can lead to extreme demands. The extremity of demands depends on the circumstances, while the extremity of principles depends on the principle's inherent features. For example, impartial or maximizing principles can be thought of as extreme in all or most circumstances. However, the no harm principle does not have to be labelled an extreme principle even if it produces extreme demands. It only produces extreme demands in the current circumstances afflicted by New Harms and climate change. Thus, the demandingness of ordinary morality is contingent on the circumstances, and sometimes, if the circumstances are right, ordinary morality can harbour extreme demands.

So far, I have examined the extremeness caused by New Harms. Next, I will take a closer look at a plausible and moderate principle that turns extremely demanding because the circumstances change due to prolonged neglection of that principle. Let us test a simple, far less dramatic, and common-sensical principle in tune with the ordinary morality; the principle that whoever makes a mess cleans it up, or shortly, *the mess principle*. This thought experiment tests Berkey's distinction that allows moderate principles to produce extreme demands:

> *The Messy*. Suppose there is a society with a commonly held and accepted principle that "whoever makes a mess cleans it up". For a long time, the society kept everything clean and in good order. However, during the many years of its existence, the society had, first unnoticed, started to make a mess its members did not clean up. The mess was a result of uncoordinated action, and it accumulated slowly and gradually. When the society noticed it, no one could be sure who's mess it was exactly, but it was certain that everyone contributed. Everyone was equally responsible. What is worse, the mess had trickled to neighbouring societies who had complied with the principle, and now they had to clean up someone else's mess.
>
> If the society wanted to get rid of the mess, everyone would have to participate in cleaning it up. Participation would, however, require great sacrifices from the members of the society and from the society as a whole in terms of their pastime, resources, and life plans. People start to protest, and the society ends up living in the mess until the mess becomes so intolerable, they must force people to participate – leading to similar but

extended personal sacrifices. The mess results in a tragic situation, where getting rid of the mess and living with the mess are equally bad options.

The question is if the mess principle is over-demanding in this thought experiment. It seems problematic that the acceptability of a moral principle would change *only* because the environment changes. If that were true, then making a big enough mess would eventually excuse people from having to clean it up. Unless one wants to allow breaking moral principles, Berkey's distinction explains the situation quite neatly. It can be concluded that the mess principle is not over-demanding, and by orientation moderate. Initially, the mess principle does not create great demands for the society of the Messy. It is their own actions that make following the principle demanding down the line. Eventually, we see a shift from moderate to extreme demands.

Recall that OIC, that agents must not be required to do acts that are impossible, is not applicable when the impossibility of following a moral requirement is the agent's own making. In such cases, an agent can still be held morally accountable even if they were not able to follow the requirement. Thus, even if cleaning all the mess was *impossible*, it probably would not give people an excuse not to try to clean at all. Of course, if the problem is caused collectively, an individual cannot be reasonably held responsible for the entire mess. But individuals remain responsible for their own actions. Further, if it is morally required to follow the mess principle, it is not supererogatory to clean the mess nor suberogatory to create more mess. Whether the mess principle is feasible depends on which interpretation of feasibility one adhered to (see section 5.3. in previous chapter). If politicians suggesting the principle would face fierce resistance and lose the next elections to mess-denialists it could be politically infeasible (if against the general political atmosphere) to clean the mess. Technically, of course, it would be feasible to clean the mess. Being burdensome or requiring much sacrifice and work does not yet imply physical or logical impossibility.

However, it could be said that the mess principle was implausible all along because it had *potential to become over-demanding*. But this is not a satisfying criterion for the plausibility of a moral principle. Arguably, one can imagine circumstances where obligations drawn from just about any moral principle leads to over-demanding moral demands. This would render moral philosophical theorizing very difficult, having to anticipate all possible scenarios before assessing the plausibility of a principle. It would also risk making ordinary morality minimalist, which was to be avoided in the first place.

The situation of the Messy and our current predicament with climate change are highly alike. Arguably, they are analogous. Even the mess principle has a corresponding climate-related principle, namely the polluter pays principle. (See Caney 2005, 752–756.) The principle is straight-forward enough, but its implications are potentially very demanding from the perspective of individuals living in highly polluting societies. In the case of polluter pays principle, some might argue that as climate change ("the mess") is partly inherited and gone too far to be fixed ("cleaned up"), it is overly demanding to claim that those who have polluted have a strong responsibility to immediately stop climate change. And, as it seems to be the case, we can only hope for them to adapt to a new life amidst the mess, to perhaps make a less of a mess, and to compensate for those who did not make the mess but are harmed by it.

The distinction Berkey makes between moderate and extreme principles and demands gives grounds for reconsidering the regulative principles. While the background theories should match the world to avoid arbitrariness, the level of principles works the other way around. They need to retain some independence of particular circumstances, or they are vulnerable to *reductio ad absurdum* arguments where, if things are messed up badly enough, nothing has to be done about it, as in the Messy. The distinction Berkey provides gives good grounds for holding on to principles like the no harm principle, even if they lead to extreme demands, and in some sense, this saves ordinary morality. The regulative principles can remain the same, they just need to be focused on the principles themselves, not on their contingent implications.

3.4.3. The Moderate Nature of Principles

Berkey's distinction between minimalism/moderation/extremism about principles and about demands is useful because it keeps ordinary morality's core principles moderate while accounting for why they sometimes produce extreme demands without changing their status to 'extreme'. The idea seems to be that the *nature* of the principle is moderate, and it is only contingent upon circumstances if it happens to sometimes produce extreme demands.[48] Yet, one could still question the moderation of a principle if it seems to produce numerous extreme demands. If one insists that a principle is extreme because of the extreme demands it often produces, how can we convince them that the principle is in fact moderate? If the principle is tested with practical case examples or thought experiments, and it very often or easily produces extreme

[48] 'Nature' here refers to the intent or spirit of the principle, akin to spirit of the law as opposed to the letter of the law.

demands, it is not very convincing to insist that it remains by nature moderate. One would have to come up with additional explanations for why it is by nature moderate, regardless of the plethora of test results that point otherwise.

Also, insisting on the moderate nature of a principle that produces extreme demands can produce unwanted implications that sit uneasy with the spirit of ordinary morality. As an example, let us return to Singer's principle and the shallow pond case. Singer claims that the principle in itself is almost uncontroversial and tests it with the shallow pond case to demonstrate this. (Singer 1972, 231.) However, when applied to cases in the actual circumstances, and when iterated, the principle is judged over-demanding. (See Timmerman 2015.) One option is to reject Singer's principle as over-demanding on the grounds that the principle seemed promising but lost its guiding and explanatory power when iterated in modern circumstances. Another option, suggested by Singer (1972, 238), is that there is something wrong with "our ordinary standards of behavior". Even if most people do not do what they morally ought to do, it would "hardly be honest to take this as evidence that it is not the case that we ought to do it". (Ibid.)

This criticism can be expanded to ordinary morality; ordinary morality allows people to disregard the death and suffering of numerous people even when people could easily prevent these bad things from happening. This would suggest that ordinary morality needs some revising. As already suggested, similar problems arise with principles that are far more central to ordinary morality. With New Harms, even a moderate no harm principle becomes over-demanding. The similarities of this problem are striking with Singer's case. The problems seem to follow only when iterated and applied to current circumstances. Again, an option in to reject the no harm principle or say that there is something very wrong indeed with our ordinary standards of behaviour. Or, that if ordinary morality is so strongly regulated by some strongly fixed acceptable demandingness threshold, it allows behaviour that at least seems immoral.

When applying Berkey's distinction to show that a principle is by nature moderate, it is implied that changes in circumstances do not alter the moderate status of the principle. In some circumstances moderate principles can produce very little demands. As Singer (1972, 238) notes, the conclusion about over-demandingness does not follow in all circumstances, for example "if there were no bad occurrences that we could prevent without sacrificing something of comparable moral importance". The demandingness of Singer's principle is contingent. When iterated and presented in current circumstances, the principle implies over-demanding conclusions. It produces extreme demands. The

circumstances have changed so that ordinary people are able to prevent much distant death and suffering *globally* without great sacrifices, and following Singer's principle becomes extremely demanding in such circumstances.

To make a comparison, let us call this newly appeared possibility to help distant strangers globally the New Benefits. A similarity can be found between New Harms and the accompanying no harm principle, and New Benefits and the accompanying Singer's principle. It is changes in circumstances - namely, the appearance of New Harms and New Benefits – that make following both principles extremely demanding. Why would Berkey's distinction make sense in the case of no harm principle, but not Singer's principle? One answer would be that even if it does not it is not a problem, but rather a welcome outcome. However, this would go against the spirit of ordinary morality, so this option cannot be considered further here. Another way to answer is to try to show that there is an *original position* (see, e.g., Rawls 1971; Freeman 2019) for moral theorizing whose circumstances determine the moderate nature of principles. In other words, it is the circumstances where a principle is first tested that show whether or not a principle is moderate. A third way to answer is to show that it is the theoretical qualities of a principle that determine its moderate status, not primarily the circumstances in which it is tested. Next, I will consider the latter two options.

3.4.3.1. Testing Principles in an Original Position

Singer's principle seems to make moderate demands in circumstances like those of the shallow pond, but the consequences of following it consistently leads to extreme demands. So, is the principle moderate or extremist? One way to answer this is that it indeed is by nature moderate, and its moderateness should be tested with a thought experiment, or a 'useful fiction', (Fosl & Baggini 2020, 82–83) that posits an 'ideal observer' or an 'original position' for moral theorizing. An original position is a theoretically constructed thought experiment for testing and formulating principles in such a level of abstraction where one does not know the exact circumstances one will be in. (Rawls 1971, ch. 3., 136–137.) The use of original position here comes from Rawls (1971, ch. 3), but I will take Rawls' account as *one* possible account for original position theorizing that I call the *theoretical approach*, and compare it with another, a *time period approach*[49], that treats the original position as a (pre-)historical period of

[49] For instance, a time period that resembles a state of nature that preceded a social contract. (e.g., Locke 2003, II §14.) Also, proponents of evolutionary ethics could take an approach like this, taking the environment of evolutionary adaptedness (Buss 2013, 39) as a starting point.

time. The nature of principles – whether they are minimalist, moderate, or extremist – could then be tested in an original position. For instance, if the principle produces moderate demands in the original position, the principle could be taken to be moderate. If the original position test shows that a principle is moderate by nature, but the principle turns out to produce extreme demands in current circumstances, there is perhaps something odd, wrong, or alarming with the circumstances, not with the principle itself.

When testing principles this way, part of the reflective equilibrium process would take place in some assumed original position. The principle would be tested against assumed events in an assumed environment. This puts a lot of pressure on positing the kind of original position that we can safely assume to be representative of the proper circumstances for ordinary human morality. For instance, one wants to avoid special circumstances like emergencies, because they are not the typical operational area of ordinary morality. In short, the original position should posit 'ordinary circumstances'.

The time period approach could make, for instance, hunter-gathers who lived 50 000 years ago as the original position to consider. The claim would then be that for those hunter-gatherer's, Singer's principle was not over-demanding. When following Singer's principle to the letter, the hunter-gatherers could have shared their food if someone was left without, given shelter to the occasional wandering hominids, and even given their extra tools to a neighbouring tribe if they needed them. It is much less clear that Singer's principle would have been *overly* demanding and produced extreme demands to the group of hunter-gatherers, as it does with New Benefits. With the introduction of New Benefits, the circumstances have changed so that following Singer's principle has become extremely demanding. Again, the idea is that the principle is moderate by nature, and it is only the change in circumstances that lead to extreme demands.

However, it is not clear which period of time counts as an original position for the time period approach. If one wants to insist on the moderate nature of some principle, they probably do not want to posit the original position in modern times because of the extreme demands implied by New Harms and New Benefits. One must first narrow the search from a quarter million years of human history. Perhaps it was the conditions of hunter-gatherers before the Neolithic Revolution, but why limit this to Neolithic Revolution, since there still exist many groups of hunter-gatherers in the world? Quite problematically, these different groups of modern hunter-gatherers probably have very different views about morality. It seems that the time period approach is still very theoretical, only assuming what it might have been like or is like for hunter-gatherers. There is also a weird sense of essentialism in assuming that the

Pleistocene hunter-gatherer is the 'prototype human' whose life we take as a starting point. One could equally well claim that modern civilizations are the true manifestations of humanity and thus an original position should start from the present time.

The theoretical approach does not face similar problems. In the Rawlsian original position, behind the veil of ignorance, people do not know their psychological disposition, level of civilization, political or economic situation, or even which generation they belong to. (Rawls 1971, 137.) However, the theoretical approach faces a different problem. Whereas the time period approach seems to assume too much about historical ordinary circumstances, the theoretical approach assumes too little. There seems to be *no* circumstances in this original position. How could one tell if a principle produces minimal, moderate, or extreme demands, and, consequently, whether the principle is by nature minimalist, moderate, or extremist?

Because of these problems with even finding the desired original position, it is doubtful that testing the nature of principles this way could ever be done without a risk of doing it in a self-serving, question begging way. While nothing conclusive can be said about these approaches here, the problems – positing the relevant original ordinary circumstances – should be clear enough. It is difficult to test the moderateness of a principle with an original position because it is not clear what or *when* such original position should be. Next, I will consider an optional, more theoretical way to assess the moderate nature of a principle.

3.4.3.2. The Theoretical Qualities of a Moderate Principle

The moderate nature of a principle can also be determined by looking at the principle's theoretical qualities. Conveniently, we already have the necessary tools for this – the boundaries set by options, constraints, non-maximizingness, and partiality – as they were discussed in the beginning of this chapter. Firstly, it should be noted that regulative principles alone cannot help with this approach. This is because the main puzzle originated from a conflict between moral principles (the no harm principle) and regulative principles (the over-demandingness principle), and an original position approach is left out. The conflict must now be addressed head-on.

Boundaries like options, constraints, partiality, and non-maximizingness should be enough to determine a principle's moderate nature. It seems that the no harm principle does not break these boundaries. First of all, it is a negative duty. Most importantly, it places constraints on what an agent can do – namely, not harm others without a good reason – while leaving plenty of options for the

agent – virtually *anything* as long as one does not harm others. It does not directly say anything about partiality, but in the context of ordinary morality, it is very much compatible with partiality. The only limit to looking after one's own interests first is that one cannot harm others while doing so without a morally justifiable reason. It is also safe to assume that it no harm principle is non-maximizing because it only tells people to omit harming others instead of actively helping whenever possible. It does not even tell people to *actively reduce* harm in the world or behave in a way that produces *least* possible harm. After all, it allows causing some harm if it happens for good reasons.

For comparison (see table 1), consider again Singer's case. Singer's principle, regardless of circumstances, breaches some of the boundaries. It is a positive duty, and far too general to fit within the limits of ordinary morality. (See Rajczi 2007.) It denies an option not to help when the sacrifice is not of comparable importance. It does not constraint what people are permitted to do when following the principle. Consequently, if followed to a letter or not obstructed by other, more constraining principles, it allows and even requires sacrificing one life to save five, as one life is not morally comparable to five. The principle is unclear about partiality, because 'morally comparable' can be defined in a way that includes emphasizing agent's own interests over the interests of others.

Table 1:

Boundary	**Singer's principle**	**No Harm Principle**
Options	*Removes options not to help whenever specific circumstances arise.*	*Does not limit options (of morally permissible acts)*
Constraints	*Does not provide constraints*	*Constraints harmful acts*
Partiality	*Limits partiality*	*Allows partiality*
Non-Maximizing	*Unclear*	*Non-maximizing*

The main issue with assessing only the theoretical qualities of a principle is that it seems to leave less room for considered judgments and the full reflective equilibrium process. If we just assess the theoretical qualities of principles, is there any role left for considered judgments or background theories? This is, however, only partly true. Firstly, considered judgments still play a great role in providing contents that can be systematized into principles. In that principle-forming process, the boundaries discussed above only provide a rather broad frame for what the resulting principles should look like. Second, the boundaries

and regulative principles can also be the product of considered judgments. They are systematizations about considered judgments regarding the nature of morality (as discussed in section 3.3. of this chapter).

The merit of assessing only the theoretical qualities of a principle is that it avoids self-serving assessments of a principle's status. It also reduces chances for giving up principles in a self-serving, morally corrupt (see Gardiner 2011a) way, whenever the going gets tough. However, even if the principle is deemed moderate by nature or not, if one wants to get rid of extreme demands, one could try to show that as the circumstances have changed, there are reasons to come up with new moral principles. In the next section, this strategy is examined further.

3.4.4. Introducing New Principles for New Harms

While the distinction Berkey provides seems to salvage ordinary morality, it comes with an uneasy trade-off. Ordinary morality sometimes must allow extreme demands as they may even be brought about by moderate principles, depending on the circumstances. This goes against the more general moderate spirit of ordinary morality, and it also conflicts with the input commitment to non-excessive demands, although this commitment leaves open what counts as excessive. Because of this trade-off, making Berkey's distinction comes with a heavy theoretical cost. There must be good reasons for adopting it as part of ordinary morality. Without the distinction, however, ordinary morality collapses into minimalism or becomes an extremist account. So, if making the distinction is the only viable option, it should be made. For these reasons, it is worth considering a few ways to circumvent the conflict between the regulative over-demandingness principle and the no harm principle.

One approach is to deny that New Harms and the no harm principle ever produce extreme demands. Recall that the no harm principle only forbids causing unnecessary harms to others. One could argue that the harms Lichtenberg calls New Harms are in fact necessary for living a decent life. If one cannot survive without causing some harm to others, the harm is justified. But this line of argument is not as effective as it may first seem. Henry Shue's (1993) distinction between luxury and subsistence emissions is, again, particularly useful. While much of the New Harms fall under the category of subsistence emissions and therefore do not violate the no harm principle, there is still a considerable amount of luxury emissions that do violate the no harm principle. Much of the comfort and easiness of the affluent lifestyle is not necessary for survival, or even a decent human life. Requiring that one lets go of all the

luxuries that cause New Harms would be, arguably, very demanding. In addition to the cost of losing the comfort of luxury, it also could be psychologically difficult, and significantly reduce the agents' options. Recall that the demandingness objection has been raised against Singer's principle on similar grounds: it is too demanding to require that people donate money to charity up to the point that they would be sacrificing something morally nearly as important. For the affluent, this would primarily mean that they would have to sacrifice their comparably luxurious and comfortable lifestyle. This strategy fails because the no harm principle would still produce extreme demands together with New Harms.

Another approach is to show that New Harms do not violate the no harm principle, but instead some other principle. Either 1) the circumstances have changed so much that they fall outside the scope of ordinary morality (e.g., we are in an emergency), or 2) the problem of New Harms is, as their name suggests, novel and thus requires a new principle in ordinary morality. This way, the stress test would never reach the moderate no harm principle and question its moderateness, and the conflict could be at least for now avoided. This is a qualitative approach as it claims that New Harms provide a qualitatively novel type of harm that requires a new principle.[50][51] It should be noted that coming up with new principles requires good reasons. As discussed in chapter one, the theoretical virtues for the reflective equilibrium process that will be adhered to throughout the dissertation include frugality which keeps moral theorizing as lean as possible. Developing new principles for ordinary morality is only possible when truly novel problems are encountered. The qualitative approach is an attempt to show that New Harms are a qualitatively novel issue and may thus require new principles.

The claim that the circumstances have changed so dramatically that they no longer count as ordinary, could involve relying on ICE principles, in which case an alternative set of ethics is adhered to. New Harms reflect well the tragic circumstances of an emergency where an agent cannot make one move without

[50] In a sense, the other attempts to root out principle that produce extreme demands have been quantitative. They have tried to show that New Harms, New Benefits, or some other circumstantial factors produce such a vast number of problems that a principle must be considered extreme and thus rejected. With New Harms and the no harm principle, this was a serious attempt because the no harm principle is so central to ordinary morality. There were, however, theoretical approaches available for salvaging this area of ordinary morality.

[51] This approach might find support from Jamieson's (2014, 102, 170, ch6.) work, since Jamieson notes that climate change is a problem that humans are not adapted to encounter, which leads to shortcomings in 'commonsense morality'. According to Jamieson, new concepts and ethical theories are required to fully grasp climate change as a moral problem.

contributing to and deepening the problem further, or where there is no way out of the problem without some sacrifice. If New Harms apply, perhaps ordinary morality does not. If this is the case, climate change would not pose severe complications for ordinary morality, at least not on a theoretical level because it would not be the business of *ordinary* morality in the first place. However, this goes outside the scope of ordinary morality. For someone who is interested in showing that climate change can require many sacrifices from individuals, this appeal to ICE principles is not a bad option. It delivers just that, a full pass for great sacrifices, dictated by dire circumstances. For someone who insists that morality should make only moderate demands, this is not a favoured approach, because there is no end in sight for the climate crisis. The circumstances that produce the climate emergency are not going away any time soon. This, on the other hand, is also a problem for the ICE principle approach. Emergencies are usually perceived as short-term, temporal, and sudden events (similar to disasters, see Lindell 2013.) Emergencies seem to relate more closely to extreme weather events than climatic change as a whole slow process. Climate change requires more permanent solutions and adjustments in our way of life for the long-term. Amidst climate change, ordinary people will have to find ways to live their everyday lives. For a full analysis of ordinary morality, it is worth assuming that climate change does not amount to an emergency.

The second claim is that New Harms are, as they conceptually seem to imply, novel, and require new principles to answer the challenge they impose. Regulative principles are in place to make sure that the new principles are not over-demanding or impossible to follow, either. This move would likely gain support from considered judgments about the extreme demandingness of being required to avoid New Harms. To do justice to the theoretical virtue of frugality, one would then have to show that New Harms are, in fact, novel and necessitate new principles. Intuitively this seems like a promising approach because there is indeed something surprising about New Harms. Generally, we do not perceive our everyday activities as harms or think that they are morally questionable. If this is still factually the case, something unprecedented is taking place. Thus, it is worth taking a closer inspection of what kind of novelty is implied by *New* Harms.

If just any harm that happens to be a new type of harm counted as a New Harm, the concept of New Harms would lose most of its conceptual merits. For instance, the invention of nuclear weapons introduced a new way of causing massive harm, and the ensuing nuclear fallout could be considered a new type of harm. However, I suggest that nuclear weapons are not a New Harm. This is because there is nothing surprising about the fact that using nuclear weapons is

harmful; in fact, they were designed to be extremely harmful. They are only new ways of harming but not New Harms. Namely, there is a difference between new harms and New Harms. Lichtenberg's (2010) description of New Harms suggests that while people keep doing the same things, something in the circumstances have changed so that these familiar things are now suddenly harmful. The main difference is that with New Harms, something that seemed harmless previously has become harmful in a morally relevant way.

However, Lichtenberg (2010, 564) acknowledges that "neither the New Harms nor awareness of them are entirely new". Yet, they occur on an unprecedented scale. While having merely more of the same hardly provides grounds for introducing new principles, there is something intuitive about the concept and the idea that never before have mundane everyday activities harmed distant strangers in a way they do today. There are at least two ways to understand what it means that something was not previously harmful. The first is *ontological* – something has changed so that a previously harmless thing has become harmful. The other is *epistemological* – something that was thought of as harmless is now known to be harmful.

The ontological view of New Harms holds that New Harms are harms that follow from actions that were not previously harmful. Had the state of affairs not changed in any way, the act would remain harmless. Thus, change in the state of affairs – how things are in the world – is a necessary condition for something to be a New Harm. So, to find out if something is a New Harm requires looking for a specific mechanism: a change in the state of affairs so that something that previously was harmless in fact becomes harmful. Globalisation and climate change are some of the things that could be counted as mechanisms that produce New Harms. For instance, doing grocery shopping was presumably not harmful in previous circumstances, without life-threatening climate change or when goods were more locally produced.

Peeters, Bell and Swaffield (2019, 510) have pointed that globalisation, an important characteristic for New Harms, is not an entirely new phenomenon. For hundreds of years, it has been true for affluent western people, for instance, that mundane activities like buying spices contribute to distant harms. Also, citing Tosh (2008, 43), Peeters, Bell and Swaffield (2019, 509) note that changes in history are incremental, not sudden. It is hard to argue against the case Peeters, Bell and Swaffield make. Their criticism seems to be on point, especially if New Harms are defined ontologically as harms that have surfaced during the last century or so. Peeters, Bell and Swaffield seem to take New Harms as a socio-historical concept, and when read in this way their criticism hits the target. There is nothing ontologically new in New Harms. This would imply that New

Harms are not, after all, novel in the sense that they would change the operational space for ordinary morality in a novel way. The old principles of ordinary morality should be enough and suitable for addressing New Harms.

The epistemological view of New Harms holds that New Harms are harms that follow from the recognition of previously unharmful acts as harmful. An example of this would be the usage of DDT, a pesticide that was first thought of as completely harmless to people and the environment. Eventually research showed that it is in fact harmful – and from a user perspective, it is a new harm. DDT itself was all along harmful, and nothing in the relevant state of affairs, facts of the world, had changed except our knowledge about the facts. The epistemological definition seems like a promising way to understand New Harms, because it avoids many of the ontological definition's problems. It is irrelevant whether or not New Harms are, for instance, socio-historically new. What is important is that ordinary people in ordinary circumstances perceive them as new. Historically, this would go well with the relatively lately surfaced public awareness of environmental problems. Also, it could be argued that people who did not know they were doing something wrong could not be blamed for it, because it would go against the regulative principle of ought-implies-can.

