Explaining and Expanding the Scope of Strawson’s Reactive Attitudes: An Examination and Application of Freedom and Resentment

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Abstract
In this paper, I examine P. F. Strawson’s “Freedom and Resentment” [6] in an effort to clarify the essential features of attitudes that Strawson believes may be understood as reactive. I propose a definition of the reactive attitudes that outlines the various conditions that must be met in order to give rise to a given reactive attitude. I then expand upon Strawson’s work (as captured in my definition of reactive attitudes) by introducing two additional categories of reactive attitudes: self-reflexive reactive attitudes and second-personal reflexive reactive attitudes. In addition to explaining the new categories of reactive attitudes that I seek to introduce, I also set forth reasons that lead