However, the epistemological interpretation does not seem to provide reasons for introducing new principles. Its implications are rather limited in the sense that we could not hold many past generations culpable of committing New Harms, as they did not understand or know that they were doing something wrong. From the perspective of reflective equilibrium and the scientifically informed background theories, ordinary morality now includes this kind of knowledge. The extreme demands from following the no harm principle remain.

The novelty of New Harms seems to follow from the way they are carried through. For instance, globalisation seems to be an important driver for New Harms. But it is not clear if the harms caused to people, and how the harms materialize, are novel in the sense that new principles would be required. Climate change causes death and suffering, and it is not clear whether principles need to address anything more specific than that. The no harm principle itself is not very specific in what kinds of harms it forbids, and it would go against the theoretical virtue of frugality to develop a new principle for all different kinds of harms one can imagine. "Do not harm people with sticks", "Do not harm people with rocks", "Do not harm people with nuclear fallout", and "Do not harm people by teleporting them to black holes" are not principles but considered judgments, while the no harm principle is a systematization of these

kinds of more specific and particular judgments. The latter two examples are new ways of causing harm to people, but the harm itself – death and suffering – is nothing new. It is difficult to see why "Do not harm people with New Harms" would count towards being an independent principle, and not merely a considered judgment that is consistent with the no harm principle in modern circumstances.

As far as New Harms capture some of the important aspects in the modern circumstances, they do not provide good reasons to adopt new principles. New Harms are, in the relevant sense, old harms that only seem novel. Apart from New Harms, there is, however, another route to claiming that the circumstances have changed so that qualitatively new problems have appeared. Dale Jamieson (2013, 436–437; 2014, 150), for instance, claims that climate change does not present itself like a paradigm moral problem, but something new. Paradigm moral problems include things like murder or theft. Climate change is much more complex, and there is no clear one-on-one relation between the agent causing harm and the one who suffers the harm. Understood this way, climate change might give reasons to come up with new principles.

However, there is an important difference between making a moral psychological claim that climate change is something that people do not perceive as paradigmatic moral problem and claiming that climate change is in fact not a (paradigmatic) moral problem. The moral psychological novelty of climate change is further discussed in the following chapter, as well as the nature of climate change. Also, even if climate change is not a paradigmatic moral problem and thus provides reasons for coming up with new principles (whatever they may be), it does not mean that *only* new principles should be applied to climate change. It does not even mean that climate change related principles will replace the no harm principle so that it would seize to produce extreme demands. The focus here was on harm, and as far as harm goes, it is not clear why the harms caused by climate change, as far as ordinary people in ordinary circumstances contribute to them, would not be addressed by the no harm principle.

Persson and Savulescu (2012) have called climate change an ultimate harm, which is a massive and irreparable harm. Still, it is not clear why the no harm principle would require a replacement to address ultimate harms, as ultimate harms can easily be read as such that they violate the no harm principle in a worst imaginable way. Also, even if ultimate harms would require a corresponding no-ultimate-harm principle, most of the everyday activities that cause harm to others via climate change are not ultimate, but of the ordinary kind. This is suggested by climate ethics literature, where some philosophers

have discussed climate related harms like causing premature death of three people over one's entire lifetime emissions (Nolt 2011) or causing harm equivalent to a headache by taking a Sunday Drive. (Hiller 2011.) These harms seem far from ultimate. Also, if an ordinary person would violate a no-ultimate-harm principle in their everyday circumstances, it would still produce great sacrifices, or else it would have to be concluded that one is morally permitted to contribute to ultimate harms in ordinary circumstances, which is absurd.

It seems that ordinary morality does not need new principles to accommodate New Harms. The qualitative approach to safeguard the no harm principle by introducing new principles fails, even without the notion of New Harms. Berkey's distinction between minimalist/moderate/extreme principles and demands remains necessary for ordinary morality, with the trade-off of allowing extreme demands. Still the concept of New Harms is a very efficient metaphor that captivates much of the problems of modern times. It communicates well what has changed during the last century, and from the point of view of moral demandingness something clearly has changed. New Harms intuitively feel new, and from an epistemological point of view may well be novel. But this hardly gives grounds for introducing new principles. However, such a conclusion does not make the challenge of New Harms any easier. Even simple principles like the no harm principle are problematic and highly demanding in modern circumstances. What is new, perhaps in the sense that it is surprising and catches moral belief systems like ordinary morality 'off-guard', is that we can dramatically affect people distant in both time and place, at an unprecedented level and rate.

3.5. Conclusions

In this chapter, I have explored the performance of ordinary morality in a world of climate change. Ordinary morality was defined as a common-sensical and moderate orientation towards morality that sets boundaries to moral theories and prescriptions, particularly about the acceptable level of moral demandingness, for ordinary people in ordinary circumstances. I briefly compared ordinary morality to related concepts like moderate morality, common-sense morality, and positive morality, and outlined the boundaries that determine the suitable contents of ordinary morality. After examining the more structural aspects of ordinary morality, I outlined some key contents of ordinary morality with a reflective equilibrium analysis. I argued that scientific views in the level of background theories is in fact more common-sensical than folk views, suggested the over-demandingness principle and no harm principle

as crucial components on the level of principles, and identified typical considered judgments for ordinary morality. After that, I put ordinary morality under the stress test of climate change. Simultaneously, I explored the last definitional components of ordinary morality: ordinary people and ordinary circumstances. It was noted that the ordinary circumstances for ordinary people in modern times produce extreme demands even when following ordinary morality's key principles. This was problematic for ordinary morality, because modern circumstances create a conflict between over-demandingness principle and no harm principle, collapsing ordinary morality into either minimalism or extremism. After examining the problem, by applying the distinction of minimalism/moderation/extremism about demands and principles, I discussed how principles can be moderate by nature, and that the modern circumstances, conveniently captivated by the concept of New Harms, do not pose novel enough problems that would call for new principles. Thus, ordinary morality must be able to accommodate extreme demands.

Chapter Four. The Adaptive Limits of Human Morality

4.1. Introduction

Homo sapiens is one of the deadliest species on Earth. No other species has been as destructive to its environment, spread its influence all over the globe, and so drastically altered and damaged the life supporting systems on this planet. Humans are capable of immense cruelty and intended wickedness. Yet often the worst human behaviour is the total neglect and disregard of death and suffering of fellow creatures. Among the many results of these latter human qualities is anthropogenic and catastrophic climate change.

However, humans are also caring, empathetic, good-willed and avoidant of violence. We feed the poor, care the sick, and foster the progeny. Sometimes, we do good things for total strangers. Humans give words of encouragement to their peers, even though the society has pitted them against each other, competing for status and wealth. Humans are capable of good and altruistic behaviour, but simultaneously we can cause massive destruction. Why is it so difficult for us to end poverty or stop climate change? The question is empirical, but has proven important for moral philosophy, as well. This chapter explores how both human nature and the nature of climate change make it difficult for people to rise to the task, by drawing from moral psychology and some insights from the evolutionary history of homo sapiens.

The psychological difficulties related to climate change have been discussed already quite thoroughly and in good detail in the climate ethics literature, and much of the issues are linked to moral motivation. (See Kasperbauer 2016.) In the field of climate ethics, it has been recognized that certain qualities in human psychology are key factors in understanding and doing something about the inaction and inertia concerning climate action. (E.g, Gardiner 2011a; Kasperbauer 2016.) There is also much empirical research in the field of moral psychology on human responses, or lack of them, to climate change. (E.g., Weber 2006.) In the literature, a number of problems have been identified, such as the motivational problem (Peeters et al. 2015), recognizability of climate change as a moral problem or the 'grasping problem' (Gardiner 2011b, 52), the problem of reliability of our judgments related to climate change (Greene 2013, 89–95), and problems with different ways of psychologically evading the problem known as moral disengagement strategies. (See Peeters et al. 2019; Bandura 2016.) The problems can be approached from a proximate angle asking *how* does human psychology work, in the field of empirical moral

psychology, and from an ultimate angle asking *why* human psychology works like it does, in the field of evolutionary sciences. This chapter draws from this research as the background theories and continues the philosophical analysis of ordinary morality and demandingness in the case of climate change.

From the perspective of moral demandingness, these issues with (moral and evolutionary) psychology bring about *psychological difficulties* that increase the costliness of climate related moral prescriptions. For instance, if climate change is difficult for humans to grasp (Gardiner 2011b), it can be psychologically more taxing to comply with climate policies and the sacrifices they induce. Arguably, it is easier to accept sacrifices when one comprehends their importance and positive effect, or when one understands that they have a moral responsibility to accept those sacrifices. Additionally, there is interesting research on how problems like climate change affect people psychologically, for example in the form of eco-anxiety. (See Pihkala 2020.) Although the psychological effects of climate change on humans are interesting from the demandingness as a cost viewpoint, these issues remain outside the scope of this chapter (but are related to issues discussed in section 2.2.). It is sufficient to note that the psychological costs of climate change increase the overall burden of tackling climate change. Moreover, this reflects the tragic situation humankind finds itself in, as it will be costly if we do not do enough about climate change, and it will be costly if we do. There is no escaping without getting one's feet wet.

These issues are also important for the background theories and how reliable certain considered judgments are, and how this affects the system of ordinary morality. In the previous chapter, it was noted that for ordinary morality, considered judgments are to a large extent based on common sense and that background theories should not be grounded on folk views, but on scientifically informed views instead. This chapter explores some of these background theories that are important for ordinary morality under the climate stress test. The discussion on background theories gives reasons for reflecting and re-reflecting on the moral and regulative principles of ordinary morality, which is further pursued in section 5.3.2. Further, this chapter re-evaluates the role and trustworthiness of certain type of considered judgments, which will be further reflected in section 5.3.3. In section 2.1. it was noted that common sense plays an important role in ordinary morality, but in this chapter the trustworthiness of common sense is questioned. Here it is assumed that common sense is at least partly based on intuition. There are instances where considered judgments fail to respond consistently to different cases, and this inconsistency is traced back to what intuitively seems common-sensical to

people. This affects the whole reflective equilibrium process, as intuition plays a great role in it through considered judgments. I will follow a methodological move suggested by Joshua Greene, called a *double-wide* reflective equilibrium, where parts of the background theory are formed so that certain types of considered judgments can be questioned. (Greene 2016, 140.)

This chapter continues demonstrating how climate change is a stress test for ordinary morality. In section 3.4.2. it was noted that climate change challenges some of the regulative principles of ordinary morality, creating a conflict between basic moral principles and the acceptable level of moral demandingness. In this chapter, the stress test will challenge common sense and its role in ordinary morality. This challenge gains its force from a central problem that human moral psychology has not adapted to respond adequately to problems like climate change. As far as ordinary morality relies on common sense, and common sense is constituted by human moral psychology, also ordinary morality is in danger of being ill-equipped to deal with climate change. These are the *adaptive limits of human morality*.

In the context of climate change, the adaptive limits of human morality result from both the nature of climate change and human moral psychology. Stephen Gardiner (2011a) describes the nature of climate change as *a perfect moral storm* to demonstrate how it is problematic for humans and institutions to respond to it. The perfect moral storm is a combination of global, intergenerational, and theoretical 'storms' that reflect the globally and intergenerationally dispersed causes and effects of climate change, and the lack of theoretical tools for understanding climate change. It is the nature of climate change as a perfect moral storm that leads to moral corruption and thus inaction. That is one way to approach the problem. In *Reason in a Dark Time*, Dale Jamieson (2014, 102–103) points that it is not readily available for humans to respond effectively to problems like climate change. We have not evolved to solve such problems, and we do not immediately *sense* climate change. This is what Jamieson calls *the hardest problem*, and it also affects our motivation to act.

Thus, there is a dual challenge that needs to be confronted. Firstly, there is a mismatch between the psychological abilities that humans possess, and the challenges posed by modern environment (the hardest problem). Secondly, the modern environment, because of careless or reckless human activities, throws new problems like climate change at us, problems that by their own nature are difficult to respond to (the perfect moral storm). It is like being stuck in a place where you don't speak the language, and then suddenly a civil war breaks out. There is additional chaos in an already difficult situation. I will call this, paraphrasing Gardiner (2011a) and Jamieson (2014), the *hardest moral storm*.

The hardest moral storm creates many problems for effective climate action. One particularly important is the so-called *motivational gap*. Motivation gap refers to judging that something ought to be done about climate change, but still failing to behave accordingly or even behaving in opposite ways. According to Peeters et al. (2019), there are two explanations for the motivational gap. One is similar to the hardest moral storm and related to our moral judgment systems and the complexity of the issue. The other is related to weakness of will. These both explanations are explored throughout this chapter.

This chapter will begin with examining the problems related to moral motivation that stem from the complex nature of climate change, and how this results in moral corruption and moral disengagement strategies. (Gardiner 2011a; Peeters et al. 2019.) However, motivational issues are only part of the explanation, as there are important biases to consider, as well. (Kasperbauer 2016.) Aften discussing moral motivation, I will focus on moral judgments and different biases that may affect them. This includes an examination of how moral psychology is problematic with issues like climate change, especially regarding moral judgments based on intuition. Then, explanations for these problems are sought from dual-process theory (Greene 2016) and evolutionary perspectives. Finally, I will return to ordinary morality and assess how the challenges discussed in this chapter impact it.

4.2. Problems with Moral Motivation

Essential facts about climate change are known well enough to assume that climate change is dangerous to humans and life systems on Earth, that there is knowledge available on what causes climate change, and how to slow down climate change. Climate science has revealed the causes and effects, and physical means to put an end to climate change. Mere knowledge, it seems, does not motivate change in behaviour. Sometimes, even if people have properly internalized the fact that something bad is happening, they may rely on different forms of self-deception (for discussion, see Räikkä 2014, 141–145), moral disengagement strategies (see Bandura 2016) or even moral corruption. (See Gardiner 2011a.) Numbers, statistics, and scientific models of future scenarios seem to be similarly impotent in leading to behavioural changes. In some sense this is self-evident. If knowledge like this alone would motivate sufficiently, humanity probably would have acted long ago. There has been plenty of time because relevant facts about climate change have been known for a long time.

This is not to say that gaining motivation to respond to climate action is impossible. Clearly there are people motivated enough to act against climate change. This action is demonstrated by individuals like Nordic climate activists Greta Thunberg and Sini Saarela, who *do* act against climate change, and even make great personal sacrifices while doing so.[52] Yet, considering the whole of human population, such individuals seem to be an anomaly. Climate change is a threat to most people, yet there is something that keeps us from gaining enough motivation to act accordingly. Such motivation is not impossible, but perhaps very rare or hard to gain and maintain as clearly the problem is not yet solved but rather seems to be intensifying. It is increasingly clear that we do not lack the knowledge and know-how of changing the course for our planet. Instead, we lack the political will and means to follow through the required changes. On an individual level, people may recognize that climate change is a problem, and something ought to be done about it, but still fail to act accordingly. In climate ethics, this problematic divide between what people think should be done and what actually is done is called *the motivational gap*. (Peeters et al. 2015; Peeters et al. 2019).

There are many explanations to the motivational gap. In moral philosophy, there are two basic and contrary ways of understanding the relationship between knowing what is right or good and doing what is right or good. These are called motivational internalism and externalism. Internalism holds that a sincere moral judgment that something is good or right or ought to be done automatically leads to corresponding action. If there is no corresponding action, as in the case of climate change, one should expect something to be wrong with the judgment that we ought to mitigate climate change. Perhaps the judgment that climate change ought to be mitigated was not sincere after all. Another option is externalism, which does not assume such an intimate link between moral judgments and action. In climate ethics, Jamieson (2013, 44) has offered internalist explanations for the motivational gap. It is the ineptitude of our moral judgment system that explains why we are not acting. Gardiner (2013, 102), one the other hand, has opted for externalist explanations. The complexity of the issue makes it difficult to grasp the problem properly, and instead of motivating action it corrupts it. (Gardiner 2011a; 2011b; Peeters et al. 2019, 428–429.) Peeters et al. (2019, 429) reject both extremes. Instead, they endorse a weak internalist position that still holds that sincere judgments motivate action but there can be many other overriding motivations to act differently. Gardiner's externalist position is still relevant, as it explains why not acting in a climate

[52] For example, Saarela faced incarceration in Russia after being caught climbing to an oil rig. (See YLE 2013, https://yle.fi/news/3-6991815.)

friendly manner is not overridingly motivating compared to many other (more short-term, more personally rewarding) motivations. Although this dissertation remains agnostic about the internalist/externalist divide, both accounts are interesting for the analysis of why humanity is not doing more to tackle a catastrophic climate change, and also why climate change is so problematic for ordinary morality.

Consequently, an obvious answer to the question why we are not acting more efficiently to mitigate climate change is that there is a motivational problem. On the other hand, one issue that explains at least some of the inaction is that we have trouble even recognizing and understanding climate change as a moral problem. This is what Gardiner calls the grasping problem. (Gardiner 2011b, 52; see also Kasperbauer 2016, 353–354.)[53] The next section will explore the complex nature of climate change and how this complexity increases the difficulty of responding to the problem, or even grasping it.

4.2.1. Moral Corruption and The Problematic Nature of Climate Change

One source of confusion that yields psychological difficulties to grasp climate change is that responsibility for causing climate change is highly diffused. Indeed, identifying those responsible and holding them responsible is one of the biggest issues in climate ethics. There are numerous variables to consider: are we interested in past emissions or present emissions, does the interest of future generations count, should countries with little historical emissions have a right to emit more now, and so on. There are also many corresponding views, theories, and arguments given to support some variables over the others. For example, *the polluter pays* view states that the ones with historical or current emissions are the ones who are most responsible. (Caney 2005, 752–756.) If there are repercussions, it is the biggest polluters who should bear them. If you break it, you fix it. The *ability to pay* view, on the other hand, focuses on the ones who can do the most good for stopping climate change, regardless of past or present emissions. (Shue 2014, 186–189.) This view gives a more outcomes-focused take on climate change. If you can fix it, you fix it. The *beneficiary pays* views holds

[53] Kasperbauer (2016, 353–354) notes that focusing only on moral motivation is misleading, because much of the psychological problem is related to the grasping problem. I will follow Kasperbauer here and discuss moral motivation together with the grasping problem. Kasperbauer also discusses multiple biases that create significant psychological limitations to effective climate action. I will focus on those associated with human tribalistic tendencies (Greene 2013), discussed further in section 4.3.1. According to Kasperbauer (2016, 353), these psychological limitations have implications also for climate policy and moral norms concerning climate change, and this will be the topic of section 5.1. of the following chapter.

that responsibility can be based on gains achieved through emitting greenhouse gases. (Caney 2005, 756.) The ones who benefitted the most should bear the burdens of payments in proportion to the harms they have caused, for example. If you benefited from breaking it, you fix it.

These different ways of viewing climate responsibilities reflect the complex, spatially and temporally diffused nature of the issue. Climate change is a highly chaotic ethical problem. Or a 'storm', as Stephen Gardiner (2011a) puts it. In *A Perfect Moral Storm*, Gardiner (2011a, 23) outlines and analyses the ethically challenging nature of climate change, and identifies three interrelated storms:

1) the global storm
2) the intergenerational storm
3) the theoretical storm.

The first two storms are characterized by *dispersion of causes and effects*, *fragmentation of agency* and *institutional inadequacy*. The effects of climate change are not geographically or temporally limited to the time and place of CO2 and other greenhouse gas emissions causing climate change. It is often the case that those emitting the most and causing most of the problem also suffer less from the adverse effects of climate change. This contributes to the global storm because local actions can have negative global effects. The matter gets even more complicated if on a local and short-term level the actions cause mostly positive outcomes like employment or economic growth. This can create a strong incentive to keep emitting locally, regardless of the negative global and long-term effects. From an intergenerational perspective, present CO2 emissions do most of their damage much later and remain in the atmosphere for a long time. This easily leads to myopic decisions like opting for short-term economic benefits at the cost of future generations who must deal with the effects of climate change. Climate change is also caused by a great number of different agents, around the world and over time, which makes agency highly fragmented. For the intergenerational storm this is especially worrisome because the interaction between generations is unilateral. Spatially fragmented agents can, at least in theory, become unified in a way temporally fragmented agents cannot. On top of this, we lack the institutions to tackle these problems. The key institutions that could execute climate policies have a national focus and are too temporal by design. (Gardiner 2011a, 24–29, 32–38.)

Gardiner demonstrates the problematic nature of both first two storms by comparing them with Garrett Hardin's (1986) *the tragedy of the commons* case. In a typical tragedy of the commons scenario, each agent increases their own lot of

some diminishable common-pool resource but when everyone does the same, the resource base diminishes affecting everyone negatively. The tragedy emerges because everyone pursues their own best without pursuing the common good. There is no invisible hand that makes everyone better-off. Climate change shares the structure of this tragedy. It is rational for each nation state (or individual, or a company) to increase their economy and thus their emissions, but if everyone does it, they end up with catastrophic climate change and ultimately everyone suffers. The global storm gains its force from the fact that it is very easy to defect from cooperation, and it is very tempting to keep emitting and hope that others will take care of the problem. The intergenerational storm is even more worrying because standard solutions to the tragedy of the commons like increasing cooperation are not available. What follows is what Gardiner calls *intergenerational buck-passing*, when every generation has the temptation to defect and pass on the problem to the next generation. Because the intergenerational storm dominates over the global one, mere tragedy of the commons analysis is not enough. Rather, climate change is what Gardiner calls a *tyranny of the contemporary* scenario, where the present generation has strong incentives to defect and pass on the problem, and finally get away with it. (Gardiner 2011a, 24–29, 35–38.)

The idea of a theoretical storm captures the lack of theoretical understanding and tools to address climate change head on. This makes it even more difficult to navigate the other two storms. As an example of lacking theoretical tools, Gardiner offers cost-benefit analysis. Reducing the problem to economic terms which may point to different directions and climate policies without appreciation towards the needs of future generations, not to mention nonhuman animals and nature. This latter oversight might further be termed the 'ecological storm'. (Gardiner 2011a, 41–44, ch. 8.)

Together, these storms constitute the perfect moral storm. The perfect moral storm, according to Gardiner, leads to *moral corruption*. It makes moral corruption easier and more tempting. By moral corruption, Gardiner refers to variety of excuses and even mental strategies people make to avoid dealing with climate change. These include things like selective attention, hypocrisy, and unreasonable doubt. Moral corruption is present when people try to find and offer rationales for not doing more about climate change, to justify their inaction or inefficiency. Further, moral corruption can lead to self-serving analyses and solutions to climate change, and to so-called shadow solutions where actions seem to be taken but with little consequences. (Gardiner 2011a, 45–48.)

4.2.2. Moral Disengagement Strategies and Detecting Moral Corruption

The idea of moral corruption is important for the analysis on demandingness and ordinary morality in the context of climate change. If the perfect moral storm clouds our vision, how can we be sure that we are assessing the appropriate level of moral demandingness or the coherence and performance of ordinary morality in a right rather than a self-serving way? Such a risk suggests that, in the schematics of wide reflective equilibrium, there should be an addition to the level of regulative principles – namely a *moral corruption detector* that helps to identify and root out self-serving judgments, principles, and even background theories, like those supporting climate denialism. How does a moral corruption detector work? Similar to the theory twister detector[54], it detects a heightened risk of forming unreliable considered judgments and self-serving reasoning. For instance, in *the Messy* presented in the previous chapter, claiming that the mess principle ("whoever makes a mess cleans it up") seizes to apply if the mess gets bad enough because it would be too demanding to follow it seems to be an instance of self-serving application of a demandingness objection. Contingently extreme demands caused by a principle that is not in itself extreme should not be ruled out only because of their high demandingness. That would be too convenient and ought to raise the alarm of a moral corruption detector. However, the function of a moral corruption detector is only to alarm about morally suspicious beliefs, not to outright reject them. Mere alarm does not necessarily indicate fire, let alone put it out, but it gives good reasons to inspect if there indeed is a fire.

Strategies against extremism about demands are based on intuition, but intuition in this case might not be trustworthy because it may favour agents' own preferences against making personal sacrifices. Also, methodologically, with the method of reflective equilibrium one cannot justify moderation about demands based on intuition, because intuitions may be untrustworthy. (Berkey 2016, 3022–3025.) Berkey seems to refer to something like moral corruption here if there is a chance that intuitions about demands work in a self-serving way. Adding a moral corruption detector to the regulative principles safeguards the theory against such moves. Moral corruption detector should be alert also when choosing background theories. From the perspective of reflective equilibrium, choosing denialist background theories can be tempting, because it could dissolve some of the problems in ordinary morality. For instance, the motivational gap about climate change is evaded if a strong internalist position is coupled with folk views about the climate and the environment that have a

[54] Introduced in section 2.4.2.

hard time acknowledging climate change or see environment as almost limitlessly resilient. Consequently, people could make sincere judgments according to which nothing much needs to be done. This is an additional reason to reject folk views and endorse scientifically informed views, as there is a better chance that the scientific method that produces scientific knowledge is less susceptible to moral corruption.

Behaviour that matches moral corruption has been observed and discussed in terms of moral disengagement strategies. (Bandura 2016; Peeters et al 2019.) The goal of moral disengagement strategies is to

> "convince oneself and others that one's reprehensible conduct still falls within moral standards through changing the perception of one's actions or reconstructing the situation" (Peeters et al. 2019, 430.)

Peeters et al. note that their analysis of moral disengagement strategies in the context of climate change in fact complements and confirms Gardiner's account on moral corruption. They discuss different mechanisms of moral disengagement like discrediting evidence of harm (e.g., climate denialism), making advantageous comparisons (e.g., "others do it too!"), diffusion of responsibility (e.g., "my emissions don't matter!"), and displacement of responsibility (e.g., "the government should do it!"). (Peeters et al. 2019, 430–436.) Identifying these moral disengagement strategies and other instances of moral corruption can be an effective tool, but also a blunt weapon. An argument merely formally resembling a moral disengagement strategy does not make it an instance of employing one. We cannot guess the opponents' motivations for making some argumentative move. For instance, Peeters et al. (2019, 433) blame Sinnott-Armstrong of employing the moral disengagement strategy of diffusion of responsibility in a manner that seems too quick. Sinnott-Armstrong (2005, 289) notes that an individual act like Sunday driving is not necessary or sufficient for causing climate change. Peeters et al. (2019, 434) counter this by claiming that individual's emissions do contribute "in an infinitesimal but fully real way". However, whether infinitesimal but fully real contributions to climate change count or are morally relevant is a different, debatable matter. Peeters et al. seem to go too far in viewing this as an instance of moral disengagement. The problem is that they seem to take the mere identifiable match to a mechanism of moral disengagement as evidence for moral disengagement. (Peeters et al. 2019, 433–434.) They note:

> "-- we should also resist the temptation to try to exonerate individuals [*sic*] emitters' culpability by construing the contribution of their greenhouse gases to the problem as morally insignificant, *because it amounts to a well-known strategy of moral disengagement* [emphasis added]" (Peeters et al. 2019, 434.)

However, mere resemblance to the structure of a mechanism of a moral disengagement strategy does not make something an instance of a moral disengagement strategy. An agent should be able to make a case for diffused responsibility without automatically being suspect of moral disengagement strategies, even if this grants reasons for others to be suspicious of one being employed. Moral corruption detector may go off, but no fire is necessarily found. For instance, it is consistent to claim from consequentialist grounds that it is better to enjoy the fun of a Sunday drive than to omit enjoying it because of the insignificant effects it will have on the climate. After all, Sinnott-Armstrong's position, although (admittedly) resembling a moral disengagement strategy, is a position that can be rationally argued for. It would amount to a futile witch-hunt if such argumentative moves would be automatically prohibited because their resemblance of some mechanism of moral disengagement. It is a separate, although an important matter, whether making such a consequentialist argument is in fact an instance of employing a moral disengagement strategy or not. Also, there is a danger of begging the question if it is already assumed that the individual's contribution is *not* insignificant and then blaming someone for employing a moral disengagement strategy. This is because it may well be the case that diffusion of responsibility *does* provide a moral excuse. Thus, the idea and power of moral disengagement strategies might be better suited on a population or statistical level where we try to understand why people behave in a certain way, but application to individual cases or lines of argumentation might be less fruitful.

4.3. Problems with Moral Judgment

Another complementary answer to the question why we are not acting more efficiently to mitigate climate change is the ineptitude of our moral judgment system. Understanding the difficult nature of climate change is helpful, but it is not the complete story. It is possible that if humans were different, climate change would not present itself as such a difficult problem. Arguably, the difficulty lies somewhere in the relation between us and the complexity of the issue. The previous section focused on motivational issues following from the

complex nature of climate change. This section focuses on individuals' moral judgments about cases like climate change.

First, an explanation is sought from moral psychology. If previous section explored the ways in which *climate change is difficult to grasp* for humans, this section turns the problem upside down and tries to find out whether *humans are poor at grasping* issues like climate change. Human tribalistic tendencies seem to make judgments about climate change less trustworthy.[55] (See Greene 2013, 69, 89–95; 2017, 73.) With respect to judgments that allow contributing to climate change, one strategy is to chase the intuition and claim that it is in fact morally correct. However, this goes against many moral principles. Therefore, a second strategy is to bite the bullet and insist that the intuition is flawed, not the principle. (Greene 2016, 134.) If the first strategy succeeds, the intuition that one is not doing anything wrong when emitting greenhouse gases would be correct. Then, there is no mystery about why people are not motivated to act efficiently to mitigate climate change. Finally, we will see if this strategy of chasing intuitions works by reviewing some case examples provided by Peter Unger to demonstrate how our intuitions problematically conflict with each other and moral reasoning. The section concludes that chasing intuitions is not a sound strategy and confirms that there is indeed something wrong with human moral judgment systems. (Peeters et al. 2019, 436.)

4.3.1. Tribalism, Intuition, and Climate Change

Climate change is a problem that affects, especially from the perspective of the affluent, other people distant both in time and place. In short, it affects mostly people who do not belong to the in-group. This is problematic, because our moral psychology seems to be tribalistically biased which makes our intuitions about the effects of climate change unreliable. (Greene 2017, 73.) In *Moral Tribes* (2013), Joshua Greene distinguishes between two sets of problems, of which the first one human moral brain handles reasonably well while the second is far more difficult and confusing. The first set of problems is called, familiarly and based on Garrett Hardin (1968), *the tragedy of the commons*. Greene (2013, 26) argues that human moral brains have adapted to solving the tragedy of the commons type of problems. According to Greene, the tragedy of the commons is essentially a *Me versus Us* type problem. In short, these are the normal

[55] A stronger claim is that tribalistic tendencies and other biases make human intuition untrustworthy altogether. However, it is important to note that the trustworthiness of intuitions can be a matter of degree, and the degree of trustworthiness varies between different types of problems.

everyday problems of our everyday social life, at least to the point where one could imagine that ancient hunter-gatherers faced them. Human moral brains have evolved to solve these Me versus Us type problems. (Greene 2013, ch.2.)

The second set of problems, *the tragedy of the commonsense morality*, on the other hand, is far more difficult. The tragedy of the commonsense morality concerns *Us versus Them* type problems. These, according to Greene (2013, 26, ch.3), humans have not evolved to solve. The tragedy of the commonsense morality follows from situations where individuals must make moral decisions that potentially affect both their in-group (Us) and out-group (Them). Human moral brains seem to fail to solve the problem of Us versus Them reliably. Humans favour their in-group on the expense of the out-group. Thus, humans are *tribalistic* and also our moral judgments are often tribalistically biased. (Greene 2013, 49–55, 98–99, 293–294; 2017.)

This relates to the idea about the tyranny of the contemporary. (In Gardiner 2011a, 24–29.) An important difference between that and tragedy of the commons scenarios is that there can be no genuine cooperation, no reciprocity in tyranny of the contemporary scenarios. The solutions that may work for tragedy of the commons cases do not work between generations, making tyranny of the contemporary a much more severe problem. Even if humans are evolved to solve tragedy of the commons problems in more limited Me versus Us circumstances, as Greene (2913, 293) claims, it seems that we are not evolved to solve tyranny of the contemporary problems because they are of the Us versus Them type. Unfortunately, climate change is in many important respects of the latter sort. Except for present generation's immediate descendants (see Gardiner 2011a, 170–171), future generations belong to 'Them' rather than 'Us'.

The tribalistic bias picks up the in-group-favouring and short-sighted characteristics of human moral psychology. Of course, this does not mean that everyone is biased all the time. But on a statistical level one can reasonably expect such flaws from any random human individual. There can also be other than tribalistic biases at play, like low impact bias or single action bias. (Kasperbauer 2016, 358.) However, sometimes socially produced instead of genetically inherited biases are affected by tribalism. Part of favouring the in-group is favouring their beliefs and norms. (Kasperbauer 2016, 359; Schultz et al. 2007.) In fact, it is in this way problematic for climate change mitigation if there is widespread denialism in a society. (Greene 2013, 91–93.) Then, merely learning new facts about climate change does not affect people's judgments. In fact, people seem to react to the same facts differently, depending on their political beliefs. (Luo & Zhao 2019.) However, if the beliefs and norms shared in a society change, people's judgments can change, as well. Also, intuition can

be trained, so people are not stuck with the tribalistic tendencies. (Greene 2017, 76.) Still, for the very least, tribalistic tendencies make it an uphill battle against climate change, even if not a lost cause.

Calling the tendencies *biased* is not entirely unproblematic from the moral perspective. It could be argued that favouring people emotionally and proximately close to you is not biased, but morally acceptable – or even morally required. Also, it is more economic to help members of one's in-group and to prefer not harming them instead of others. It is also socially more acceptable than withholding help from them let alone helping only distant strangers instead. Peter Singer (2009, 129–139) writes about people who travel around the world to help others in need or donate all their extra savings to effective charities, leaving their own family only with what they think of as an acceptable standard of living. Is it a tribalistic bias to judge that these people ought to devote more time and care for their own family? If not, and if consequently such judgments are collected and systematized into the level of principles, there is an ever-present danger that such principles are chosen in a morally corrupt, self-serving way. However, judging against a tribalistic bias being in play also goes against some of the otherwise intuitive principles discussed in earlier chapters, like Singer's principle. How to respond to moral judgments being potentially tribalistic? One strategy is to overcome the problem that judgments, depending on their context, could be affected by tribalistic biases and bite the bullet, that is, hold on to the principles even if they imply counterintuitive conclusions. The other strategy is to chase these intuitions and claim that they are not biased but sound moral intuitions. (See Greene 2016, 134.) In the next section, we will examine this latter strategy and some of the problems related to it.

4.3.2. Chasing Conflicting Moral Intuitions

To demonstrate some of the flaws in intuitive moral judgments, and to assess the soundness of chasing intuitions as a strategy to responding to tribalistic biases, I will rehearse several thought experiments by Peter Unger. As such, they work as intuition pumps that help to demonstrate our intuitions about particular cases. Moreover, they demonstrate the ineptitude of human moral judgment systems (Peeters et al. 2019, 426), and reveal the chance for moral corruption (Gardiner 2011a) when chasing intuitions. When assessed together, these thought experiments are helpful in showing how intuitions judge differently than moral reasoning. The cases share relevant features with climate change, so they are helpful in pointing out why climate change is sometimes so difficult to grasp (Peeters et al. 2019, 426; Jamieson 2014, 148–150), but also why

ordinary morality has many performance issues with problems like climate change.

In *Living High and Letting Die*, philosopher Peter Unger (1996) takes a methodological approach that plays heavily on philosophical thought experiment to show that moral intuition is in some cases untrustworthy. This way Unger (1996, 11–13) argues against a view that we should preserve the ties between our basic moral values and intuition, no matter what. A conflict between basic moral values and intuitions could be translated into a conflict between principles and judgments in a system of ordinary morality. Unger's argument is built by analysing intuitions about the different thought experiments, or case examples, that Unger varies slightly throughout the book to show that the intuitions are contradicting and cannot be explained by reason.

The first thought experiment goes as follows:

> "*The Vintage Sedan*. Not truly rich, your one luxury in life is a vintage Mercedes sedan that, with much time, attention and money, you've restored to mint condition. In particular, you're pleased by the auto's fine leather seating. One day, you stop at the intersection of two small country roads, both lightly travelled. Hearing a voice screaming for help, you get out and see a man who's wounded and covered with a lot of his blood. Assuring you that his wound's confined to one of his legs, the man also informs you that he was a medical student for two full years. And, despite his expulsion for cheating on his second year final exams, which explains his indigent status since, he's knowledgeably tied his shirt near the wound so as to stop the flow. So, there's no urgent danger of losing his life, you're informed, but there's great danger of losing his limb. This can be prevented, however, if you drive him to a rural hospital fifty miles away. "How did the wound occur?" you ask. An avid bird-watcher, he admits that he trespassed on a nearby field and, in carelessly leaving, cut himself on rusty barbed wire. Now, if you'd aid this trespasser, you must lay him across your fine back seat. But, then, your fine upholstery will be soaked through with blood, and restoring the car will cost over five thousand dollars. So, you drive away. Picked up the next day by another driver, he survives but loses the wounded leg." (Unger 1996, 24–25.)

As Unger (1996, 26) notes, people usually judge negatively on this kind of behaviour. The need of a stranger is salient and conspicuous to us, and intuition tells us that it is wrong not to help, even though there is a relatively big financial cost to it. Here Unger assumes that people would in general judge negatively.

After pointing out a negative intuitive response to the Vintage Sedan, Unger proceeds by introducing another thought experiment to compare with the first one:

> "*The Envelope*. In your mailbox, there's something from (the U.S. Committee for) UNICEF. After reading it through, you correctly believe that, unless you soon send in a check for $100, then, instead of each living many more years, over thirty more children will die soon. But, you throw the material in your trash basket, including the convenient return envelope provided, you send nothing, and, instead of living many years, over thirty more children soon die than would have had you sent in the requested $100." (Unger 1996, 25.)

In this case, Unger (1996, 26) expects a neutral or positive reaction. Unger claims that most people judge leniently to cases like this, where the need for help is not salient or conspicuous, but rather abstract and far away.

However, intuition might give a different response if the thought experiment would be presented differently, for example, if there would have been a story of an individual who needs help. 'Thirty children' is much more abstract than one identifiable person. There are studies that suggest this is the case. (Singer 2009, 46–50; Kogut & Ritov 2005.) But this does not increase the viability of intuition. On the contrary, if The Envelope is coupled with a case where the victim is identifiable and there is a lenient judgment on the Envelope and a more negative judgment with the variation concerning identifiable victim, our intuition is morally irrational in judging leniently when there is a group of thirty people to be saved, and negatively when there is only one identifiable victim, even if the mode of helping (donating money) is the same.

Unger claims that from the viewpoint of moral reasoning, our intuitive responses do not make much sense. Indeed, our intuitions conflict with a more careful moral reasoning. Of the different variables in the thought experiments, important differences in the beneficiaries, the cost of helping, and the situation of the beneficiaries can be found. (Unger 1996, 26–27, 42.) They can be compared according to the following table:

Table 2:

Variables	**Vintage Sedan**	**Envelope**
Beneficiaries	*One leg*	*Thirty children*
Cost of helping	*5000 dollars*	*100 dollars*
The situation of the beneficiaries	*Responsible for one's situation;* *Lived a decent life so far*	*Not responsible for one's situation;* *Lived a short life in strife and poverty*

It seems that intuition judges negatively if we omit saving one leg for 5000 dollars and leniently when we omit saving thirty lives for 100 dollars. Furthermore, the beneficiary in Vintage Sedan is at least partly responsible for his own situation, and as Unger (1996, 27, 42) notes, arguably they have lived a decent life so far, having studied in a university and having hobbies like birdwatching. The children of the Envelope, on the other hand, have lived a life in poverty, and if they are likely to die from easily preventable diseases, their lives have probably been afflicted by suffering. Yet, intuition seems to favour the birdwatcher's leg.

Another thought experiment, proposed by me and with less elaboration, is also revealing:

> *The Benefactor*. You have won some money in the lottery and now you feel that as life has given so much to you, you want to give something back. Not familiar with the whole charity business, you ask consultation from a trustworthy friend, who presents you two available charity projects to invest in. The first option available, Project A, saves someone's accidentally injured leg for 5000 dollars. The second option available, Project A, saves thirty innocent lives for 100 dollars. For whatever reason, you choose Project A, and someone's leg is spared.

Did you do something wrong? Presented this way, it is intuitively better to save lives than legs, and the low cost of saving lives makes the case for choosing the lives even stronger. Why would it be wrong to prefer saving legs over human lives, if both acts are still good? Some philosophers (e.g., MacAskill 2016) have argued that there is a general duty to help efficiently.[56] The Benefactor case supports this claim.

[56] There is a growing movement that focuses on the discussion, study, and advocation of doing as much good as one can, namely the Effective Altruism movement.

Unger notes that one must show a morally relevant difference between the Envelope and Vintage Sedan to retain the necessary connection between intuition and basic moral values. There are multiple candidates for a morally relevant difference, including proximity and distance (both physical and social), informative directness, experiential impact, number of helpers, epistemic focus, causal focus, urgency, and the number of beneficiaries. (Unger 1996, ch.2.) However, also extra-moral factors can sometimes affect our judgment. By extra-moral, I refer to things that should not affect the content of a moral judgment yet do affect them. Sometimes people complain that music competitions are too much about extramusical factors like looks and fancy stage props rather than the music itself. Extra-moral factors work similarly. The cases above dealt with factors like proximity and distance that could be identified as extra-moral. Also, returning to tribalism, belonging to an in-group rather than out-group or present generation rather than future generation could be considered extra-moral if it is possible to show that there is no morally relevant difference between them. Indeed, views that take all people – future and present – as morally equal, worth equal consideration, or of equal value would hold the distinction as extra-moral. It would be wrong not to help someone merely because they belong to an out-group. In fact, it might be even xenophobic, adding another reason to regard a person refusing to help on those grounds blameworthy. The question is, are these differences in Unger's cases extra-moral, or morally relevant differences?

One could claim that our intuition is *not* misguided in judging negatively in the case of the Vintage Sedan and leniently in the case of the Envelope, because there is nothing wrong with not helping foreign, far-away children because of their social or physical distance. Unger (1996, ch.2) answers to such attempts by modifying the variables in the original cases, creating a set of different envelope-y and vintage sedan-y cases. For example, Unger presents a case like the envelope that takes distance into account, as follows:

> "*The Bungalow Compound*. Not being truly rich, you own only a one-twelfth share in a small bungalow that's part of a beach resort compound in an exotic but poor country, say, Haiti. Long since there's been much strife in the land, right now it's your month to enjoy the bungalow, and you're there on your annual vacation. In your mailbox, there's an envelope from UNICEF asking for money to help save children's lives in the town nearest you, whichever one that is. In your very typical case, quite a few such needy kids are all within a few blocks and, just over the compound wall, some are only a few feet away. As the appeal makes clear, your $100 will

> mean the difference between long life and early death for nearby children. But, of course, each month such appeals are sent to many bungalows in many Haitian resort compounds. You contribute nothing and, so, more nearby children die soon than if you'd sent $100." (Unger 1996, 34.)

In this case, Unger demonstrates how intuition is not always affected by distance. Here the beneficiaries are close to the helper, just like in the Vintage Sedan. Yet, like Unger (1996, 34) claims, intuition judges leniently on this behaviour, as it did with the Envelope. Unger presents another case, paired to the Bungalow Compound, that is more like the vintage sedan case:

> "*The CB Radios*. Instead of coming upon the erstwhile student at a crossroads, you hear from him on the CB radio that's in your fine sedan. Along with the rest of his story, the trespasser informs you, by talking into his own much cheaper CB radio, that he's stranded there with an old jalopy, which can't even be started and which, to boot, is out of gas. Citing landmarks to each other, he truthfully says you're just ten miles from where he's stranded. He asks you to pick him up and take him to a hospital, where his leg can be saved. Thinking about an upholstery bill for over $5000, you drive in another direction. As a foreseen result of that, he loses his leg, though not his life." (Unger 1996, 34–35.)

In this case, on the other hand, the beneficiary is farther away from the benefactor. Yet again, as with the Vintage Sedan, our intuition judges negatively.

There are many differences between the cases that intuition chasers could try to claim to be morally relevant. In fact, Unger (1996, ch2.) goes through over fifteen possible candidates and debunks them all in a similar fashion as seen above. While it is not possible to rehearse them all here, there is one difference that seems interesting and relates to the ICE principle discussed in section 3.2. On a daily basis, cases like the Envelope are much more common than cases like Vintage Sedan. Many people receive the kinds of pleads for financial aid to support some good and worthwhile cause, and many people also refuse to help and give nothing. Intuition is mostly silent or lenient about issues like this. Consequently, the relevant difference would be that the Vintage Sedan exhibits an emergency where a different set of principles including much more laxed regulative principles take over. However, Unger (1996, 45) makes another thought experiment that is otherwise like the Envelope but this time the letter informs about an emergency in Haiti. Unger notes that regardless of the

emergency, our intuition remains silent or lenient if we discard the envelope. Yet, there are reasons to think that the *chronic horrors* encountered by the children of the Envelope make their situation morally even more pressing than a temporal emergency. There is no end in sight to their distress. (Unger 1996 42–45.) Thus, there can be even *more* reasons to help the children who suffer from chronic horrors.

Greene's research may help to explain the conflicting moral intuitions in Unger's cases. When the case example is presented in a way that stimulates our tribalistic tendencies, and we rely on intuition, we end up with implausible conclusions, from the point of view of reasoning. The reason we judge negatively on omitting to save a man's leg and leniently on omitting to save hundred children does not reflect any moral truth behind the scenarios, but rather our moral psychological defaults: human intuition reacts to morally abhorrent behaviour in here-and-now, in-group-y cases like Vintage Sedan, but does not raise any alarm when out-group people suffer, sometime next month, according to a case that has a statistic tone to it. It is more difficult for us to comprehend a hundred deaths compared to the tragedy of one, identifiable victim. (See Singer 2009, 46–50.)

Unger's thought experiments suggest that intuition works inconsistently. Intuition does not always carry from simple intuitive principles and test cases like the shallow pond *to every morally similar case*. Intuition is not consistent, and intuitive judgments do not consistently follow across different cases. Consequently, the strategic choice is between biting the bullet – namely, holding on to a principle that requires helping – or chasing intuitions – namely, letting go of the principle. (Greene 2016, 134.) Biting the bullet strategy matches what Unger (1996, 11) calls liberationism, as it seeks to liberate our basic values from particular intuitive judgments. It enables holding on to principles like Singer's principle. Chasing intuitions strategy matches what Unger (Ibid.) calls preservationism, as it seeks to preserve the connection between intuitions and basic values. Unger's cases provide support for biting the bullet strategy, because intuition seems to work inconsistently with cases that have the characteristic features described above. This implies setting certain moral principles free from intuitive reactions to them and accepting the likes of Singer's principle despite its intuitive over-demandingness.

If Unger is correct, there is a lot of real-world suffering that our intuition turns a blind eye on. Simultaneously, many people go on comfortably with their lives. Does this mean that especially affluent people are horribly immoral? Are humans essentially egoistic and tribalistic, not caring about distant and future

suffering of fellow species members, not to mention nonhuman animals and the environment?

The next section examines how human moral psychology works and the processes it uses to arrive at a moral judgment. This is important for finding means to resist moral corruption and the worrying inaction towards climate change (the motivational gap), but also for more theoretical issues regarding ordinary morality and common sense on the level of considered judgments. First, the focus will be on how the problem manifests by taking a look at proximate explanations from moral psychology, and then the focus is shifted to ultimate explanations about why the problem manifests by taking a look at ultimate explanations from an evolutionary perspective.

4.4. Human Moral Psychology

The thought experiments discussed above undermine the reliability of intuition in cases where we are facing an opportunity to help distant strangers. To arrive at the conclusion that intuition is unreliable, there must be some way to morally evaluate the acts in these thought experiments. Unger used moral reasoning to reach the conclusion that our intuition does not always reflect our most basic moral values. (Unger 1996, 33.) So, there are at least two ways to address moral problems: intuition and moral reasoning.

It is puzzling that in the thought experiments moral intuition leads to different judgments than reasoning. Initial intuitions about the cases differed radically from an effortful, reason-based assessment. Cold facts in the thought experiments point towards different moral judgments than intuition. Which one should be used (primarily) when they conflict? Or, more worryingly, do we ever (primarily) use reasoning? On the other hand, if moral reasoning is accessible, what are the perils in intuition being unreliable? In these questions about moral judgments and how humans generally reach them, reasoning is often contrasted with moral intuition and moral emotions. Here the exact relation of intuition and emotions is not important. Rather, it can be accepted that there are more or less automatic processes that unconsciously lead to moral judgments contra reasoning which generally requires some conscious effort. On the other hand, one could also to claim that humans do *not* have inadept moral judgment systems thanks to reasoning. Maybe we could just rely on moral reasoning. However, it is not completely in our control which we rely on, intuition or reasoning, when making moral judgments. Further, there is evidence suggesting that in any case pure reasoning is not the only process that leads to judgment as it is affected by moral emotions. (See Prinz 2016, 53, 56.) Some go

as far as to claim that reasoning never or only rarely is the main process for coming to a moral judgment. (Haidt 2001.) These competing views will be examined further in the next chapter. For now, the focus will be on model that includes both reasoning and emotions or intuitions, called the dual-process theory. (Greene 2016.)

4.4.1. Dual-Process Theory, Unfamiliar Problems, and New Principles

According to Joshua Greene, human moral psychology is best explained by a dual-process theory. The theory holds that there are two neuropsychological processes that are used to form a moral judgment. To clarify the neuroscience behind the dual-process model, Greene offers a camera analogy. Like a high-end camera, the moral brain has automatic settings and a manual mode. One can use both, but it depends on the circumstances which one is used. (Greene 2016, 120.) This is akin to Daniel Kahneman's (2011) two systems theory of the fast system one, and the slow system two. I will assume that dual-process theory describes human moral psychology sufficiently well and incorporate it as a background theory for ordinary morality in the reflective equilibrium process.

The two processes in the brain and the camera have analogous functions and characteristics. Greene (Greene 2016, 120) characterizes the dual-process design of the brain as a solution to a certain design problem, that is, the trade-off between *flexibility* and *efficiency*. The manual mode of the camera, which resembles moral reasoning, is used when a task requires precision and clarity. Indeed, there are perks in choosing the manual mode, as there is more control over the details. The downside is that it requires more effort, and it is much more time consuming. It would not be efficient to use the manual mode all the time. For most everyday life pictures that one wants to take, using automatic settings is much more efficient. The automatic settings resemble moral emotions. The quality is not as good, but it is efficient and easy to use. By using the automatic settings, one relies on their programming. In a camera, the settings may, for example, recognize human faces and automatically zoom into them. The downside is that sometimes the automatic settings leave something out of the picture or focus on wrong things.

Automatic settings require *trial and error experience* to function well. Greene (2016, 131) identifies three sources for such experience in humans: 1) our biological ancestors, that is, by natural selection – for example, we are afraid of snakes but not cars, although the latter are much more dangerous, 2) our cultural ancestors – for example, one can be afraid of guns without ever being harmed by one, and 3) our own personal experience – for example, one does not

voluntarily touch a hot stove ever again having done it once. Respectively, such experience is acquired through the mechanisms of genetic transmission, cultural transmission, and learning from experience. These, according to Greene, are the only ways to mould the automatic settings so that they function adequately.

4.4.2. Climate change and Automatic Settings

The automatic settings may be expected work well enough in everyday life, providing an efficient solution to most moral problems. However, for problems like climate change we lack the necessary[57] trial and error experience. This is clearest in the case of genetic transmission, as our ancestors did not face such complex collective moral problems. Arguably this is what triggers Jamieson's hardest problem. Automatic moral responses to climate change are not as salient as responses to paradigm moral problems like stealing. (Jamieson 2006, 476–477.) Without some intervention, cultural or personal experience, climate change escapes human moral psychology.

Citing Weber's research on climate change and two psychological processing systems, affective and analytical, Gardiner brings up a duality similar to Greene's when discussing possible reasons for political inertia on climate change. An abrupt climate change, with noticeable effects during this generation, could break the spell. (Gardiner 2011a, 193; Weber 2006.) Interestingly, ten years later, there are indications that many of the affluent are in fact facing abrupt effects of climate change, with draught, heat waves, and forest fires menacing Europe and the US. Simultaneously, there are growing grassroots level movements and more visible political activists demanding effective climate action. However, at the same time, CO2 emission levels are higher than ever. What is enough to count as sufficient ingredients for cultural transmission or learning from personal experience?

Arguably, cultural transmission is still only on its way. First off, collective ancestral experience has not learned the true extent of the horrors that climate change brings about. Second, it remains to be seen what climate change in its full force would be like. Also, one could argue that there is no personal experience yet about *catastrophic* climate change, although the inhabitants of small drowning island states might be an exception. Perhaps adding to this lack of personal experience is that climate change is not always experienced directly.

[57] Greene (2016, 131) notes that trial and error experience is only necessary, not a sufficient condition for good functioning.

For instance, the effects of extreme weather can be experienced, but people may still insist that it is just the weather, not climate change, that is affecting them.

There is no proper trial and error experience about climate change, at least catastrophic climate change, although this may be slowly changing. People are already experiencing some effects of climate change, and there is a growing change in culture. Still, the genetic transmission of past trial and error experience about global and long-term problems like climate change is lacking and will inevitably be too slow to motivate responding to the problem already at hand. This does not make adequate responses impossible, but it makes them less likely. This seems to explain part of the political inertia.

4.4.3. Evolutionary Mismatch and Climate Change

With climate change, there is no ancestral trial and error experience. Jamieson (2014, 102) has raised a similar worry in *Reason in a Dark Time*, that evolution did not prepare us for responding to problems like climate change. A similar thought is also entertained by Persson and Savulescu (2012), and they note that this mismatch between our hunter-gatherer minds and modern environment with climate change and nuclear weapons make us *unfit for the future*.

For the case of climate change, an important flaw with the automatic mode is that it is good in precisely the kind of environments it was designed for. Similarly, intuition may work best in the environment it evolved in. However, there are huge differences between the modern environment and those of the environment of evolutionary adaptedness (EEA in short). (Buss 2013, 39.) Human species has not changed much, but our environment has – and sometimes these changes amount to *evolutionary mismatches*. A mismatch occurs when the environment changes faster than a population living in it can adapt to these changes. According to Stearns and Medzhitov (2016, 13–14), the most important driver for the changes in the environment has been cultural evolution, the revolutions in agriculture, urbanization, and hygiene. Sometimes these changes result in some previously beneficial traits turning less beneficial or even harmful.

Buchanan and Powell (2018) discuss a particular kind of mismatch, a moral mismatch they call the *Pleistocene hangover*, which occurs because of the residues of our evolutionary history.[58] It is

[58] This mismatch should not be understood in a strictly evolutionary sense. It is suggested that rapid changes in the environment cause moral psychological processes to respond inadequately to some of the moral problems in the modern environment. But to be a biological mismatch, our "mismatched" moral psychology would have to result in problems for carriers

> "a mismatch between the "innate" psychological dispositions that solidified in the EEA and the modern ecological environment that our evolved prehistoric psychologies must navigate." (Buchanan & Powell 2018, 248.)

For example, human leadership-followership psychology may have been beneficial in the EEA, but in the modern setting with weapons of mass destruction and the possibility of large state-level conflicts it may prove out to be mismatched. Following a strong leader in a time of trouble has different consequences for a group of fifty with stone hammers compared to a nation of millions with rifles and state media. Similarly, general human tendencies towards xenophobia and favouring the in-group at the expense of the out-group are residues of ancient adaptations in the EEA. (Buchanan and Powell 2018, 245, 248–249; see also van Vugt et al. 2008.) This could explain the tribalistic tendencies in human moral psychology and why humans are better at Me versus Us than Us versus Them type of moral problems – they were simply more common and more important to solve efficiently in the EEA. (Greene 2013, 24.) Human social behaviour evolved for life in small close-knit groups of hunter-gatherers. Such circumstances gave humans a bias towards near future, restricted human altruistic behaviour mostly to next of kin and the in-group, restricted human capacity to sympathize with a large number of people, a bias towards acts instead of omissions, and a causally based conception of responsibility which dilutes responsibility when acting in a larger group. According to Ingmar Persson and Julian Savulescu, these factors increase the risk to use weapons of mass destruction and makes it less likely that humans are able to solve problems like climate change. It is their argument that therefore we are "*unfit* for the future". (Persson and Savulescu 2015, 338.)

of these mismatched traits. If climate change would finally kill or inhibit procreation for most or all of the contributors to climate change, for example, then it might make sense to speak about an evolutionary mismatch in the biological sense. However, it is likely that for some individuals, and especially those who contribute to climate change most, these moral psychological traits can prove beneficial in a purely evolutionary sense. Suppose that only affluent western people survive climate change. Then, it would clearly not be an evolutionary mismatch to be equipped with moral psychology contributing to problems like climate change. Rather, the concept of moral mismatch picks up something similar to the grasping problem.

4.4.4. Unfamiliar Problems and New Principles

From the perspective of human moral psychology, lacking experience with a problem is a challenge because it would be a cognitive miracle for the automatic settings to work properly on novel and unfamiliar problems. (Greene 2016, 131–132) By unfamiliar moral problems Greene (2016, 131) means problems of which "we have inadequate evolutionary, cultural, or personal experience." Unfamiliar problems are likely to be "moral problems that arise from recent cultural developments, most notably the rise of modern technology and the intersection of disparate cultures." (Ibid., 132.) Another way is to use disagreement as a proxy for lack of familiarity. When intuitions of two different parties differ and the disagreement is practical – about what to do, rather than why do it – at least one party's intuition is likely to be astray. What makes unfamiliar problems difficult for our automatic settings is that "it would be a cognitive miracle if we had reliably good moral instincts about unfamiliar moral problems." (Greene 2016, 131.) This leads to the following principle, proposed by Greene:

> *The No Cognitive Miracles Principle*: "When we are dealing with unfamiliar* moral problems, we ought to rely less on automatic settings (automatic emotional responses) and more on manual mode (conscious, controlled reasoning), lest we bank on cognitive miracles." (Greene 2016, 131.)[59]

Applying the principle requires that we know "which of our candidate judgments are preferentially supported by automatic settings versus manual mode", and "which of the moral problems we face are unfamiliar". (Greene 2016, 132). Consequently, for the present issue, the question is whether we bank on cognitive miracles if relying on automatic settings with climate change.

New Harms may also be is contributing to the current circumstances' unfamiliarity. Because of the complexity and global character of New Harms, our moral emotions are not well matched to them. It is difficult to feel shame or guilt, for instance, for contributing to New Harms. (Lichtenberg 2010, 561–562.) This question of unfamiliarity is very important for ordinary morality and the problem of demandingness (discussed in section 3.4.4.). Relying on Peeters, Bell and Swaffield (2019), I have argued that New Harms are not qualitatively different and novel enough to ground their own new moral principles. But if climate change poses an unfamiliar problem where our intuition is

[59] With the asterisk in the quote Greene refers to the specified technical meaning of 'unfamiliar problems', which refer to problems "with which we have inadequate evolutionary, cultural, or personal experience". (Greene 2016, 131.)

untrustworthy, this could provide some grounds for introducing new principles to adjust or replace the no harm principle that produces extreme moral demands in the case of climate change. If so, ordinary morality could avoid the conflict between the moral no harm principle and the regulative over-demandingness principle, which are both characteristic to ordinary morality.

Another reason to consider new principles is that climate change is not, as Jamieson (2006) puts it, a paradigm moral problem. For instance, climate change related harms are not (typically) intentional, the harm and those suffering it are not readily identifiable, and the violator and the victim are not (always) spatially and temporally close to each other. As these features of paradigm moral problems are lacking in climate change related harm, climate change related harm may be relevantly novel and unfamiliar. This could be a further reason to introduce new climate change related principles.

One of the theoretical virtues identified for this reflective equilibrium process was frugality. This implies that without sufficiently pressing reasons, new principles should not be introduced. The question is, do unfamiliarity and not being a paradigm moral problem provide enough reasons to introduce new principles? The problem with this approach is related to the novelty of New Harms. While climate change may present harms in a particularly complex, even unfamiliar way, the harm itself is familiar. There is a difference between the way a harm is caused, and the harm itself. Ultimately, there is no new *harm* caused by climate change. Only the way to introduce it is new. If someone comes up with a completely novel and imaginative way to torture their neighbour, the harm itself is of a familiar type.

Further, a harm can be unfamiliar in a way that intuition does not respond to it correctly, even if there is nothing novel with the harm itself. Some forms of harm can be 'unfamiliar' in the sense that the society does not acknowledge them as harms, and only later learns or acknowledges that something is harmful. How people treat animals is a good example of this. It was not until the animal liberation movement from the 1970s that western societies acknowledged that mistreating non-human animals is morally relevant harm. But the harm itself (e.g., pain and death) was nothing novel. Arguably, as the public perception of animal mistreatment has changed, for many people their intuitions have followed suit as an occurrence of cultural transmission. This does not necessarily require new principles, as the environmental extensionists would claim, it only requires applying these principles to new areas. Thus, while unfamiliar problems can make intuition unreliable and less trustworthy, they do not form a new problem type in the sense that grounds introducing new principles.

4.5. Conclusions

Greene's account on tribalism and Unger's many thought experiments demonstrate that intuition is affected by extra-moral factors. Factors like proximity or use of personal force found in the cases can affect how people react to them. (Greene 2016, 703.) Also, factors outside the time pressure have been found to affect intuitions. (Suter & Hertwig 2011.) These studies make the strategy of chasing intuitions less tenable, and these extra-moral factors seem to make it more likely that humans are susceptible to moral corruption and moral disengagement strategies, especially with unfamiliar problems like climate change. Involvement of such extra-moral factors in a case should then raise the alarm of a moral corruption detector – they may not provide a reasonable rationale, and to claim that they do, additional argumentation for that should be provided. This is also important for considerations about demandingness. There is a danger that the regulative principles are set in a self-serving way. Especially, if they are systematized from judgments concerning demandingness that work in the guise of demandingness objections, but only amount to demandingness complaints. This danger can be counterbalanced with other, moral corruption detecting principles.

Evolution provided humans with tools for solving in-group conflicts. However, the most pressing conflicts in modern times are not restricted to the social strives of the in-group. Climate change by its very nature makes it necessary to consider the out-groups as well, because most of its harmful effects do not affect Us but rather Them, far across the globe and far into the future. In ordinary circumstances, humans can do fine most of the time with the automatic mode, but sometimes the complexity of a moral problem requires the manual mode, moral reasoning. (Greene 2013, 294–295.) However, there are many reasons to think that intuition, which constitutes much of the automatic settings, is unreliable, that the problems humans are facing are unfamiliar, and that they mostly affect the out-group and not the in-group. Reasoning, on the other hand, can take these problems into account.

If background theories are changed so that they accommodate the moral psychological and evolutionary factors considered in this chapter, for ordinary morality this would mean a great shift in the point of equilibrium. This suggest an *eliminative background theory* that questions all considered judgments that are 1) based on intuition and 2) are evolutionarily mismatched to respond to climate change. With reflective equilibrium, the next steps are to eliminate judgments that oppose stopping climate change, or that could be equipped for means of moral disengagement strategies. Greene (2016, 140) calls this the double-wide reflective equilibrium, a method that questions the reliability of intuitions in

certain contexts where our intuition is particularly susceptible to tribalistic biases. Climate change is such a context. With this method, some judgments could be outright eliminated as they are not *considered* judgments but rather biased opinions, and for some their theoretical cost could be increased.

It should be noted that the case made in this chapter does not rest on these evolutionary psychological notions. In some sense, evolution is redundant in the mismatch hypothesis. The argument does not rest on evolutionary psychology, although it makes it easier to understand and accept. The problem is the same whether it was evolution or God who made us the way we are. It doesn't matter whether it was 250 000 years or 6000 years ago that human species with these moral abilities appeared into this world. The idea is that a mismatch occurs all the same, that human moral psychological abilities are suited to that environment and, at worst, ill-suited to the current circumstances. We live in a global, fast-paced world where people are intensively connected and actions that seem morally indifferent make a moral difference.

As a remedy, Kasperbauer (2016, 365) has suggested that it would be more fruitful to focus on policy rather than individual behaviour to overcome some the psychological limitations discussed in this chapter. The problems discussed in this chapter can be summarized as the *adaptive limits of human morality*. In the next chapter, I will make an argument from the adaptive limits of human morality, that suggests we morally ought and practically should not leave it up to individuals to respond to climate change, lending support for institutional approaches instead.

Chapter Five. Morally Far Gone

5.1. Introduction

This chapter is divided to three parts based on the three main threads of the dissertation, namely *the Argument*, *the Reflective Equilibrium Analysis*, and *the Exploration*. Each part will gather and analyse corresponding relevant contents identified, developed, and explored in the dissertation. Here, the idea of climate change as a conceptual stress test is deployed, so it will be assumed that stopping climate change requires great sacrifices from individuals. This stress test is useful for hashing out different problems and characteristics of ordinary morality, and to assess how ordinary morality can operate in such dire circumstances.

The first part, the Argument, draws mostly from the moral psychological factors considered in chapter four. An argument from the adaptive limits of human morality is considered. It gains its force from the alleged unreliability of moral intuitions. The nature of the problem, together with human moral psychological limitations (the hardest moral storm), point that it should not be left for individuals to tackle climate change. Instead, institutional solutions seem to fare better in the sense that they steer individuals' behaviour in everyday circumstances. The first part ends with an analysis of individual's climate duties as duties of compliance, and their demandingness.

The second part, the Reflective Equilibrium Analysis pulls together the different elements discussed and developed throughout this dissertation and attempts to shift ordinary morality towards a new point of equilibrium that fills Rechnitzer's (2022, 35) criteria for reflective equilibrium. First, the proceedings on each level – the level of background theories, principles, and considered judgments – are discussed. Then, a comparison between the initial ordinary morality and the new point of equilibrium is made. The new point of equilibrium better respects the input commitment of stopping climate change but faces similar problems with respecting the other input commitment, that morality should not be overly excessive in its demands. While this commitment seizes to cause inherent problems for the system of ordinary morality in the new position, it remains challenging to respect it fully.

The third part, the Exploration, provides a diagnosis of the challenge that it is difficult to respect the input commitment of non-excessive demands. It is suggested that the world has become morally far-gone, and even ordinary morality causes problematically extreme demands in such circumstances. First,

to understand the full extent of the diagnosis, a comparison is drawn between present circumstances and those of a broken world, as characterised by Tim Mulgan (2011). Because the principles of ordinary morality produce varying demands in different circumstances, the fact-sensitivity of ordinary morality is discussed. Lastly, it is concluded that moral theorizing should not aim at a clean slate state with low demands in its theorizing process, but rather this is more appropriate as an end-state goal of moral theories.

The chapter, and this dissertation, ends with a few considerations about some of the implications of living in a morally far-gone world, and what the future might hold for ordinary morality and moral philosophy.

5.2. The Argument

The previous chapter discussed some of the adaptive limits of human morality that pertain to climate change. Because of the complex nature of climate change and the mismatched human moral psychology, there is a danger of moral corruption and problems with moral judgments, especially related to unreliable intuitions. Intuition is particularly unreliable in cases that are unfamiliar (Greene 2016, 131–132), and cases that invoke tribalistic biases. (Greene 2013, 294–295.) Climate change seems to fit these criteria, and thus one should at the very least be cautious of intuitive judgments in the climate context. As Jamieson puts it, climate change is not a paradigm moral case like theft. (Jamieson 2006, 475–477.) Gardiner's global and intergenerational storm show that most of the harms caused by climate change affect other people, strangers distant both in time and place. (Gardiner 2011a, 24–29, 32–38.) As Kasperbauer (2016, 365) notes, these psychological limitations also have implications for climate policy. The following sections develop an argument from the adaptive limits of human morality to defend institutional approaches against individualist approaches.[60]

The first premise is formed in accordance with the climate stress test. Anthropogenic climate change is a catastrophe that will result in massive harm to numerous people over numerous generations if it is not sufficiently averted or mitigated. Thus, it should prima facie be averted or mitigated as much as

[60] This is of course not the only or most direct possible line of argumentation for institutional approaches. I have chosen this line because the elements of my institutional argument are connected to the methodological thread of this dissertation. For both, human moral psychology and the processes underlying the formation of considered judgments, particularly when judging about unfamiliar cases like climate change, produce problems. In this sense, the argumentative and methodological threads share a similar root which raises doubt about the reliability of intuition and thus certain kinds of considered judgments. This has ramifications for both the method of reflective equilibrium and climate policy.

possible. If so, it seems reasonable to further assume the truth of the following premise: "Anthropogenic climate change ought to be stopped." This is also in line with the input commitment of stopping climate change, which is discussed further in the next part along the reflective equilibrium process. Further, the stress test assumes that there is no technological solution that dissolves the problem. What naturally follows is the question about *what* must be done to stop climate change. Given the unreliability about intuitions on issues like climate change, and the chance of moral corruption (Gardiner 2011a, 45–48), it is unlikely that individualist approaches will succeed in stopping climate change. This gives grounds for forming a practical syllogism where the first premise, that anthropogenic climate change ought to be stopped, and a second premise, that approaches where reliance on individuals' spontaneous climate action is not likely to achieve that goal, lead to the conclusion that individualist approaches are not to be followed because then climate change will likely not be stopped as human moral psychology is not supportive of this goal.

It should be noted that this non-supportiveness, at least to the extent that it is caused by the unfamiliarity of climate change, is somewhat contingent. While humans for a very long time still will lack the genetically transmitted ancestral experience on problems like climate change, cultural transmission is increasingly possible, and even personal experience might be available in some cases.[61] For instance, the increase in grassroots level climate activism movements may be an indication of a cultural change, and that humanity is finally beginning to learn its lesson on climate change. Also, personal observations like noting the change in seasons – "Winters these days are not as snowy as in my childhood" – can count towards making the problem more familiar and tangible.

However, there are at least two reasons why this change in familiarity is probably not going to be sufficient for effective action against climate change. The first is that it still does not dissolve the storms relating to climate change. The intergenerational and global nature of climate change in all its complexity is still enough to produce the grasping problem. (See Gardiner 2011b, 52.) Also, people can have first-hand experience about poverty and its effects yet be completely unmoved by facts about poverty related suffering globally. Similarly, it is not clear that there is a direct connection between witnessing heat waves and starting to behave in a more climate responsible manner. Even then climate change can be seen as someone else's fault, or one could claim that their actions are inconsequential, so the possibility of moral corruption is still present.

[61] For genetic and cultural transmission and learning from personal experience, see Greene 2016, 131.

(See Gardiner 2011a, 45–48.) Second, even if these cultural transmissions and personal experiences did change people's behaviour, a sufficiently widespread effect would also mean that humanity is in many ways too late. The effects of climate change, especially the more dreaded effects that cause people noticeable and significant harm, would already be there. The worst scenarios might still be preventable, but a lot of unstoppable damage would have already been done. So, relying on cultural transmission's power to make individualist approaches more reliable is a poor strategy – it already involves losing part of the battle.

The syllogism alone does not take us very far towards the objective of stopping climate change, but it gives a negative guiding rule for the overall mission: when it comes to climate change, individual action should not be relied on. This is partly because of moral corruption and partly because of unreliable intuitions.

5.2.1. The Role and Scope of Reasoning

If intuition is ill-suited to respond to problems like climate change, why am I assuming that people do not rely on reasoning instead? For a more positive guiding rule, relying on moral reasoning could be an alternative to relying on (mere) intuition. Peter Unger's (1996) many thought experiments examined in the previous chapter showed how reasoning can lead to more consistent replies to different cases, whereas intuition runs into problems.

However, reasoning is not without its flaws. In fact, evidence suggests quite the opposite. For example, Jonathan Haidt lists two factors that make reasoning motivated and therefore biased. These are *relatedness* and *coherence motives*. Relatedness motives make people agree more easily with people they are close with. Coherence motives make people dismiss evidence that does not cohere with existing knowledge, especially if it is important for their identity. (Haidt 2001, 820–821.) Reasoning can also be affected by some clearly extra-moral factors – that is, morally irrelevant factors that affect the moral judgment – as arbitrary as a bitter taste in one's mouth. (Eskine et al. 2011.) Undermining reasoning does not automatically increase the valence or reliability of intuition. If moral reasoning is as unreliable as intuition, it does not mark a victory for accounts championing intuition, but rather, a loss for everyone. Morally speaking, humans would be left in the dark.

Reasoning can also be biased, but if a decision between intuition and reasoning has to be made, I suggest it is better justified to rely on reasoning because there is more control over the process of reasoning. Here the hope is that reasoning can overcome unfamiliarity. Through reason it is possible to

become aware of the biases in reasoning, and maybe even try to mitigate them, whereas intuition is not similarly aware of its biases, and they cannot be mitigated from within intuition. For instance, one could reason by analogy inferences to show that some familiar case is very similar to an unfamiliar case, and thus one should judge similarly or behave in similar ways in both cases. Peter Singer (1972) makes this move from a shallow pond to world poverty in "Famine, Affluence, and Morality". Tribalistic biases could be overcome by similar means, by showing that there are no morally relevant differences between two cases, and thus one should judge similarly between the cases. The strength of this argument by analogy is that it relies on intuitions in a *familiar* type of case and claims that similar intuitions *should* be present with other, analogous cases.

In other words, it is not the case that intuition is always unreliable and should be abandoned altogether, but rather that one should be careful about the structure and nature of a case, and in particular if it is of a familiar (or paradigm) kind. As Greene (2016, 120) notes, the manual mode based on reasoning is more flexible than the automatic mode based on intuition. This flexibility grants the possibility to use reasoning for problems that are unfamiliar. Just like human hands were not adapted to painting miniature figures but they perform satisfyingly enough with this evolutionarily novel task, also reasoning can be used flexibly in solving novel problems. Relying on reason in forming moral judgments cannot be defended further here, but even given its obvious flaws, if intuition is unreliable, reasoning might just be the best hope with unfamiliar and tribalism-provoking problems like climate change. How meagre a hope that might be is a question that cannot be pursued here.

However, there is a further worry that can be very alarming for individualist approaches, and also for stopping climate change in the first place. What if people very rarely primarily rely on reasoning or do not rely on it as a primary decision-making or act-motivating channel at all? Jonathan Haidt's (2001) *social intuitionist model* paints such a picture. According to the social intuitionist model humans form moral judgments primarily based on intuition. Intuition, in contrast to reasoning, is automatic, effortless, and fast. Through intuition we reach judgments immediately without conscious effort. Jonathan Haidt claims that the role of reasoning (contra common belief) is not to reach judgments, but rather to justify the initial intuition to others. This makes the model *social*: our reasoning can in turn affect the intuitions of others. Nevertheless, moral reasoning happens mostly in a *post hoc* manner.[62] (Haidt

[62] Note that Haidt's social intuitionist model has also been criticized. For critical discussion, see Liao 2016, 15–20.

2001, 814–815, 822.) If the social intuitionist model is correct, it seems that we are left in a dead end: most human individuals, most times, cannot be relied on because a) their intuition is unreliable and b) reasoning, which is the alternative, is rarely relied on primarily. Right tools for addressing climate change should be searched elsewhere. Here is a summary of these thoughts:

1) Anthropogenic climate change ought to be stopped.
2) Relying on intuition does not support stopping climate change.
3) Relying on reasoning supports stopping climate change better than relying on intuition.
4) Therefore, if having to choose between relying on intuition and relying on reasoning on stopping climate change, one ought to rely on reasoning.
5) However, individuals often fail to rely on reasoning.
6) If relying on intuition does not support stopping climate change and if individuals often fail to rely on reasoning, then it should not be left for individuals to stop climate change.
7) Thus, it should not be left for individuals to stop climate change.

This practical argument concludes that it should not be left for individuals to stop climate change. The normativity of this conclusion comes from the first premise, that climate change ought to be stopped. Failure to stop climate change is not morally permissible. The strength of this argument depends on the validity of the rather empirical claim that individuals do not usually rely on reasoning. The strongest version of the argument can be conjured if Haidt's social intuitionist model is correct, and reasoning only serves a post hoc role for justifying intuition-based judgments to others. The argument is severely weakened, however, if the opposite is true, that intuition is just an afterthought, a response to reasoning. Because the argument's strength depends heavily on these matters, it is worth taking a closer look at which version seems most plausible.

Jesse Prinz (2016) identifies four competing classes of theories about moral judgment. These are the *emotions as outputs theories*, *emotions as inputs theories*, dual-process model, and what Prinz calls *constitution model*. Although in this dissertation the focus has been on moral intuitions, a cognitive yet unconscious process, Prinz discusses the relation of reasoning and emotions. For the present purposes, the important difference is the contrast between the effortful, yet flexible process often called reasoning, and the effortless, efficient, and automatic process that characterize both intuition and moral emotions.

All four classes of theories of moral judgment discuss the role of emotions and reasoning in making a moral judgment, but only emotions as outputs

theories, like moral rationalism or moral grammar theories, state that emotions have no (or very little) role as humans come to a moral judgment via reasoning. Emotions as inputs theories, such as Haidt's social intuitionist model, state the opposite, giving reasoning no or only a limited or secondary role in moral judgments. Dual-process theories (like Greene's) try to find a middle ground, allowing a role for both. Prinz's favoured constitutional theory differs radically from the others as it has emotions as constituent parts of moral judgments, rather than something we reach moral judgment *from*. Prinz notes that neuroscience alone has not been able to settle which theory is correct. In neuroimaging studies, both emotion and nonemotion areas of brains have been found to be active when presented with moral stimuli, although emotion seems to play a more regular role. (Prinz 2016, 48–52.)

However, the account that would make the argument weakest, emotions as outputs, seems least likely to be the correct one. The available evidence does not support the view that moral judgments would be reached with reasoning alone, as studies have found that brain areas associated with emotions are active when subjects were presented with moral cases. (Prinz 2016, 48 cites Damasio 1994; Vytal and Hamann 2010; Maddock et al. 2003; Nielen et al. 2009; Olsen et al. 2007.) Pure reasoning seems implausible as well, since reasoning does not seem to be unaffected by emotions, as inducing emotions has been shown to sometimes affect moral judgments.[63] According to Prinz, some proponents of emotions as outputs theories have claimed that although emotions are often present and affect moral judgments, emotions *themselves* do not make the moral judgment, or they only have an *amplifying* effect that may alter the moral judgment. Prinz notes, however, that emotions affect moral judgments in a very specific way. For example, happiness increases, and anger decreases positive moral judgments.[64] (Prinz 2016, 53.) This suggests that emotions have a greater role to play than merely affecting or amplifying moral judgments. Prinz concludes that we use emotions to reach moral judgments and there is no strong evidence to suggest otherwise, which points towards the implausibility of emotions as outputs theories. (Prinz 2016, 56.) So, for the argument at hand, it seems that there are not solid grounds for trying to weaken it by claiming that people in fact do mostly rely on reasoning when making moral judgments.

[63] Here Prinz refers to Wheatley and Haidt (2005) where it was found that hypnotically induced disgust increases the severity of moral judgments, Schnall et al. (2008) where different sources of disgust like bad smells were found to increase the severity of moral judgments, and Eskine et al. (2011) where it was found that also taste perception affects moral judgments.

[64] Here Prinz refers to Seidel and Prinz (2013).

This moral psychological matter cannot be settled here. However, the middle-ground approach, dual-process theory, gives interesting insights in the problem at hand. Both reasoning and intuition play a role, but intuition, when encountering unfamiliar problems can be unreliable. (Greene 2016.) Using reasoning is not impossible, but Haidt's research suggests that humans do not rely on it on an everyday basis. This gives an edge to institutional approaches. Institutional approaches, contra individualist approaches, are more likely to rely on reasoning as the process of designing and implementing them is different from responding to everyday situations from an individual's viewpoint, where there is more room for moral corruption or weakness of will. Once the institutional arrangement is in place, it continuously steers individuals' behaviour consistently in the same direction. It is this consistency that gives institutional approaches an edge over individualist approaches. In the next section, I will present an argument for the institutional approaches.

5.2.2. An Institutional Argument from the Adaptive Limits of Human Morality

If a case can be made for the stronger[65]argument, then what could be the next practical counter step? The path chosen here is that, to a great extent, the project of stopping climate change should not be left for individuals. Rather, it should be left for a broad array of institutional arrangements that help or force individuals to behave in a manner that either will be productive towards the goal of stopping climate change, or at least not hinder it. This *institutional* approach reflects much of the climate ethics literature that depicts the whole problem as a collective action problem whose solution should be on the level of institutions, not individuals. (For discussion, see Fragnière 2016, 808–809.) Institutional approaches go against what could be called individualist approaches as guiding theories for stopping climate change. The driving force behind the individualist approaches is the idea that allowing people to follow their preferences will eventually help stopping climate change, because people do not prefer a climate catastrophe. They put a lot of faith in human ability to grasp climate change and gain enough motivation to ward off overriding, more short-term motivations like economic growth or merely opting for some immediately satisfiable desire.

A full argument of the former, institutional kind could be called an *institutional argument from the adaptive limits of human morality*. It goes as follows:

[65] Or the strongest, if Haidt's account is correct.

1) Anthropogenic climate change ought to be stopped.
2) Relying on intuition does not support stopping climate change.
3) Relying on reasoning supports stopping climate change better than relying on intuition.
4) Therefore, if having to choose between relying on intuition and relying on reasoning on stopping climate change, one ought to rely on reasoning.
5) However, individuals do not rely mostly on reasoning.
6) If relying on intuition does not support stopping climate change and if individuals often fail to rely on reasoning, then it should not be left for individuals to stop climate change.
7) Thus, it should not be left for individuals to stop climate change.
8) Institutional approaches are more likely to rely on reasoning.
9) Therefore, institutional approaches should be preferred over individualist approaches for stopping climate change.

It should be noted that this argument is not very general. It does not mean that all intuitions are unreliable, or that people should be governed in most aspects of their lives. Intuition can be very reliable in everyday moral problems, especially those that have the Me versus Us structure Greene (2013, 294) described. However, even in some Me versus Us type problems, control has been externalized to different institutions. Institutional approaches hold the promise that they could be carefully designed to overcome the flaws in human nature. There is nothing spectacular in this. There are many institutional designs already in place that function like that. For example, the state monopoly on violence aims to ensure that public order is maintained without impassion, justly, and impartially. It keeps people from turning into vigilantes, dealing justice out of anger or vengeance. For the victim, the law can sometimes feel insufficient: "They stole and crashed my beloved car and only get a small fine, that is outrageous! They should be hanged for it!" But when the situation is less personal, a similar judgment can feel sufficient: "Teenagers do stupid things and its good we don't put them to prison for their first or minor offences." However, this does not mean that institutional designs are always good, just, or benign. They can reflect the very worst and lowest points of human nature. For example, there can be institutions planned with careful reasoning and designed with the sole purpose of upholding xenophobic or racist structures. These kinds of institutions could steer our behaviour to make us do or allow morally horrible things. In those cases, being a product of reasoning is not their redeeming quality – quite the contrary.

So, nothing guarantees that institutional approaches are always good, but that is not what is claimed in the argument. The claim is that they should be

preferred over individualist approaches in the context of climate change of having to choose between the two. Being based on reason and being an institution does not guarantee a good outcome. Yet, institutional approaches, I argue, are the best bet – but nevertheless they are a bet. However, as we have seen, reason can overcome some of the human flaws, and institutions can better maintain whatever good outcomes of reasoning there are than individuals can be expected to achieve on a daily basis.

There is an additional worry related to the process of creating institutions. Their independence of intuition and reliance on reasoning takes effect only after they are set. But what if their creators do not reliably rely on reasoning? This is indeed a problem, especially if Haidt's account is correct. Again, there is only the very meagre hope that they are guided by reasoning, or intuitions supportive of efficient climate action. Such intuitions obviously are not impossible to obtain, as some people clearly do obtain them. The hope with institutional approaches is that the process of designing institutions itself offers a moment of clarity after which it does not matter if that clarity does not persist. Institutions can be a way of pre-committing (Elster 1979) people for certain values when there is a high probability that later they will not act on them otherwise. This option is considered in the next section.

5.2.3. Institutional Approaches and Self-Binding

In *Ulysses and the Sirens: Studies in Rationality and Irrationality*, Jon Elster (1979) discusses the rationality of self-binding or pre-committing oneself, that is, the idea that people could stop themselves from doing something bad or undesirable later by binding or pre-committing themselves in the present moment. A typical example of this is handing over your car keys to you friends before a party if you know that you have a bad habit of drunk driving. This is the appeal of institutional approaches. If it is very probable that later, in their everyday lives, people will continue with their climate harmful behaviour, it would make much sense to design institutions in a way that makes less harmful behaviour possible, easier, or more probable, or harmful behaviour impossible, more difficult, or less probable. These approaches could include a wide array of designs from sanctions and regulations to incentives and nudges.

To discuss the idea of precommitting oneself, Elster takes the tale of Ulysses and the Sirens as a case example. Ulysses wanted to hear the singing of the Sirens, but he had heard the stories that the singing would tempt sailors to their doom. Wanting to hear the song, nevertheless, Ulysses had his crew put beeswax in their ears and tie him to the ship's mast, so that the crew would not

get tempted, and he could safely hear the singing. Ulysses had sufficient knowledge to make the decision to let the crew tie him up. He knew that other sailors could not resist the Sirens, and that he was also, after all, a human being with the same human flaws. He had basic knowledge about human psychology, knowledge about the history of others being tempted by the Sirens and he realized that he was similar enough to the other sailors to be in danger if he heard the song. Knowing all this, it was rational for Ulysses to precommit himself by getting tied to a mast. (Elster 1979, 36–47.) In some sense, restricting one freedom he could safely enjoy another freedom – to hear the song of the sirens without a fear of a violent death.

Analogously, would it be rational for contemporary people to allow their behaviour to be restricted to avoid harming the environment, and through that, themselves? Should people be required to consent to precommitting themselves to more ambitious climate action? With the moral psychological notions discussed in this dissertation, a strong case can be made for this. People have tribalistic tendencies and they do not usually rely on reason. There is enough evidence to make an inference from the general to the particular: if most humans are not able to resist temptations that contribute to excess greenhouse gases, and I am like most humans, then I am not able to resist the temptations, either. This can be followed with a *Ulyssean inference* that without self-binding I will cause serious harm to myself and others, and if I want to avoid causing serious harm to myself and others, I ought to self-bind myself.

It should be noted that this view is not as radical as it may sound at the onset. Societies are full of widely accepted coercion for the good of the people. Sanctioned use of seatbelts and bicycle helmets, or higher taxes on cigarettes, alcohol, and sugary food items, are common and not highly controversial. A smoker might economically benefit from lower taxes on nicotine products, but simultaneously they themselves may accept that it is good that the taxes are high if that decreases smoking or prevents others from starting to smoke.

There are two important limitations with this approach of supporting the institutional approaches. The first is that not all acts of emitting greenhouse gases are avoidable nor a result of following some temptation. Here, Shue's (1993) distinction between luxury and subsistence emissions is again particularly useful. It was not necessary for Ulysses' survival to hear the Sirens, quite the opposite, so the experience would probably count as a luxury of adventure. An important part of greenhouse gas emissions, on the other hand, do not come from pursuing luxuries in life, but rather from satisfying basic needs. Hence, if the Ulyssean inference grants any support for institutional

approaches, it is mostly targeted to those that limit *excess* luxury greenhouse gas emissions.

Second, an important difference between the cases of Sirens and climate change is that *no* person could resist the Sirens' song, not even Ulysses despite being a great hero, but there are *some* people who in fact can and do resist the temptation of emitting *excess* greenhouse gases. Ulysses could deduce his solution from an essential human feature, namely that it is not humanely possible to resist the Sirens. But the Ulyssean inference in the case of climate change is based on induction. The moral psychological information available is not essentialist, but statistical. Further, it seems that many people do not believe they are like most people when it comes to rationality of their life decisions. They feel rational enough to make up their own mind, and do not feel the need for state interference in their everyday lives. The wisdom of Ulysses is not that easily shared.[66] People do not accept the rationality of allowing binding themselves if they do not see any need to bind oneself. This potentially quite unfounded belief in one's abilities was one of the reasons folk views were rejected from the background theories of ordinary morality in section 3.3.1.

Elster (1979) discusses Ulysses and self-binding from the point of view of rationality and irrationality, but there is yet another lesson to be learned from Ulysses, concerning the morality of self-binding actions. It could be claimed that Ulysses would have acted immorally if he had not ordered the crew to bind him to the ship's mast.[67] Additionally, one could claim that the crew would have been justified in forcefully binding Ulysses to protect themselves. While Ulysses could deal with certainties, the argument from the adaptive limits of human morality deals with probabilities. It seems highly unlikely that intuition is reliable, or that reason is followed consistently. But taking risks and avoiding risks is something moral philosophy can easily operate with. Suppose Ulysses did not allow himself to be tied to the mast and nevertheless wanted to hear the Sirens. He could have steered the ship and all its crew to their doom. If it was morally wrong of Ulysses to take the risk, then analogously, it might be wrong of people to take the risk of steering the planet to its doom.

[66] On the other hand, Ulysses himself *was* an exception to the fact that no had heard safely the song of the Sirens. Perhaps some of the people who do resist the temptation of excessive CO2 emissions have found Ulyssean ways to counter those temptations.

[67] A further point to consider is that Ulysses had no right to take such risks in the first place. An adventurous lifestyle that puts people in great danger could be morally condemned. Similar claims can be made of the lifestyle that causes climate change, although an account that allows as many options as possible to the agent (e.g., adventurous lifestyle) that can be safely enjoyed is more compatible with ordinary morality.

There is a lot to be said about Ulysses and Elster's discussion on the topic, but here it suffices to notice that the institutional approaches can be supported from moral grounds similar to Ulysses' case. It is not only wise or rational to know one's flaws and identify situations where one is foreseeably going to give into temptation, but also morally required in many circumstances, especially those that disproportionately risk the wellbeing of others. Accordingly, people might, for example during elections, collectively share the Ulyssean wisdom and vote for candidates who promise to bind them from behaving in a climate irresponsible way.[68] This is highly compatible with Caney's (2014, 134–135) second order climate responsibilities, namely the responsibility to act in ways that support people's first order responsibilities which directly concern mitigating, adapting to, or compensating climate change.

If the institutional argument from the adaptive limits of human morality succeeds, a reasonable follow-up question is what the role of individuals is, other than voting every now and then. Especially if coupled with the idea that an individual's actions are inconsequential (Sinnott-Armstrong 2005), bar those of some extraordinary people with more resources or higher emissions, there is nothing much left for average individuals to do regarding climate change except comply with whatever institutional designs the institutional approaches produce.[69]

On the other hand, such compliance is not passive or easy. Firstly, second order responsibilities for creating and realising such institutional designs apply and must be actively pursued. But secondly, even after they are in place, people must allow the institutions to do their work. There should not be unbinding in the middle of the process. This is not as easy as it sounds. Some people might have to give up their livelihoods. Some people may not be able to live in the rural or otherwise far-off places where they have built their entire identities.

[68] This is not to claim that people would vote like that, or that politicians would pursue these goals even when elected to pursue them. This is merely a claim about justification and moral reasons that support the institutional approaches. The practical challenge with this institutional argument from the adaptive limits of human morality is how to get people to implement the self-binding institutional solutions to the climate problem. This is not a problem for philosophy to solve, but what philosophy can do is to show that such approach is justified and based on solid reasoning. Further, in the form of a practical syllogism, if there is a duty to stop climate change, it can be shown that there is a duty to pursue these institutional solutions. Stringent climate policies that effectively steer people's behaviour is not only justified and reasonable, but also morally required.

[69] There may still be moral reasons to leave some decisions up to the individuals, like having children, even if these decisions had major impact on climate change.

Protests against rising fuel prices demonstrate that many people are not ready to give up on these things. For them, compliance implies more costs, more difficulties in their everyday lives, and more restrictions in the options on how they want to live their lives. These are all demandingness factors that should be considered.[70]

It is worth examining how ethics operate in extreme but constant circumstances. Suppose climate scientists learn that a 0,1 degree increase in global average temperature will melt the Siberian permafrost after which the only possible scenario is a hot-house Earth scenario, the worst possible case. It would truly mark a climate emergency, but it would not work similarly to normal emergencies because the changes in circumstances and the ensuing state of emergency would be permanent. People would still have to find ways to carry on with their everyday activities in a climate emergency. From the point of view of moral demandingness, interesting things are bound to happen in either case. If the ICE principles (discussed in 3.3.2. and 3.4.4.) kick in and some sort of emergency ethics is applied, a lot of (even voluntary) individual sacrifices may become more easily justifiable, among other novel requirements or restrictions. But if the criteria for an emergency are not met, ordinary morality must be able to somehow respond to the catastrophe. This, however, goes against the second input commitment to non-excessive moral demands. From the perspective of the reflective equilibrium process, this can be problematic. This problem will be discussed in the following part.

5.3. The Reflective Equilibrium Analysis

This section will conclude the main methodological thread of this dissertation, the reflective equilibrium analysis. I will unpack the contents of ordinary morality in the context of climate, identified throughout the dissertation. This will be done in three levels of reflective equilibrium, that is, the level of background theories, principles, and considered judgments. I will take the reflective equilibrium analysis as a basis for arguing for a new point of equilibrium that is more suitable for addressing climate change, and thus better respects the first input commitment that climate change ought to be stopped.

The suggested definition of ordinary morality holds that ordinary morality is a common-sensical and moderate orientation towards morality that sets

[70] This form of self-binding with climate policies can also reduce demandingness compared to individualist approaches, as individuals do not have to take on the challenge of stopping climate change all by themselves. Once efficient climate policies are in place, people can focus on living their everyday lives.

boundaries to what moral theories and prescriptions may demand from ordinary people in ordinary circumstances. The role and scope of common sense, especially in so far as it concerns the reliability of intuition, is discussed from the perspective of background theories in section 5.3.1., and the moral psychological limitations to common sense are discussed from the perspective of considered judgments in section 5.3.3. The moderate nature of ordinary morality is discussed as part of moral theoretical components pertaining to background theories in 5.3.1. and as characteristics of ordinary morality's key principles in section 5.3.2. The boundaries inherent to ordinary morality are discussed as part of background theories in 5.3.1. Background theories also give insights into the ordinariness of ordinary people and ordinary circumstances, especially through climate science and moral psychology.

The analysis will begin on the level of background theories because acknowledging climate change and its perils is where ordinary morality begins to unwind. This way climate change is an effective stress test. It shows where theoretical structures start to leak first. Incorporating the scientifically informed views on climate science and moral psychology into background theories will cause tremors throughout the structure, up until the point where the theoretical cost of maintaining certain beliefs all the way down to considered judgments is too high. As ordinary morality trembles, a new point of equilibrium not only becomes reachable, but necessary to avoid collapsing ordinary morality into extremism or minimalism.

The final subsection proceeds to compare the initial and resulting position for ordinary morality. I argue that the stress test of climate change reveals that the initial position has some major problems that the new position does not have. The key issue is ordinary morality's fact-sensitivity in changing circumstances. The upshot of this is that now there are more tools for arguing for more effective, even radical, climate ethics and compliance to climate policies following suite without having to face a demandingness objection or even running against ordinary morality.

What motivates ordinary morality and gives it strength is its sobering, anchoring effect on morality. It makes morality more sensible. But if one can work from *within* ordinary morality and make the shift in the point of equilibrium suggested in this section, it can be shown that either 1) such sensible ordinary morality is not altogether possible in the challenging circumstances of climate change, or 2) that ordinary morality remains a sensible option but allows radical, extremely demanding measures *because* of threats caused by climate change.

5.3.1. Background Theories

Background theories can include theories about morality, the world, humans, and other theoretical notions that grant certain characteristics, like moderation, to belief systems. Let us start with the moral theoretical background theories for this research. As discussed in section 3.3.1., ordinary morality generally gravitates towards moderation about morality, as opposed to moral minimalism and extremism. Morality should not require excess sacrifices and should be fit for ordinary people in ordinary circumstances. For instance, it is not a professional ethic with a specific set of principles suitable for carrying out the special duties related to some profession. (See Martin 1981.) Ordinary morality does not accept full impartiality, and resists maximizing as a goal of morality. It leaves room for options and includes constraints on what can be permissibly pursued in the name of morality. (Kagan 1989, 9; Berkey 2016, 3026.) Relating to this, a class of supererogatory and suberogatory acts is very compatible with ordinary morality. This class was briefly discussed in chapter two as a concept closely related to demandingness. Interestingly, what counts as supererogatory and suberogatory seems to depend partly on other background theories, and in this case climate science. If climate change and its dangers are not taken seriously enough, doing something about climate change might be morally good but not required, and polluting might be morally bad but not forbidden. Arguably, taking climate change morally more seriously will strip some acts of their supererogatory or suberogatory status.

There is another important general gravitational characteristic of ordinary morality, namely its close ties to common sense, discussed in chapter three. This has implications for the method of reflective equilibrium. At the onset, the theoretical cost of giving up considered judgments that are based on common sense is quite high. In section 4.3., I already mentioned the two strategies: biting the bullet and chasing intuitions. (Greene 2016, 134.) Theoretically, it tends to be costlier to bite the bullet in ordinary morality when extremely demanding moral requirements are made, especially if they do not appear common-sensical.

In section 3.3.1, it was argued that although their seemingly common-sensical character, folk views should not be incorporated into the background theories. The strength of ordinary morality lies, arguably, in its sensibility and ability to anchor morality to common sense. Within such a system, stubborn insistence on folk views does not support ordinary morality but goes against its very spirit. It is supposed to anchor our views so that they are not entirely arbitrary. The background theories in a reflective equilibrium do just that: they ensure that the belief system, even if thoroughly consistent, is compatible with

what is known about the world and people in it. Thus, background theories are a gateway to the world, and this way they have a sobering effect on belief systems. Scientifically informed views have a similar function. The scientific method works against dogmatism and accepts no fixed set of beliefs about the world as a given. From this perspective, folk views are problematic for ordinary morality, and reduce its sensibility instead of enhancing it.

So, it can be argued that ordinary morality would lose much of its sensibility if it denied climate change and its dangers, or if it devalued the best knowledge available and favoured folk views instead. Because the stakes are high, it is sensible to listen to the expert opinion and assume a *scientifically informed view* on the level of background theories. Scientifically informed views offer the notions of the hardest moral storm and adaptive limits of human morality, as discussed throughout chapter 4. The nature of climate change and human abilities to respond to it construe what could be called the hardest moral storm, a combination of Gardiner's (2011a) perfect moral storm and Jamieson's (2014) hardest problem. Additionally, there is a mismatch between human moral psychology and the moral problems people face in the modern environment. Our moral psychology is tribalistic and produces unreliable responses to problems like climate change. (Greene 2013; 2016.) This mismatch constitutes the adaptive limits of human morality.

It was shown that taking the adaptive limits of human morality into account lends support for institutional approaches. It also lends support for two methodological moves. The first is to increase the theoretical cost of maintaining certain considered judgments because they are unreliable in the context of climate change. When conflicting with other beliefs that are not prone to such unreliability, it is better to let the unreliable judgments go. This makes chasing intuitions considerably costlier, and consequently bullet-biting a more viable strategy. The second, related move is upgrading the wide reflective equilibrium into a double-wide version, as suggested by Greene (2016, 140). This gives grounds for eliminating certain considered judgments based on their unreliability. Since unreliable judgments are already costly to maintain, eliminating them benefits the overall belief system.

In section 2.5.3., feasibility was briefly discussed as a concept related to demandingness. It seems plausible to think that ordinary morality includes feasibility constraints. Could the demanding climate policies and the institutional approach be fended off on grounds of feasibility? It seems compatible with ordinary morality to perceive climate policies as utopian, so feasibility constraints would soon kick in if too stringent climate policies are suggested. They are utopian, so they must not be pursued further. However,

climate policies are not necessarily utopian, but rather anti-dystopian. Sure, such policies may require radical political changes, but the radicalness of those changes is the outcome of the radically undesirable conditions of catastrophic climate change. They are like a risky evasive manoeuvre when the only other option is a certain-death crash. Making such manoeuvres in normal circumstances would surely be reckless, but in special circumstances like ours, they are the only sensible move to make if a crash is to be averted. So, even if ordinary morality assumes a very strict set of feasibility constraints, radical climate policies do not count as unfeasible if they are anti-dystopian rather than utopian.

In section 3.4. it was noted that the ordinariness of ordinary people and ordinary circumstances should be assessed in conjunction with each other. Further, moral psychology reveals some important psychological limitations with ordinary people, while climate science informs us about the current ordinary circumstances that we now face. For ordinary circumstances, it is important that climate change is not perceived as an emergency, but as a process that requires changes in behaviour for longer term into the foreseeable future. An emergency can prompt an alternative set of emergency ethics, but people should be able to carry on with their lives throughout climate change. Thus, ordinary morality should be able to operate with climate change. However, acknowledging climate science and the first input commitment that climate change ought to be stopped can produce extreme demands even with moderate principles, because ordinary behaviour in ordinary circumstances contributes to climate change in a negative way, for instance by causing harm to other people distant both in time and place. This causes conflict within the system of ordinary morality, between its regulative and moral principles.

5.3.2. Principles

In this dissertation, the level of principles in reflective equilibrium has been divided into regulative and moral principles. In section 3.3.2., it was noted that, as a bare minimum, ordinary morality subscribes to negative duties like the duty not to harm others. Positive duties like duties of beneficence are less likely to be included, or if they are, they will be applicable only in limited circumstances. (Rajczi 2007.) Positive duties seem to generate extremely demanding moral demands, which seems to make them incompatible with the overall scheme of ordinary morality. The content of the moral principles of ordinary morality reflects its moderate spirit, so that ordinary people in

ordinary circumstances can pursue the kind of life they want as long as it does not harm others, and only in special cases they have a duty to actively aid others.

For a more detailed account on ordinary morality, it is useful to focus on regulative principles. Their function is to regulate the overall demandingness of ordinary morality, again reflecting its moderate spirit. In section 3.3.2., it was noted that typical regulative principles include the ought-implies-can principle, an over-demandingness principle that gives grounds to demandingness objections, and a principle of super-/suberogation. These regulative principles ensure that ordinary morality remains moderate in spirit. They are compatible with the background theories that lay out the general features of ordinary morality, like that agents should have options and are not required to act in entirely impartial good maximizing ways.

The ought-implies-can principle has the important function of ensuring that agents are not morally required to perform acts that are impossible. Here, the 'can' part is of particular interest. In section 2.5.1., it was noted that this limitation concerns most obviously physical impossibility (and of course logical impossibility as well). If a bomb is going to go off on the other side of town in two minutes, and I am the only one with the codes to disarm it, I am not morally obligated to disarm the bomb if it is physically impossible for me to be there on time (if I could, this would arguably be one of those special cases where positive duties apply). Extreme difficulty (and thus costliness) could also count towards 'cannot' and hence 'ought not'. (Griffin 2015, 38–39.) If I would have to walk through a building on fire to disarm the bomb, suffering extreme burns and with a high risk of not surviving from the walk, I might claim that I cannot disarm the bomb. However, it was concluded that for analytical purposes it is better to leave these kinds of considerations under the concept of demandingness and the demandingness objection. If the bomb was set under a children's hospital, the cost of the burns I suffer probably would be proportionate to the death of numerous children, and I would not be morally off the hook. For similar reasons, a psychological 'can', which is a matter of much debate (e.g., see Haji 2002; Griffin 2015), can be dropped from the scope of ought-implies-can and considered under the concept of demandingness. If someone just does not care about children's hospitals and finds it impossible to gain enough motivation to disarm the bomb (whether there are other costs involved), they are not taken to be morally off the hook.

Interestingly for the case of climate change, if the physical impossibility (or the high cost) is self-induced, the ought-implies-can principle does not apply. If someone sets the bomb and immediately regrets it, they are not morally excused if they cannot disarm the bomb, even if this inability makes it impossible to

disarm it. Similarly, people knowingly contribute to climate change, and even if it is impossible for them to stop climate change, they are not morally off the hook. Furthermore, arguably people *can* do something to stop climate change – if nothing else then follow their second-order responsibilities – so the ought-implies-can principle does not seem very applicable to many important climate related duties.

The over-demandingness principle that grounds demandingness objections is an integral part of ordinary morality. It ensures that moral demands are moderate. In section 2.2. it was noted that demandingness can be read as costliness that is constituted by pure costs, difficulty, and restrictions of options. (Van Ackeren 2018, 330.) Demandingness objection is an objection against a moral prescription that demands too much in terms of pure costs, difficulty, or restrictions of options. It is triggered by moral prescriptions that cross some threshold or whose costs are disproportional to the benefits. (Van Ackeren and Kühler 2016b.) In sections 2.4.1. and 2.4.2. it was suggested that proportionality might be more useful for assessing demandingness related to climate change.

On reflection, ordinary morality soon runs into trouble when considering the background theories from climate and environmental sciences that report about the state of the world. It turns out that following one's negative duties not to harm others is extremely difficult, if not impossible, in the modern world. Lichtenberg's (2010) notion of New Harms describes this change, even if it has other conceptual issues. In the modern setting, even a moderate principle can be extreme. Berkey's (2016) distinction, however, helps explain this and saves ordinary morality from collapsing into extremism or minimalism. We should distinguish between minimalism/moderation/extremism about principles and minimalism/moderation/extremism about demands. With this distinction, it is possible that moderate or even minimalist principles produce extreme demands in the right conditions.

It was suggested in section 3.3.2. that over-demandingness principle's main target area is governing other principles. Following Berkey's (2016) distinction, principles should remain moderate, but if they happen to produce extreme demands in certain conditions, then this demandingness is seen as a result of those conditions, not the principle itself. In section 3.4.2. this was tested with a thought experiment, the Messy, which showed that it is arbitrary to change a moderate principle only because changed conditions make it difficult and costly to follow the principle. Further, as noted above, self-induced changes in the conditions, as was the case with the Messy, do not let one morally off the hook. Climate change is in many important aspects analogous to the Messy, and

if the moderate principles are now costly to follow only because of climate change, this does not provide reasons for abandoning the principles. It would be equally arbitrary – and self-serving, not to mention most likely morally corrupt – to stop following a principle when the principle is needed the most to guide us back to more morally acceptable conditions. Ordinary morality would lose much of its sensibility if it abandoned its principles when the situation gets tough.

This distinction between principles and demands comes with a high theoretical cost. Suddenly, the moderate character of ordinary morality has to be re-negotiated. Interestingly, the pressure does not come from the outside, but from the principles inherent to ordinary morality. The background theories, which connect the belief system to this world and guard it against arbitrariness, are also a backdoor through which this challenge lurks in. This is a potential stand-off between accepting climate science as a background theory or accepting extreme demands which make ordinary morality lose its gravitation towards moderation. In other words, it is a stand-off between the two input commitments: that climate change ought to be stopped, and that morality cannot be excessively demanding. To solve this impetus, indirect support can be sought from other beliefs in the system. Here the knowledge on the adaptive limits of human morality is incorporated. It provides reasons to think that some considered judgments regarding climate change can be unreliable. Thus, some considered judgments that favour less demanding outcomes might be ruled out. Also, the risk of moral corruption forces a critical analysis on whether opting for moderation is done in a self-serving fashion.

From the point of view of reflective equilibrium, it is important to be able to assign different theoretical costs of maintaining and eliminating beliefs in a belief system. For this purpose, two distinct 'detectors' were identified. The other, discussed in chapter four, can be called the moral corruption detector, named after Gardiner's (2011a) concept of moral corruption. Moral corruption detector sweeps through all levels of reflective equilibrium and asks: is this belief formed in a self-serving way? If it is, is it susceptible to moral corruption? While not outright eliminating such beliefs, it increases the theoretical cost of maintaining such beliefs. Incorporating a moral corruption detector on the level of regulative principles takes into account the moral psychological factors, and the nature of climate change, discussed in chapter four.

The other detector, the theory twister detector, was discussed in section 2.4.2. It was noted that assessing proportionality can be difficult with cases where the desirability of some outcome is extremely high. Arguably the desirability of stopping climate change is extremely high, and consequently,

almost any (effective) sacrifice would be proportionate. This way extremely high desirability can *twist* moral theories and make proportionality assessments difficult. However, it was noted that systematically eliminating extremely desirable outcomes can be done in a self-serving way. It would be just too convenient to eliminate extreme sacrifices required by effective climate action to save ordinary morality from extreme demands. This is where the moral corruption detector, again, should be applied. Even if climate change is suspect of twisting moral theories, which increases the cost of accepting climate related duties, the moral corruption detector could count towards levelling the costs if the accusation is done in a self-serving way. Considering all the troubles climate change brings in a system of ordinary morality, it sure would be handy to get rid of it as a moral issue. The system of ordinary morality could operate perfectly well if it were not for the interruptions of climate ethics. Arguably, this seems like self-serving, morally corrupt reasoning. Furthermore, even if any sacrifice would be proportionate against stopping climate change, assigning thresholds to what can be an acceptable sacrifice in a system of ordinary morality can help eliminate the most extreme sacrifices like sacrificing human lives to prevent the climate crisis. It is plausible that such a threshold would have to be set quite high, however, to respect the input commitment of stopping climate change. Sacrificing everyday commodities, for instance, should not be sufficient to breach the moral threshold.

The moral corruption detector is an important analytic tool for inspecting the plausibility of other principles, background theories, and especially considered judgments. Combined with the idea of adaptive limits of human morality, and the double-wide reflective equilibrium, the moral corruption detector can help eliminate considered judgments that are susceptible to moral corruption, myopia, and tribalism. However, it should be noted that, as with any detector, there can be false alarms. But it is better to have a few false alarms every now and then than no alarm when there is an actual fire. Also, the detectors are just that – they are not regulators (they do not stop fires), but they help keep vigilance about expected problems. If an alarm goes off, the reason for it should be inspected. If there is smoke, there is probably a fire nearby. This is the function of placing a moral corruption detector in a system of moral theory.

This section has demonstrated how difficult it is for ordinary morality to retain its moderate stance under the stress test of climate change. The discussion so far has hinted that a thorough sweep across the level of considered judgments is imminent when the suggested background theories from moral psychology

and climate science are adopted into the system. The next section will take a more systematic look at this outcome.

5.3.3. Considered Judgments

As with moral principles in ordinary morality, it is difficult to assign a fixed set of considered judgments for ordinary morality. The considered judgments that are of particular interest for this dissertation are related to demandingness. The kind of considered judgments I have in mind are judgments like "It is too demanding that I cannot take leisurely Sunday drives" and "It is too demanding that I cannot take a flight to vacation". They are important for problematizing the operational integrity of ordinary morality under the stress test of climate change. The climate stress test shows that efficient climate action may require significant sacrifices that produce a wide array of considered judgments about climate action's demandingness.

In section 3.3.1., it was suggested that the proper target for the regulative over-demandingness principle are other principles. This does not mean that considered judgments are irrelevant for the assessment of some principle's demandingness. How else can we know if a moral principle is over-demanding, if we do not consider what kind of judgments it produces? However, this inspection should be theoretical in the sense that the regulative principle assesses the outcomes a moral principle produces in stable, 'ordinary' circumstances. Of these outcomes, considered judgments about demandingness are formed. A wide enough collection of these demandingness judgments shows that the moral principle is over-demanding and does not cohere with the background theory of ordinary morality's general orientation towards moderation, and the regulative over-demandingness principle. The principle can then be, on reflection, eliminated from the system.

The regulative principle can itself be a result of systematization of demandingness complaints. Of the fact that there are many instances where we intuitively judge that something is far too demanding, ordinary morality has incorporated a systematic principle for detecting and eliminating over-demanding elements from the system.

In summary, problems arise when a previously non-demanding principle starts to produce over-demanding considered judgments. For instance, with something like New Harms emerging, following the moderate no harm principle produces extreme demands. My suggestion is that the demandingness objection is not as readily available as it probably typically is thought to be. There may be a wide collection of considered judgments claiming that some

climate related moral prescription, belief, argument, or theory is overly demanding. . However, as noted in section 3.3.3., instead of triggering demandingness objections, these considered judgments should only be regarded as demandingness complaints on the level of considered judgments. Now, the moral corruption detectors can help reconsider the theoretical cost of maintaining such demandingness judgments. If they are produced in a self-serving way, with a danger of moral corruption, keeping them is theoretically too costly. Or, in other words, the value of such demandingness complaints is set very low. They are *devalued*. Thus, even a large set of similar demandingness objections are not able to 'buy out' the principle. It is like having a wheel barrowful of pennies: it does not matter how many coins you have if you cannot meet the asked price. For initial ordinary morality, the solution would be to discredit the principle that produces such a wide array of demandingness complaints. But in the new point of equilibrium ordinary morality resists this solution, and instead opts for disregarding the considered judgments. It bites the bullet, instead of chasing intuitions. For this move, additional support can be sought from the background theory of adaptive limits of human morality. For instance, the demandingness judgments could be tribalistically biased, or myopic.

5.3.4. Reaching A New Equilibrium

This brings us towards a new point of equilibrium, one that is better suited to answer the input commitment of stopping climate change. However, this will come with a slight trade-off with the second input commitment to non-excessive moral demands. In this section, I will first summarize the new point of equilibrium by reviewing it in terms of Rechnitzer's (2022, 35) reflective equilibrium criteria. This is followed by a comparison of the initial but imbalanced ordinary morality and the new point of equilibrium. Finally, I will discuss some potential implications of the new equilibrium. Reflecting on these, I will provide an explanation why the initial ordinary morality fails to satisfy the criteria, and why the new equilibrium on it succeeds.

To begin, let us return to Rechnitzer's list of criteria for reflective equilibrium, discussed in section 1.5.:

1. "The resulting commitments and the system are in agreement;
2. The resulting commitments and the system are supported by background theories;
3. The system does justice to the relevant theoretical virtues;
4. The resulting commitments respect the input commitments adequately;

5. The resulting commitments have independent credibility; and
6. The resulting position is at least as plausible as all available alternatives." (Rechnitzer 2022, 35, 40.)

The first two criteria are fulfilled. The new point of equilibrium includes a set of beliefs that are in agreement, and the beliefs are consistent and mutually supportive of each other. On different levels, the beliefs should not only be consistent, but also coherent so that they enforce, imply, and explain each other. As discussed in section 3.4.2., in the initial ordinary morality, there was a conflict between principles and demands, as demonstrated by Berkey (2016). On the other hand, the new equilibrium has components that cohere in a desirable way. There are many such mutually supporting and cohering beliefs: The scientifically informed view on background theories allows taking into account moral psychology and climate change. Considering the knowledge provided by these background theories produces new components like the moral corruption detector, and the notion of adaptive limits of human morality. The moderate spirit is exemplified in regulative principles and moral principles. Initially conflicting considered judgments, namely the demandingness complaints, can now be eliminated with the support of background theories. Re-calibrating the over-demandingness principle to target principles instead of judgments supports this move.

But do resulting background theories, principles, and considered judgments respect the input commitments? The new point of equilibrium includes the adaptive limits of human morality, and the hardest moral storm in the background theories. It also includes a moderate orientation and other considerations about options and constraints. Moreover, it is not entirely impartial nor maximizing. This respects the input commitment to non-excessive moral demands. That the new system allows extreme demands in particular cases is not a problem if it can be shown that the sacrifices necessary for stopping climate change are not *excessive*. The demands are not excessive as long as they are necessary to remain respectful of the other input commitment – namely, stopping climate change. So, in summary, I conclude that the fourth criterion is satisfied, even with this slight trade-off between the two commitments. Respecting a commitment does not require following it to the letter. The function of respecting input commitments is to ensure that the project does not change altogether. (Rechnitzer 2022, 25–28.) The process of reaching a new equilibrium did not abandon these commitments, and the project remained the same.

It is criterion three and adhering to it that pulls the point of equilibrium towards more extreme demands. The theoretical virtues of stability and

frugality were respected because the principles were maintained, and the creation of new principles was omitted as far as it was consistent. The theoretical virtue of consistency points out that if climate change is to be taken seriously, it is not consistent to make the moderate features of a background theory too rigid. Moreover, regulative principles must also be laxed to allow more demanding demands. This is done by re-targeting the over-demandingness principle and demandingness objections on the level of other principles rather than considered judgments. The moral corruption detector and adaptive limits of human morality give further reasons to support this adjustment and eliminate conflicting yet intuitive considered judgments about demandingness. These demandingness complaints about climate duties are then either disregarded, or their relevant theoretical cost is adjusted accordingly. Consequently, the new set of considered judgments would have to conclude that it is not over-demanding to sacrifice a great deal more to stop climate change. Even ordinary morality can be costly, difficult, and restrict one's options when followed consistently. Further, the theoretical virtue of frugality requires that no new principles are introduced without a new type of a problem. In section 3.4.4. it was noted that New Harms are not novel in the sense that new principles would be required, and section 4.4.4. added that the moral psychological unfamiliarity of climate change nor its non-paradigm moral problem structure does not require new principles, either. The no harm principle does not require a replacing principle for climate change, and thus it keeps producing extreme demands. Rechnitzer (2022, 31) notes that doing justice to the relevant theoretical virtues can pull to the other direction from the input commitments. This ensures that the equilibrium is not overly conservative, and adequate reflection has occurred. This pulling-away effect is evident in my account, and the third criterion is satisfied.

Resulting commitments have independent credibility, as they gain support from background theories. The gravity of change and human moral psychological features support the claims that more extreme demands can be necessary, and moral judgments regarding more moderate demands can be morally corrupt. Further, the resulting commitments work towards *saving* ordinary morality from collapsing into minimalism or extremism. The argument developed throughout section 5.2. goes to show that the resulting commitments can also stand in argumentation and give action-guiding normative prescriptions. Thus, the resulting commitments have independent credibility.

The last criterion, the sixth, is tricky. What are the suitable alternative positions this revised ordinary morality should be compared to? Normative

ethical theories like consequentialism would not provide a fitting comparison, because they are pursued on another level of inquiry. As noted in section 3.2., plausibility of such theories is often evaluated against ordinary morality. The best candidates might then be moral extremism and minimalism. It might well be the case that ordinary morality is not the best account for responding effectively to climate change. An extremist position might just do a better job and be more consistent. I believe the institutional argument from the adaptive limits of human morality could well be pursued from the extremist position, and the exploration of how morally far-gone the world is (in the next section) could also remain more or less the same. The two other threads are, in this sense, independent of ordinary morality that I discuss from the perspective of reflective equilibrium. The input commitment, that climate change must be stopped, could still be followed. But it is respecting the other commitment, that morality should not be over-excessive, that the extremist position fails to accomplish. Minimalism, on the other hand, is not generally considered plausible. (E.g., see Berkey 2016, n26.) It fails at respecting both commitments, as it does not arguably respect the commitment to stopping climate change, and it only delivers insufficient moral demands.

A plausible alternative might then be another moderate account on morality. Firstly, it cannot be ruled out that there could be positions that take an altogether different starting point than ordinary morality. Second, one could proceed to a wholly other direction with a different set of background theories, and the result would be more plausible than the one posited here. For the former, it should be noted that taking an entirely different road is not compatible with the goal of this dissertation. The goal was to show that ordinary morality, as commonly perceived, does not adequately respond to climate change, but from the initial set of beliefs typical to ordinary morality a new point of equilibrium can be reached where there is more room for effective climate action. For the latter, there is not much more to say than that this option remains open. However, it is not a problem because this is the nature of the method of reflective equilibrium. It leaves things open. Perhaps another position can be developed that fulfils the criteria and is more plausible than the one that I offer here. But to be similar enough, it should respect the input commitment of stopping climate change. However, in case respecting this commitment requires extensive sacrifices from the individual, I suspect the position would not be too different from the one suggested here. And even if it was equally plausible to the new reflective equilibrium, it remains to show that it is *more* plausible, to satisfy the sixth criterion. It is enough for the last criterion that there are no better competing positions in sight.

It is worth considering a while longer an alternative moderate position that would be even better suited for respecting the second commitment, the non-excessiveness of morality. This alternative requires changing background theories. Suppose that there would be a technological solution to climate change. Let us call the solution *Sampo*, after a piece of machinery from Finnish mythology that can create endless riches. With *Sampo*, climate change and many other modern problems could be met without any sacrifice. In this case, background theories regarding climate change would be very different. The need for great sacrifices to stop climate change would not arise (assuming that the riches would be distributed in a correct way), and the initial depiction of ordinary morality could remain intact. Or suppose that it would be possible to biomedically enhance humans so that another aspect of background theories, namely the adaptive limits of human morality, could be erased. An idea like this has been defended by Ingmar Persson and Julian Savulescu (2012) in their *Unfit for the Future*. People with less ill-equipped moral psychology for responding to modern problems might solve these problems either without much sacrifice, or they might not judge the necessary sacrifices to be over-demanding. The problem with the first approach is that even with *Sampo*, ordinary morality should be able to survive a conceptual stress test. It is not unimaginable that at some point we would lose *Sampo*,[71] that it does not provide sufficient resources for newly acquired needs, or that there are catastrophic problems that *Sampo* cannot fix. Could ordinary morality operate in such circumstances? The problem with the second option, enhancing humans, is that it is not clear whether people would agree to such moral enhancement. From their unenhanced perspective, they would still have to sacrifice a great deal. The demandingness complaints against human enhancement would probably be quite similar to the possible complaints against institutional approaches. Also, there is no reason to include these options in our background theories because neither approach is yet available. The climate stress test is already upon us, unlike these technological solutions.

So, I conclude that the new equilibrium satisfies the six criteria by Rechnitzer (2022, 35). One additional comparison can still be made. To see the length covered from the initial ordinary morality and the new point of equilibrium, I have collected the different beliefs relevant to ordinary morality in the following table. I have marked the differing beliefs in *italics*.

[71] Like the people of Pohjola lost it in Kalevala.

Table 3:

Points of Equilibrium	**Initial Ordinary Morality**	**New Point of Equilibrium**
Background theories	-Scientifically informed views -Classes of supererogatory and suberogatory acts exist -Method of wide reflective equilibrium, theoretical cost of biting bullets is high	-Scientifically informed views • *moral psychology: the adaptive limits of human morality* • *climate ethics: the hardest moral storm* -A class of supererogatory and suberogatory acts exists -Method of *double*-wide reflective equilibrium, *theoretical cost of chasing intuitions is high*
Moral Principles Proper	-No Harm principle as a minimal principle in unfamiliar and paradigm moral cases	-No Harm Principle as a minimum principle *in all cases*
Regulative Principles	-Demandingness Objections about Principles and Demands -OIC -Reactive stance: Principles Falter During Stress Test	-Demandingness Objections *about Principles* -OIC *-Moral Corruption Detector* *-Theory Twister Detector* *-Principled stance*: Principles Endure During Stress Test
Considered Judgments	- Demandingness Complaints: Normal value	*- Demandingness Complaints: Devalued*

The initial ordinary morality fails at fulfilling the six reflective equilibrium criteria discussed above. As we have seen, there are conflicts between the regulative principles, moral principles, the moderate background theory, and the considered judgments. The new point of reflective equilibrium remains an

account on ordinary morality, because it did not introduce new principles or discard old ones. Rather, it re-calibrated them. This was ensured by doing justice to the theoretical virtues of stability and frugality. The most radical changes occurred on the level of considered judgments, because now extreme demands can be made in particular cases. But this follows from ordinary morality's principles, again respecting the theoretical virtue of consistency.

In the above table, the background theories of initial ordinary morality and the new point of reflective equilibrium differ mostly in how much details are taken into account. Both accept the scientifically informed view on background theories, but the initial position has not yet considered particular aspects of climate change, like its complexity and the ensuing grasping problem, or moral psychology, like the adaptive limits of human morality. The difference is presented this way to highlight the active steps taken towards the new equilibrium, and how it acknowledges these details and their implications. Further, the double-wide reflective equilibrium is marked as a methodological specialty of the new position to highlight a similar point of departure from the initial position, and how unreliable intuitions are accounted for.

The two positions operate differently under the climate stress test. The principles in the new point of equilibrium do not falter against changes in the world. This respects the theoretical virtue of consistency but raises a difficult question of the proper origins of principles. From the perspective of reflective equilibrium, what is the entry point for reflecting, re-negotiating, and assessing different beliefs? To what circumstances are they negotiated for? Ordinary morality seems to lose its 'ordinariness' if the principles are not designed for the current ordinary circumstances. The initial ordinary morality does not have to answer this problem, as it seems to respond to changes in the circumstances. But as was demonstrated, this can lead to ordinary morality's collapse into minimalism, making it unstable. The answer could be that the new point of equilibrium connects to the current circumstances through background theories but is more conservative about principles than considered judgments. It opts for bite the bullet strategies. This way it dodges the problems of chasing unreliable intuitions, as is the case with initial ordinary morality.

A possible answer to the entry point might be found from the level of background theories. If some of our considered judgments are unreliable because of their mismatch with the current environment, perhaps the entry point should be somewhere closer to the environment of evolutionary adaptedness. What kind of moral problems did early hunter-gatherers face? This speculative approach and its problems were already touched upon in section 3.4.3.1., but it is an interesting thought experiment to test some moral

principles from this perspective. Let us re-consider Singer's principle and its demandingness, for a moment. The typical reaction to it is that it is overly demanding. While in some test cases like the shallow pond case it functions without problems, when iterated in a more global context, it produces a wide array of demandingness complaints. But the new point of equilibrium takes a more theoretical approach to assessing principles. If we assume that the most ordinary circumstances for ordinary people were those of hunter-gatherers in the Pleistocene era, we might get a completely different set of demandingness judgments. To call these the ordinary circumstance for humans is not so far-fetched, since we have lived in modern, radically different circumstances for only a tiny fraction of our species' existence. Further, our moral psychology adapted to those circumstances, so humans might be better matched to respond to the problems peculiar to the Pleistocene hunter-gatherers. It should be noted that the changes discussed here do not mean that people encounter novel problems by type, but by degree or structure. As noted in section 4.4.4., unfamiliarity does not imply the need for new principles. The theoretical virtues of stability and frugality hold that new principles should be formed sparingly, and in this case, there is no need for new principles. The old ones will do, they just produce more extreme demands.

Arguably, Singer's principle would mostly encounter shallow pond type problems in EEA and answer them satisfyingly. There were no technological means, no globalization, or even enough people in the world to produce circumstances where the principle produced strikingly extreme demands. Quite the opposite, it was probably quite rare to get the chance to save another person's life easily and without sacrificing something of comparable moral value. Singer's principle works perfectly well in extraordinary circumstances, but only due to their limited appearance. In ordinary circumstances, it also seems and feels as if these cases are rare: For many people, the massive amount of death and suffering in the world remains emotionally and socially distant. A duty to help is not an overarching, all-consuming principle, but rather a fail-safe principle in case something bad happens. Singer (1972, 231) notes that the principle is almost deceptively uncontroversial, at least when considered in isolation and with singular cases, and considered in the abovementioned circumstances the principle seems rather uncontroversial.

In this sense, ordinary morality is a *human* morality, and its principles fit for humans as a species. It has a *principled* stance, one that does not falter easily when the circumstances change, especially if the change occurs organically, incrementally, and is of our own making, like in the case of climate change or the Messy in chapter three. The initial ordinary morality is, perhaps, 21st

century morality, or industrialized morality. It has a *reactive* stance. Its principles falter more easily. In the next section, we will see how this kind of reactive stance is problematic for ordinary morality.

5.4. The Exploration

This section concludes the explorative thread of this dissertation. Thus far I have argued that there are practical reasons not to leave it to individuals, but rather to institutions to tackle climate change. The different institutional designs can bind people similar to Ulysses had himself tied by the crew to the ship's mast so that he could not give in to temptations he knew he could not resist. Individuals then ought to promote those institutions, and when they are in place, comply with them. This may require much sacrifice. Even ordinary morality, in its new point of equilibrium, can require institutional self-binding if it is necessary for stopping climate change. The strength of the institutional argument made in part one, and the need for pushing the reflective equilibrium process towards more demanding morality, both result from changes in the world. The last part of this dissertation will focus on exploring how the world has changed. It will be suggested that the world has become morally 'far gone', and this has many implications for moral theory.

How can ordinary morality respond to these changes? In the first chapter, this dissertation set itself two input commitments for the reflective equilibrium process. The first one was that climate change must be stopped. To respect this methodological commitment the resulting position should have the tools necessary to respond adequately to climate change. I believe that the new point of equilibrium can hold on to this commitment. The second commitment was that morality should not be exceedingly demanding. Excess can be linked to proportionality. Even great sacrifices, if necessary, are not excessive against the goal of saving the future of this planet and humanity therein. Nevertheless, there is a tension between the commitment to non-excessive demands and ordinary morality and the current state of the world. Instead of taking a reactive stance and changing the contents of ordinary morality, ordinary morality should be more principled and try to change the circumstances in the world. Its goal is a homeostasis where ordinary people may live in less demanding ordinary circumstances.

To better understand this goal, we will first discuss what the worst conditions would be like in a 'broken world' (Mulgan 2011). Moral theories in a broken world are very different from ours, as the conditions are radically different. This contrast provides a good viewpoint for an analysis of ordinary

morality's relation to the world. Then, the idea of fact-sensitivity from political philosophy is discussed. To what extent is the principled stance for ordinary morality fact-sensitive? Finally, the status of the world as morally far gone is described, and its implications will be explored. Perceiving the world as morally far gone can provide a diagnosis of the tension between ordinary morality and the commitment to non-excessive demands and give guidance for a way forward.

5.4.1. Broken World, Fact-Sensitivity, and Ordinary Morality

In *Ethics for a Broken World*, Tim Mulgan (2011) presents an intriguing thought experiment of a philosophy class in a broken future. From their perspective, the moral and political philosophy of the so-called *age of affluence* – the world we live in now, at the time of writing this – is highly problematic. After all, it was the moral and political beliefs of the age of affluence that led to the broken world. If a time traveller from the broken future visited the present affluent time, the most striking features would be natural abundance (e.g., enough water and food) and social affluence (plenty of wealth but distributed unevenly, so in reality there are only pockets of affluence) (Mulgan 2011, 2–5.) Widely shared philosophical assumptions in the age of affluence are that the conditions are favourable for satisfying everyone's needs, and optimism in progress that will make the future people better off. (Mulgan 2011, 11–12.)

Even with already present climate change, social inequality, and world poverty, the current generation does not yet inhabit a broken world. An important difference between this and the broken world is that the Humean general conditions of justice apply: People are limitedly altruistic or egoistic, and, more importantly, scarcity is only moderate. In the broken future, people live in extreme scarcity. There are not enough resources for everyone, and thus the moral systems of the future must consider things like survival bottlenecks and survival lottery. In the broken future, it cannot be taken for granted that everyone can and will survive. A key difference between the broken future and the affluent era seems to be that the conditions of justice have changed. (Mulgan 2011, 11, 15.)

According to Mulgan, things that would be seen as morally monstrous in the age of affluence are normal practice in the broken future. For instance, because of extreme scarcity, survival lotteries would not only be acceptable but necessary, and conducting them in a just way would be a major issue for political philosophy. In the age of affluence, the idea of survival lottery could not be entertained in the first place. (Mulgan 2011, 10–11.) From the perspective

of reflective equilibrium, something must have changed in the background theories of the broken future. Knowing that there is not enough to go around would force people to re-consider many of their principles. Considered judgments would also have to change. It is safe to assume that *their* ordinary morality would look very different from ours, if there could be any ordinary morality in the first place. The question that follows naturally is: Has the world already changed so that moral systems should fundamentally change, too? Brian Berkey (2014, 176) writes that the conditions that leave the future with a broken world might not be ordinary at all. However, there are important and deep differences between the broken world and the world we inhabit now that suggest the world is still 'ordinary'.

It seems that the broken future and age of affluence harbour different systems of (ordinary) morality, and different kinds of intuitions. The thought experiment demonstrates how moral philosophy can be fact-sensitive, that is, sensitive to (fundamental) changes in the world. The issue of fact-sensitivity is a central debate in political philosophy. Laura Valentini (2017) describes the two opposite positions as utopophobes and factophobes. The former hold that political philosophy should be highly fact-sensitive, tailored for this world. Further, its main project is not to describe utopias but to show what kind of political arrangements are best suited for the world as it is. The latter are less fact-sensitive, and they endorse the project of describing ideal political arrangements from which we can learn a great deal. The world, then, should strive to realize those arrangements. At the extreme, the factophobes are like a crew of political scientists on a spaceship, coming up with abstract principles that could be applied to any conditions they may encounter on different planets. (Miller 2013, 18.) The same question, and similar positions, are relevant for moral philosophy, as well. To which direction – factophobia or utopophobia – does ordinary morality pull?

For ordinary morality sketched here, it is the principled stance that seems to pull towards factophobia. After all, it gives relative independence for principles against considered judgments. But, on the other hand, the principled stance is derived from a system that is heavily influenced by background theories. It resists the fluidity of a more reactive stance. Just like the Messy (see section 3.4.2.), the current generation is not excused from following moderate principles only because following them is contingently extremely demanding. This principled ordinary morality finds itself from somewhere between the two extremes. Its principles follow from general facts about the world, and from human moral psychology. It is not an entirely abstract system suitable for any circumstances, like the spaceship political scientists, but for humans as they are,

on planet Earth. An important difference between the background theories is that in a broken world, the conditions of justice have changed because of extreme scarcity. Arguably, that is a breaking point where even the principled stance would falter. But now that we find ourselves in extremely demanding yet ordinary circumstances of ordinary conditions of justice, the principles resist change. In fact, this gives a certain goal for ordinary morality – to return things back to ordinary. Without this principled stance, ordinary morality could not navigate in the perfect moral storm, as it would change its course all too easy, losing sight of its destination.

Mulgan's story of a broken future is a warning, but it also holds hope for the present. The world is not yet broken. It is merely morally far gone. The conditions of justice have not changed due to extreme scarcity. This gives direction for ordinary morality. A broken future and the moral tragedies therein must be averted. The new point of equilibrium allows the kind of moves necessary for avoiding it, installing institutions that steer us away from it. Additionally, ordinary morality gives clues about what the world should be like. We should aim towards circumstances where ordinary people can live ordinary lives, without morality being excessively demanding. Again, this is not utopian, but anti-dystopian. In the next section, I will assess ways for measuring the distance to circumstances where ordinary life is easy, and for determining how far gone the world is.

5.4.2. A Morally Far-Gone World

'Far-goneness' is to a great extend an empirical notion as it depends on factual conditions of the world. However, *moral* far-goneness is determined by the demandingness of following one's basic duties, like those compatible with ordinary morality, due to the changing circumstances of the world. I will define moral far-goneness in the following way: From the perspective of positive duties, the world is morally far-gone when a significant proportion of people fall under the threshold of being able to satisfy their basic needs while a significant proportion of people are able to help those under the threshold without sacrificing something morally nearly as possible. The greater the distance, and the greater the number of people under the threshold relative to those able to help, the more morally far-gone the world is.

Thus, that world is morally far-gone does not mean that it is like Mulgan's (2011) broken world with conditions of absolute scarcity and survival lotteries. The world can be bountiful but remain far-gone if the distance between the rich and the poor is great enough. The distortion of how resources are distributed

contributes to the far-goneness of the world, and, perhaps oddly, the ability to help. Again, if we take Singer's principle as an example, and consider the demandingness of following that principle in a hunter-gatherer society 75 000 years ago, and following the same principle now, we see the immense increase in demandingness of following that principle. While the absolute number of goods has soared rapidly, this has not benefited a great proportion of world population. The modern affluent, 'ordinary' people enjoy the riches of medieval kings, but simultaneously many people struggle to meet even their basic needs. (Singer 2009, 9.) In some sense, this is a positive problem, because it indicates that humanity is materially better-off than it used to be. We are in a unique position to stop famine and help ease much of the suffering in the world.

From the perspective of negative duties, the world's moral far-goneness depends objectively on how difficult it is to satisfy one's basic needs without harming others, and subjectively on how difficult it is to go about one's daily routines, living an 'ordinary life', without harming others. With New Harms, the ability to harm strangers distant both in time and place, it is increasingly difficult to do almost anything without violating the no harm principle. The Messy showed how things can become morally far-gone on a more limited scale. The simple, moderate mess principle turned extremely demanding because the world was changed, like the way the world is changed by humans causing climate change.

The reflective equilibrium process showed how the initial ordinary morality had trouble responding to these changes, but ordinary morality in its new point of equilibrium seems to perform better. Its principles do not falter as easily, and it allows extreme demands, especially when the change of conditions is of our own making. Moral far-goneness is a diagnosis of this sudden extremity of demands.

In some sense, the encompassing theme for the present generation is letting go. If the current way of life is indeed unsustainable, the present generation must let go of many comforts and luxuries they take for granted. If they refuse to do so, they must, in turn, let go of having safe and healthy environments. In the long run this will likely lead to their comforts and luxuries diminishing in any case. There are elements of tragedy at play, at least to the extent that it is difficult to find solutions that do not include some sacrifices. But as long as the broken future is avoidable, we must avert an ethical tragedy where no morally good decision is available, where the absolute scarcity necessitates that one cannot operate without moral residue, as each distribution of resources involves the death and suffering of those who are left without. This is another reason for allowing more extreme demands for ordinary morality now, to avoid an ethical

tragedy later, when ordinary morality cannot operate at all. Again, the way forward is anti-dystopian, not utopian.

This diagnosis is useful, because it gives an operating space for moral theories where we have not yet reached ethically tragic conditions like those in the broken future, but we are already outside the moderate demandingness levels where ordinary morality more comfortably operates. It should be noted that both scenarios, the broken future and the morally far-gone world, are chronic states of affairs that have developed organically – not emergencies. Thus, they require a stable system of morality that can be action-guiding in ordinary people's everyday lives. So, none of the scenarios count towards an emergency, where the more stable system of morality may be momentarily replaced with another set of moral rules and principles.

Further, perceiving the world as morally far-gone is helpful because it helps to understand why even ordinary morality can be highly demanding. By understanding the circumstances that we are in, it is easier to avoid considered judgments that would not permit an exit from these circumstances. It gives access to a different stance for moral theorizing. Instead of trying to fit moral theories to current state of affairs, we can take a principled stance where the principles of ordinary morality can still help to avoid a catastrophe, even if it produces demands uncharacteristically extreme for ordinary morality. I have called the former stance reactive because it attempts to change the principles to make morality less demanding. The problem with this reactive stance is that it insists on arriving at some kind of a *clean slate morality*, where 'ordinary people' in 'ordinary circumstances' can lead the kinds of lives they desire without much moral residue. The latter stance is principled, because it embarks on the world with a set of principles and more conservatively holds on to them, not trying to explain away the demandingness. It meets these tragic circumstances, and when appropriate, allows the conclusion that in the circumstances we are in extreme demands may have to be made.

Put another way, having a clean slate is not the goal of moral theorizing, but a goal for a moral theory to pursue. The former project is misguided because it aims to explain away the demandingness of morality so that people could act as if there were no pressing, extreme moral demands for them to fulfil. Even worse, it is in itself immoral as it may hide moral wrongdoing or let people morally off the hook too quickly. If the Messy can get away with their wrongdoing, what reason is there for anyone to reconcile any damage done? However, the latter, having a clean slate as an end-goal of a moral theory, allows even extreme demands to reach that goal. It allows assessing why the slate is not clean and who are responsible, and what should be done to remedy this.

Also, this project is more resistant to moral corruption than the former. There is a danger of working in self-serving ways if moral theorizing is too deleterious of extreme demands. People can feel very uncomfortable with the idea that they are constantly doing something morally wrong. It leads them to feelings of shame, guilt, incompleteness, and imperfection. Arguably, this is one of the main motivators for demandingness complaints. It seems that the idea of a moral wrong in our vicinity which we are able to act upon is a great source of discomfort. People desire a clean slate, but this should not affect moral theorizing in a self-serving way but encourage the development of moral theories that contribute to cleaning the slate.

Because of the ideal of a clean slate morality, one is prone to object against principles that lead to extreme demands. They reveal how morally far gone the world is. If it is true that a moral wrong which is rectifiable creates a duty of rectification, we suddenly have a huge load of moral problems in our hands that require our rectification. We can easily and cheaply save numerous distant yet innocent lives, as Singer has shown. We can stop polluting so much. We can downgrade our lifestyles to a more ecologically sustainable manner. There are tons of things one can easily do right away. If the ideal of a clean slate morality is part of moral theorizing and not the goal of moral theories, it paralyzes moral theorizing.

Accepting this diagnosis of the world as morally far gone, and that a morally clean slate should only be the end-goal of a moral theory and not affect its contents, the theorizing itself, sets a clear project for ordinary morality. It should aim for conditions where ordinary people can once again behave in ordinary ways, that is, in ways that ordinary morality can operate without producing extreme demands. It can be speculated that these are the ideal moral conditions, not utopian, but anti-dystopian. The project can be further clarified by assessing the distance of these ideal conditions and the state of the world as it is now. *How* morally far-gone is the world, and how demanding is it to get to these ideal circumstances? To provide a philosophical stress test, I have assumed that dealing with the climate threat requires a great deal of sacrifice. Future research for the prospects of ordinary morality in the modern world could attempt to measure the distance and how demanding it is to get to 'ordinary' circumstances. The schematics for such a project were sketched at the beginning of this section. This should be of interest to proponents of ordinary morality who want to take climate change and similar modern problems seriously.

5.5. Conclusions

The reflective equilibrium process towards a new point of equilibrium started from identifying key considered judgments, principles, and background theories for ordinary morality. Alongside these, two input commitments were made: 1) that climate change ought to be stopped, and 2) that morality cannot be excessively demanding. This dissertation attempted to respect both input commitments while acknowledging the conflict between them. Chapter two examined the concept and nature of moral demandingness. Building on this examination, chapter three started the reflective equilibrium process by defining ordinary morality and forming an initial position for it on the three levels of background theories, principles, and considered judgments. Then, a conflict between ordinary morality's key principles was studied. Chapter four further developed the background theories that hash out the difficulties of responding effectively to climate change. From these grounds, an institutional argument from the adaptive limits of human morality could be made. However, the argument's conclusion potentially conflicts with the commitment that morality cannot be excessively demanding. The same commitment is reflected in ordinary morality's regulative principles. Yet, simultaneously another principle, the no harm principle, which is compatible with the moderate spirit of ordinary morality and the commitment to stop climate change, also produces considered judgments that conflict with the non-excessive regulative principle. Taking climate change seriously causes tremors throughout the system of ordinary morality. This clearly shows that the structure is not stable, and a point of equilibrium is not reached with this initial set of beliefs. Hence, the initial system of ordinary morality did not survive the climate stress test.

Continuing the reflective equilibrium process, new components like a moral corruption detector were identified. Brian Berkey's (2016) distinction of principles and demands, and the accordingly re-targeted regulative over-demandingness principle helped ease the conflict. However, the result is that the input commitment to non-excessive demands is under pressure. *Excessive* is a key term here, and rather than rejecting the input commitment the threshold of excessiveness is set higher than typical for ordinary morality. Rechnitzer's model of reflective equilibrium allows this. Moreover, the process throughout the dissertation has attempted to retain respect towards the commitment. The project did not change, and the result is a modified ordinary morality that better reacts to problems present in this world. There is a trade-off, but this is expected in a process of reflective equilibrium. (Rechnitzer 2022, 56.) Additionally, this allows respecting the other input commitment to stop climate change. This way, the new point of equilibrium can survive the climate stress test, but with the

trade-off of allowing some uncharacteristically extreme demands from ordinary morality. However, when these demands are put to context, they seem less problematic because the desirability of stopping climate change is so high.

The exploration on the moral situation of the world in its present state suggests that it is morally far gone, but not yet broken. It was noted that while we do not yet inhabit a broken world, humanity has taken a long misstep from morally ideal circumstances, that is, the circumstances in which it is not extremely demanding to live according to basic, inherently moderate moral principles. That morality produces extreme demands is not a diagnosis of the moral system, but the world. This also suggests that moral theorizing should not take as its goal a so-called clean slate morality, so that the theories are fitted to the world as it is to make the overall system less demanding. This kind of reactive stance was the root cause of the main problems with the initial ordinary morality. Instead, a clean slate should be the aim of moral theories. The more principled stance in the new point of equilibrium for ordinary morality provides some resistance against the changing circumstances of the world.

This diagnosis provides some schematics for future research on ordinary morality. The moral distance between ordinary morality's ideal operational circumstances and the current state of the world could be assessed, along with the cost of getting there. This would include a more thorough demandingness analysis. Further, the need for institutional and other forms of assistance is increased by the fact that climate change is not the only source of moral demands. Stopping climate change produces its own demands, and it intensifies other demands as well. For instance, if there are positive duties to aid others, climate change intensifies the demandingness of following these duties by producing and worsening conditions where people need aid from others. But climate change is not the only problem humanity must face. Future research on ordinary morality should include accounts on how ordinary morality can handle the full moral reality all at once. For instance, the concept of sustainability, with its different dimensions (environmental, social, economic, and cultural), might be a good starting point for this kind of project. It simultaneously encompasses a wide range of areas, and the possible conflicts and trade-offs between those areas. To give a full account on moral demandingness, how morally far gone the world is, and an ultimate test for ordinary morality, sustainability ethics might be a good place to start. Further, moral reality seems to be expanding in an increasing pace. New morally considerable entities may have to be included in moral considerations, and ultimately be included to ordinary morality's consideration. What started with animal liberation (Singer 1975) might end up in plant liberation. (Calvo &

Lawerence 2022.) It can be extremely difficult to avoid stumbling into and harming living beings that merit moral considerability. Also, if the project of longtermism (MacAskill 2022) succeeds, considering future generations can provide new challenges. Artificial Intelligence and whatever life forms humanity may encounter in outer space can also be added to the mix. The circle of morality is not only expanding but it is about to explode. The future of ordinary morality looks challenging.

References

Aaltola, E. (2021). Defensive over Climate Change? Climate Shame as a Method of Moral Cultivation. *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics*, 34(1), 1–23. doi: 10.1007/s10806-021-09844-5.

Ackeren, M. van & Kühler, M. (2016b). Ethics on (the) Edge? Introduction to Moral Demandingness and 'Ought Implies Can'. In Van Ackeren, M. & Kühler, M. (Eds.) (2016). *The Limits of Moral Obligation. Moral Demandingness and 'Ought Implies Can'*. New York: Routledge, 1–18.

Ackeren, M. van & Kühler, M. (eds.) (2016a). *The Limits of Moral Obligation: Moral Demandingness and Ought Implies Can*. New York: Routledge

Ackeren, M. van & Sticker, M. (2015). Kant and Moral Demandingness. *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*, 18(1), 75–89.

Ackeren, M. van (2018). How Morality Becomes Demanding Cost vs. Difficulty and Restriction. *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 26(3), 315–334.

Ahteensuu, M. (2017). Synthetic Biology, Genome Editing, and the Risk of Bioterrorism. *Science and Engineering Ethics*, 23, 1541–1561.

Arnold, M. L. (2000). Stage, Sequence, and Sequels: Changing Conceptions of Morality, Post-Kohlberg. *Educational Psychology Review*, 12(4), 365–383.

Fosl, P. S. & Baggini, J. (2020). The Philosopher's Toolkit: A Compendium of Philosophical Concepts and Methods (3rd ed). Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.

Balfour, D. (2021). Pascal's Mugger Strikes Again. *Utilitas*, 33(1), 118–124.

Bandura, A. (2016). *Moral disengagement: How people do harm and live with themselves*. New York: Worth.

Baumberger C, Brun G (2017) Dimensions of objectual understanding. In Grimm, S. R., C. Baumberger, S. Ammon (eds). *Explaining understanding: new perspectives from epistemology and philosophy of science*. Routledge: New York, 165–189.

Baumberger, C. & Brun, G. (2021) Reflective equilibrium and understanding. *Synthese*, 198(8), 7923–7947. https://doi.org/10/ggkp4w.

Beauchamp, T. L. & Childress, J. F. (2013). *Principles of biomedical ethics* (7th ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Benn, C. (2016). Over-Demandingness Objections and Supererogation. In Ackeren, M. van and Kühler, M. (eds.), *The Limits of Moral Obligation. Moral Demandingness and 'Ought Implies Can'*. New York: Routledge, 69–83.

Berkey, B. (2012). *Against Moderate Morality: The Demands of Justice in an Unjust World*. Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley.

Berkey, B. (2014). Climate Change, Moral Intuitions, and Moral Demandingness. *Philosophy and Public Issues - Filosofia E Questioni Pubbliche*, 4(2), 157–189.

Berkey, B. (2016). The Demandingness of Morality: Toward a Reflective Equilibrium. *Philosophical Studies*, 173(11), 3015–3035.

Berkey, B. (2019). Collective Obligations and Demandingness Complaints. *Moral Philosophy and Politics*, 6(1). 113–132.

Bostrom, M. (2012). A missing pillar? Challenges in theorizing and practicing social sustainability: introduction to the special issue. *Sustainability: Science, Practice and Policy* 8(1), 3-14. DOI: 10.1080/15487733.2012.11908080.

Broome, J. (2012). *Climate Matters: Ethics in a Warming World*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Brun, G. (2013). Reflective equilibrium without intuitions? *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*, 17(2), 237–252. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10677-013-9432-5

Brun, G. (2016). Explication as a method of conceptual re-engineering. *Erkenntnis*, 81(6), 1211–1241. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10670-015-9791-5

Brun, G. (2020). Conceptual re-engineering: from explication to reflective equilibrium. *Synthese*, 197(3), 925–954. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11229-017-1596-4

Buchanan, A. & Powell, R. (2018). *The Evolution of Moral Progress: A Biocultural Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Burg, van der W. & Willigenburg, van T. (1998). Introduction. Burg, van der W. & Willigenburg, van T (eds.). *Reflective equilibrium: essays in honour of Robert Heeger*. Springer, 1–25.

Buss, D. M. (2013). *Evolutionary psychology: the new science of the mind* (4th ed.). Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.

Calvo, P. & Lawrence, N. (2022). *Planta Sapiens: The New Science of Plant Intelligence*. Little, Brown Book Group.

Caney, S. (2005). Cosmopolitan justice, responsibility, and global climate change. *Leiden Journal of International Law*, 18, 747–775.

Caney, S. (2014). Two Kinds of Climate Justice: Avoiding Harm and Sharing Burdens. *The Journal of Political Philosophy*. 22(2), 125–149.

Cappelen, H. & Szabó, G. & Hawthorne, J. (eds.) (2016). *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophical Methodology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 213–230.

Carbonell, V. (2016). Differential Demands. In Ackeren, M. van and Kühler, M. (eds.), *The Limits of Moral Obligation. Moral Demandingness and 'Ought Implies Can'*. New York: Routledge, 36–50.

Chappell, R. Y. (2017). Willpower Satisficing. *Noûs*, 53(2), 251–265. doi:10.1111/nous.12213.

Chappell, T. (ed.) (2009). *The Problem of Moral Demandingness. New Philosophical Essays*. London: Palgrave.

Cohen, G. A (2003). Facts and Principles. *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 31(3), 211–245.

Cripps, E. (2013). *Climate Change and the Moral Agent: Individual Duties in an Interdependent World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Damasio, A. (1994). *Descartes' Error*. New York: Penguin.

Daniels, N. (1979). Wide reflective equilibrium and theory acceptance in ethics. *J Philos*, 76(5), 256–282.

Daniels, N. (2020). Reflective Equilibrium. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2020 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.) https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2020/entries/reflective-equilibrium.

DePaul, M. R. (1986). Reflective Equilibrium and Foundationalism. *American Philosophical Quarterly*, 23(1), 59–69.

Driver, J. (1992). The suberogatory. *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, 70(3), 286–295. DOI: 10.1080/00048409212345181

Elgin, C. Z. (1996). *Considered Judgment*. Princeton University Press, Princeton

Elgin, C. Z. (2017) *True enough*. The MIT Press, Cambridge

Elster, J. (1979). *Ulysses and the Sirens: Studies in Rationality and Irrationality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Eskine, K. J., N. A. Kacinik & J. J. Prinz. (2011). A bad taste in the mouth: gustatory disgust influences moral judgment. *Psychological Science*, 22(3). 295–299 doi: 10.1177/0956797611398497.

Feinberg, J. (1961). Supererogation and Rules. *Ethics,* 71(4), 276–288.

Feinberg, J. (1984). *Harm to Others*. Oxford: Oxford Univer-sity Press.

Fragnière, A. (2016). Climate change and individual duties. *WIREs Climate Change*, 7, 798–814.

Fragnière, A. (2018). How Demanding is Our Climate Duty? An Application of the No-Harm Principle to Individual Emissions. *Environmental Values*, 27, 645–663.

Freeman, S. (2019). Original Position. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2019 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2019/entries/original-position

Friedlingstein, P., M. O'Sullivan, M. W. Jones, R. M. Andrew, L. Gregor, J. Hauck, C. Le Quéré, I. T. Luijkx, A. Olsen, G. P. Peters, W. Peters, J. Pongratz, C. Schwingshackl, S. Sitch, J. G. Canadell, P. Ciais, R. B. Jackson, S. R. Alin, R. Alkama, A. Arneth, V. K. Arora, N. R. Bates, M. Becker, N. Bellouin, H. C. Bittig, L. Bopp, F. Chevallier, L. P. Chini, M. Cronin, W.

Evans, S. Falk, R. A. Feely, T. Gasser, M. Gehlen, T. Gkritzalis, L. Gloege, G. Grassi, N. Gruber, Ö. Gürses, I. Harris, M.Hefner, R.A. Houghton, G. C. Hurtt, Y. Iida, T. Ilyina, A. K. Jain, A. Jersild, K. Kadono, E. Kato, D.Kennedy, K. Klein Goldewijk, J. Knauer, J. I. Korsbakken, P. Landschützer, N. Lefèvre, K. Lindsay, J. Liu, Z. Liu, G. Marland, N. Mayot, M. J. McGrath, N. Metzl, N. M. Monacci, D. R. Munro, S.-I. Nakaoka, Y. Niwa, K. O'Brien, T. Ono, P. I. Palmer, N. Pan, D. Pierrot, K. Pocock, B. Poulter, L. Resplandy, E. Robertson, C. Rödenbeck, C. Rodriguez, T. M. Rosan, J. Schwinger, R. Séférian, J. D. Shutler, I. Skjelvan, T. Steinhoff, Q. Sun, A. J. Sutton, C. Sweeney, S. Takao, T. Tanhua, P. P. Tans, X. Tian, H. Tian, B. Tilbrook, H. Tsujino, F. Tubiello, G. R. van der Werf, A. P. Walker, R. Wanninkhof, C. Whitehead, A. Willstrand Wranne, R. Wright, W. Yuan, C. Yue, X. Yue, S. Zaehle, J. Zeng & B. Zheng (2022). Global Carbon Budget 2022. *Earth Syst. Sci. Data*, 14, 4811–4900, https://doi.org/10.5194/essd-14-4811-2022.

Gardiner, S. & Lawson, J. (2021). Falling on Your Own Feasibility Sword? Challenges for Climate Policy Based on "Simple Self-Interest". In Kenehan, S. & Katz, C. (Eds.), *Climate Justice and Feasibility: Normative Theorizing, Feasibility Constraints, and Climate Action*. Rowman & Littlefield International, 61–91.

Gardiner, S. M. (2006). A Perfect Moral Storm: Climate Change, Intergenerational Ethics and the Problem of Moral Corruption. *Environmental Values*, 15, 397–413.

Gardiner, S. M. (2011a). *A Perfect Moral Storm: The Ethical Tragedy of Climate Change*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gardiner, S. M. (2011b). Is no one responsible for global environmental tragedy? Climate change as a challenge to our ethical concepts. In Arnold, Denis G. 2011. *The Ethics of Global Climate Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gardiner, S. M. (2013). Reflecting on A Perfect Moral Storm. *Philosophy and Public Issues - Filosofia E Questioni Pubbliche*. 3(1), 89–135.

Gilabert, P. & Lawford-Smith, H. (2012). Political Feasibility: A Conceptual Exploration. *Political Studies* 60(4), 809–825. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9248.2011.00936.x.

Godin, G, M. Conner & P. Sheeran. (2005). Bridging the intention–behaviour 'gap': The role of moral norm. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 44, 497–512. DOI:10.1348/014466604X17452.

Goodman, N. (1955). *Fact, Fiction, and Forecast*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Gough, I. (2017). *Heat, Greed, and Human Need*: *Climate Change, Capitalism, and Sustainable Wellbeing*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Greene, J. (2013). *Moral Tribes: Emotion, Reason, and the Gap Between Us and Them*. New York: Atlantic Books.

Greene, J. (2016). Beyond Point-and-Shoot Morality: Why Cognitive (Neuro)Science Matters for Ethics. In Liao, S. Matthew (ed.). *Moral Brains: The Neuroscience of Morality*. 119–149. New York: Oxford University Press.

Griffin, J. (2015). *What Can Philosophy Contribute to Ethics?* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Grossman, D. (1995). *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society*. New York: Black Bay Books.

Haidt, J.. (2001). The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail: A Social Intuitionist Approach to Moral Judgment. *Psychological Review*, 108, 814–834.

Haidt, J.. (2001). The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail: A Social Intuitionist Approach to Moral Judgement. *Psychological Review*, 10(4), 814–834.

Haji, I. (2002). *Deontic Morality and Control*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hardin, Garrett (1968). The Tragedy of the Commons. *Science* 162(3859). 1243–1248

Hart, H. L. A. (1963). *Law, Liberty and Morality*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Hiller, A. (2011). Morally Significant Effects of Ordinary Individual Actions. *Ethics, Policy & Environment*, 14(1), 19–21. doi: 10.1080/21550085.2011.561588

Hiller, A. (2014). A "Famine, Affluence, and Morality" for Climate Change?. *Public Affairs Quarterly*, 1(28), 19–39.

Hills, A. (2010). Utilitarianism, Contractualism and Demandingness. *The Philosophical Quarterly*, 60(239), 225–242.

Hoegh-Guldberg, O., D. Jacob, M. Taylor, M. Bindi, S. Brown, I. Camilloni, A. Diedhiou, R. Djalante, K.L. Ebi, F. Engelbrecht, J. Guiot, Y. Hijioka, S. Mehrotra, A. Payne, S.I. Seneviratne, A. Thomas, R. Warren & G. Zhou. (2022): *Impacts of 1.5ºC Global Warming on Natural and Human Systems.* In Masson-Delmotte, V., P. Zhai, H.-O. Pörtner, D. Roberts, J. Skea, P.R. Shukla, A. Pirani, W. Moufouma-Okia, C. Péan, R. Pidcock, S. Connors, J.B.R. Matthews, Y. Chen, X. Zhou, M.I. Gomis, E. Lonnoy, T. Maycock, M. Tignor, and T. Waterfield (eds.) (2022) *Global Warming of 1.5°C. An IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable*

development, and efforts to eradicate poverty. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 175-312. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009157940.005.

Horgan, T. & Timmons, M. (2010). Untying a Knot from the Inside Out: Reflections on the 'Paradox' of Supererogation. *Social Philosophy and Policy Foundation*, 27(2), 29–63.

Häyry, M. (2018). Ethics and cloning. *British Medical Bulletin*, 128, 15–21 doi: 10.1093/bmb/ldy031.

Jamieson, D. (2006). The moral and political challenges of climate change. In Moser S. & Dilling, L. (eds.). *Creating a climate for change: communicating climate change & facilitating social change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 475–482.

Jamieson, D. (2010). Climate Change, Responsibility, and Justice. *Science and Engineering Ethics*, 16(3), 431–445.

Jamieson, D. (2013). Jack, Jill, and Jane in a perfect moral storm. *Philosophy and Public Issues - Filosofia E Questioni Pubbliche*. 3(1), 37–53.

Jamieson, D. (2014), *Reason in a Dark Time: Why the Struggle against Climate Change Failed – And What it means For Our Future*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Jensen, M. (2009). The Limits of Practical Possibility. *Journal of Political Philosophy*, 17(2), 168–184.

Joronen, S. & Oksanen, M. (2012). Taming the Climate Emergency: Geoengineering and Ethics. *Nordicum-Mediterraneum*, 7(2), 1–19.

Kagan, S. (1989). *The Limits of Morality*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Kahneman, D. (2011). *Thinking, fast and slow*. London: Allen Lane.

Kallhoff, A., M. Di Paola & M. Schörgenhumer (2018). *Plant Ethics: Concepts and Applications*. London: Routledge.

Kasperbauer, T.J. (2016). The Implications of Psychological Limitations for the Ethics of Climate Change. *Environmental Values* 25. 353–370.

Keas, M. N. (2018). Systematizing the theoretical virtues. *Synthese*, 195, 2761–2793. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11229-017-1355-6.

Kenehan, S. and Katz, C. (eds.) (2021). *Climate Justice and Feasibility: Normative Theorizing, Feasibility Constraints, and Climate Action*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield International.

Kogut, T. & Ritov, I. (2005). The ''Identified Victim'' Effect: An Identified Group, or Just a Single Individual? *Journal of Behavioral Decision Making*, 18, 157–167.

Kohlberg, L. (1969). Stage and sequence: The cognitive-developmental approach to socialization. In Goslin, D. A. (ed.) (1969). *Handbook of Socialization Theory and Research*. Chicago: Rand McNally, 347–480.

Kollmuss, A. & Agyeman, J. (2002). Mind the Gap: Why do people act environmentally and what are the barriers to pro-environmental behavior? *Environmental Education Research*, 8(3), 239–260. DOI: 10.1080/13504620220145401

Kramer, P. & Bressan, P. (2015). Humans as Superorganisms: How Microbes, Viruses, Imprinted Genes, and Other Selfish Entities Shape Our Behavior. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 10(4), 464–481.

Kulp, C. B. (2019). *Metaphysics of Morality*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-23410-2_2

Laborde, D., Murphy, S., Parent, M., Porciello, J. & Smaller C. (2020). *Ceres2030: Sustainable Solutions to End Hunger - Summary Report*. Cornell University, IFPRI and IISD.

Lawford-Smith, H. (2013). Understanding Political Feasibility. *The Journal of Political Philosophy*, 21(3), 243–259. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9760.2012.00422.x.

Liao, S. M. (ed.). (2016). *Moral Brains: The Neuroscience of Morality*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Liao, S. Matthew. (2016). Morality and Neuroscience: Past and Future. In Liao, S. Matthew (ed.).. *Moral Brains: The Neuroscience of Morality*. 1–42. New York: Oxford University Press.

Lichtenberg, J. (2010). Negative Duties, Positive Duties, and the "New Harms". *Ethics* 120. 557–578.

Lindell, M. K. (2013). Disaster studies. Current Sociology Review. 61(5–6), 797–825.

Locke, J. (2003). *Two Treatises of Government and a Letter Concerning Toleration* (edited by Ian Shapiro). New Haven: Yale University Press.

Lord, C. G., L. Ross & M. R. Lepper. 1979. "Biased assimilation and attitude polarization: The effects of prior theories on subsequently considered evidence. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 37(11), 2098–2109.

Luo, Y. & Zhao, J. (2019). Motivated Attention in Climate Change Perception and Action. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, 1541. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2019.01541

MacAskill, W. (2016). *Doing Good Better: How Effective Altruism Can Help You Help Others, Do Work that Matters, and Make Smarter Choices about Giving Back*. New York: Penguin Random House.

MacAskill, W. (2022). *What We Owe the Future: A Million-Year View*. New York: Basic Books.

MacAskill, W., A. Mogensen, T. Ord (2018). Giving Isn't Demanding. In Woodruff, P. (ed.). *The Ethics of Giving: Philosophers' Perspectives on Philanthropy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Maddock, R. J., A. S. Garrett & M. H. Buonocore (2003). Posterior Cingulate Cortex Activation by Emotional Words: fMRI Evidence from a Valence Decision Task. *Human Brain Mapping*, 18, 30–41.

Maimets, T. & Lõuk, K. (2016). Cloning: Human. In ten Have, H. (ed.) *Encyclopedia of Global Bioethics*. Cham: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-09483-0_95

Martin, M. W. (1981). Professional and Ordinary Morality: A Reply to Freedman. *Ethics*, 91(4), 631–633.

McElwee, B. (2016). What Is Demandingness? In Ackeren, M. van and Kühler, M. (Eds.), *The Limits of Moral Obligation. Moral Demandingness and 'Ought Implies Can'* (pp. 19–35). New York: Routledge.

McElwee, B. (2017). Demandingness Objections in Ethics. *The Philosophical Quarterly* 67(266). 84–105.

Mikhalevich, I. & Powell, R. (2020). Minds without spines: Evolutionarily inclusive animal ethics. *Animal Sentience* 29(1), 1–25.

Mill, J. S. (2010) [originally 1859]. *On Liberty*. London: Penguin Classics.

Miller, D. (2013). *Justice for Earthlings: Essays in Political Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Moore, M. S. (1989). Torture and the balance of evils. *Israel Law Review*, 23(2–3), 280-344.

Mulgan, T. (2011). *Ethics for a Broken World: Imagining Philosophy after Catastrophe*. New York: Routledge.

Murphy, L. B. (1993), The Demands of Beneficence. *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, (22)4, 267– 292.

Nesse, R. M & Williams, G. C. (1996). *Why We Get Sick: The New Science of Darwinian Medicine*. New York: Vintage Books.

Newell, P. & Mulvaney, D. (2013), The political economy of the 'just transition'. *The Geographical Journal*, 179, 132-140. https://doi.org/10.1111/geoj.12008

Newman, J. A., Varner, G., & Linquist, S. (2017). *Defending Biodiversity: Environmental Science and Ethics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/9781139024105.011

Nielen, M.M.A., D. J. Heslenfeld, K. Heinen, J. W. Van Strien, M. P. Witter, C. Jonker & D. J. Veltman (2009). Distinct Brain Systems Underlie the Processing of Valence and Arousal of Affective Pictures. *Brain and Cognition*, 71, 387–396.

Nolt, J. (2011). How harmful are the average American's greenhouse gas emissions? *Ethics, Policy and Environment* 14(1): 3–10.

Nolt, J. (2016). Future Generations in Environmental Ethics. In Gardiner, S. M. & Thompson, A. (eds.) (2016). *The Oxford Handbook of Environmental Ethics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 344–354.

Norcross, A. (2014). "Puppies, Pigs, and People: Eating Meat and Marginal Cases". *Philosophical Perspectives* 18(1). 229–245.

Oksanen, M. & Siipi, H. (2014). *The Ethics of Animal Re-creation and Modification: Reviving, Rewilding, Restoring*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Oksanen, M. (2014). Global Warming and the Critique of Culture. *Ethical Perspectives* 21(4), 539–563.

Olsen, I., A. Plotzker & Y. Ezzyat (2007). The Enigmatic Temporal Pole: A Review of Findings on Social and Emotional Processing. *Brain*, 130, 1718–1731.

Ord, T. (2021). *The Precipice: Existential Risk and the Future of Humanity*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing PLC.

Paulo, N. (2020). The Unreliable Intuitions Objection Against Reflective Equilibrium. *The Journal of Ethics*, 24, 333–353.

Peeters, W., A. De Smet, L. Diependaele & S. Sterckx. (2015). *Climate Change and Individual Responsibility: Agency, Moral Disengagement and the Motivational Gap*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Peeters, W., L. Diependaele & S. Sterckx (2019). Moral Disengagement and the Motivational Gap in Climate Change. *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 22. 425–447.

Peeters, Wouter, D. Bell & J. Swaffield. (2019). How New are New Harms Really? Climate Change, Historical Reasoning and Social Change. *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics*, 32(3). 505–526. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10806-019-09795-y

Persson, I. & Savulescu, J. (2012). *Unfit for the Future: The Need for Moral Enhancement*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Persson, I. & Savulescu, J. (2015). Summary of Unfit for the Future. *J Med Ethics*, 41(4), 338–339.

Persson, I. (2013). *From Morality to the End of Reason: An Essay on Rights, Reasons, and Responsibility*, Oxford: Oxford Academic.

Pihkala, P. (2020). Anxiety and the Ecological Crisis: An Analysis of Eco-Anxiety and Climate Anxiety. *Sustainability*, 12(19), 7836; doi:10.3390/su12197836.

Pinheiro Walla, A. (2015). Kant's Moral Theory and Demandingness. *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*, 18(4), 731–743. doi:10.1007/s10677-015-9600-x.

Posner, E. & Weisbach, D. (2010). *Climate Change Justice*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Prinz, J. (2016). "Sentimentalism and the Moral Brain" in Liao, S. M. (ed.). *Moral Brains: The Neuroscience of Morality*. New York: Oxford University Press, 45–73.

Rajczi, A. (2007). Integrity and Ordinary Morality. *American Philosophical Quarterly* (44)1, 15–26.

Rawls, J. (1971). *A Theory of Justice*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Belknap Press.

Rechnitzer, T. (2022). *Applying Reflective Equilibrium: Towards the Justification of a Precautionary Principle*. Cham: Springer.

Rolston III, H. (1988). *Environmental ethics: duties to and values in the natural world*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Räikkä, J. (1996). Are There Alternative Methods in Ethics? *Grazer Philosophische Studien*, 52, 173–189.

Räikkä, J. (1998). The Feasibility Condition in Political Theory. *The Journal of Political Philosophy*, 6(1), 27–40.

Räikkä, J. (2014). *Social Justice in Practice: Questions in Ethics and Political Philosophy*. New York: Springer.

Sandberg, J. & Juth, N. (2011). Ethics and Intuitions: A Reply to Singer. *The Journal of Ethics*, 15(3). 209–226.

Sandin, P. (2009). Supreme Emergencies Without the Bad Guys. *Philosophia*, 37, 153–167.

Scheffler, S. (1994). *The rejection of consequentialism: A philosophical investigation of the considerations underlying rival moral conceptions* (revised edition). New York: Oxford University Press.

Schnall, S., J. Haidt, G. L. Clore & A. H. Jordan. (2008). Disgust as Embodied Moral Judgment. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 34(8), 1096–1109.

Schultz, P.W., J.M. Nolan, R.B. Cialdini, N.J. Goldstein & V. Griskevicius (2007). The constructive, destructive, and reconstructive power of social norms. *Psychological Science*, 18(5), 429–434.

Segal, T. (2021). What Is a Bank Stress Test? How It Works, Benefits, and Criticism. https://www.investopedia.com/terms/b/bank-stress-test.asp [referred 21.3.2023]

Seidel, A., & Prinz, J. (2013). Mad and glad: Musically induced emotions have divergent impact on morals. *Motivation and Emotion*, 37(3), 629–637. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11031-012-9320-7

Sen, A. (1982). Rights and Agency. *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 11(1), 3–39.

Shue, H. (2014). *Climate Justice: Vulnerability and Protection*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Shue, H. (1993). Subsistence Emissions and Luxury Emissions. *Law & Policy*, 15(1), 39–59.
Sin, W. (2010). Trivial Sacrifices, Great Demands. *Journal of Moral Philosophy*, 7, 3–15.
Singer, P. (1972). Famine, Affluence, and Morality. *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 1(3), 229–243.
Singer, P. (1975). *Animal Liberation: A New Ethics for Our Treatment of Animals*. New York: HarperCollins.
Singer, P. (1981). *The Expanding Circle: Ethics and Sociobiology*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
Singer, P. (1991). Review: A Refutation of Ordinary Morality. *Ethics* 101(3), 625–633.
Singer, P. (2005). Ethics and Intuitions. *The Journal of Ethics* 9, 331–352.
Singer, P. (2009), *The Life You Can Save: Acting Now to End World Poverty*. New York: Random House
Singer, P. (2016). *Famine, Affluence, and Morality*. Foreword by Bill and Melinda Gates. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Sinnott-Armstrong, W. (2005). It's Not *My* Fault: Global Warming and Individual Moral Obligations. In W. Sinnott-Armstrong and R. Howarth (eds.). *Perspectives on Climate Change: Science, Economics, Politics, Ethics* (Oxford: Elsevier), pp. 285–307.
Smith, J. W. (1961). Impossibility and Morals. *Mind*, 70(279), 362–375.
Sobel, D. (2007). The Impotence of the Demandingness Objection. *Philosophers' Imprint*, 7(8), 1–17.
Southwood, N. (2018). The feasibility issue. *Philosophy Compass*, 13(8), 1–13. doi: 10.1111/phc3.12509.
Stearns, S. C. & Medzhitov, R. (2016). *Evolutionary Medicine*. Sunderland: Sinauer Associates.
Stern, R. (2016). Why Does Ought Imply Can? In Ackeren, M. van and Kühler, M. (eds.), *The Limits of Moral Obligation. Moral Demandingness and 'Ought Implies Can'*. New York: Routledge, 100–115.
Sterri, A. B. & Moen, O. M. (2021). The ethics of emergencies. *Philosophical Studies* 178, 2621–2634. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11098-020-01566-0
Suter, R. S. & Hertwig, R. (2011). Time and moral judgment. *Cognition* 119, 454–458.
Swanton, C. (2009). Virtue Ethics and the Problem of Demandingness. In Chappell, T. (Ed.), *The Problem of Moral Demandingness. New Philosophical Essays*. London: Palgrave, 104–122.

Timmerman, T. (2015). Sometimes there is nothing wrong with letting a child drown. *Analysis* 75(2), 204–212.

Tosh, J. (2008). *Why history matters*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Unger, P. (1996). *Living High And Letting Die: Our Illusions of Innocence*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Urmson, J. O. (1969). Saints and Heroes. In Feinberg, Joel (Ed.), *Moral Concepts* (pp. 60–73), Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Valentini, L. (2012). Ideal versus non-ideal theory: A conceptual map. *Philosophy Compass*, 7(9), 654–664.

Valentini, L. (2017). On the Messy "Utopophobia vs. Factophobia" Controversy: A Systematization and Assessment. In Weber, M. & Vallier, K. (Eds.), *Political Utopias: Contemporary Debates*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Vandenbergh, M., J. Barkenbusm, J. Gilligan (2008) Individual carbon emissions: the low-hanging fruit. *UCLA Law Rev*, 55(6), 1701–1758.

Vugt, M. van, R. Hogan & R. B. Kaiser (2008). Leadership, Followership, and Evolution: Some Lessons from the Past. *American Psychologist*, 63(3), 182–196.

Vytal, K & Hamann, S. (2010). Neuroimaging Support for Discrete Neural Correlates of Basic Emotions: A Voxel-Based Meta-analysis. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*, 12, 2864–2885.

Walzer, M. (2015). *Just and unjust wars* (5th ed.) New York: Basic Books.

Weber, E. U. (2006). Experience-Based and Description-Based Perceptions of Long-Term Risk: Why Global Warming Does Not Scare Us (Yet). *Climatic Change* 77, 103–120.

Weisbach, D. (2021). Feasibility and Climate Justice. In Kenehan, S. & Katz, C. (eds.). *Climate Justice and Feasibility: Normative Theorizing, Feasibility Constraints, and Climate Action*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield International, 15–31.

Wheatley, T. & Haidt, J. (2005). Hypnotic Disgust Makes Moral Judgments More Severe. *Psychological Science*, 16(10), 780–784. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-9280.2005.01614.x

Williams, B. (1973). Integrity. In Smart, J. J. C. & Williams, B. (eds.), *Utilitarianism*: *For and Against*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 108–117.

Woollard, F. (2016). Dimensions of Demandingness. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 116(1). 89–106. doi: 10.1093/arisoc/aow003.

Workman, L. & Reader, W. (2014), *Evolutionary Psychology* (3rd edition), New York: Cambridge University Press.

YLE (2013). Saarela: Relief over Duma decision, fears for Russian colleagues. https://yle.fi/a/3-6991815 [referred to 8.4.2023.]

It is advantageous for a moral theory to match well with how ordinary people conduct their lives under ordinary circumstances. Theories that deviate from what is often called ordinary morality can strike as counterintuitive. Yet, the climate crisis is greatly changing the circumstances, making them far from ordinary. In this dissertation, climate change is taken as a stress test to analyse how ordinary morality and its core principles can respond to the climate crisis and the sacrifices required to mitigate it. The stress test reveals a conflict within the system of ordinary morality. On the one hand, ordinary morality's key regulative principle, called over-demandingness principle, requires that agents must not be required to perform overly demanding acts. On the other hand, ordinary morality's key moral principle, the no harm principle, requires that one must not cause unnecessary harm to others. But almost anything people do contributes to climate change, and thus causes harm to others. Not contributing to climate change would be extremely demanding. Thus, the two core principles are in conflict. In this dissertation, it is argued that ordinary morality can survive the climate stress test only by allowing more extreme demands, and it is shown that this can be done without changing any of the core principles of ordinary morality. They require mere re-adjustments, although with the trade-off of accepting more extreme demands.

Reports from the Department
of Philosophy

University of Turku
COIMBRA GROUP

ISSN 1457-9332
978-951-29-9425-0 (Print)
978-951-29-9426-7 (PDF)
Painosalama, Turku, Finland 2023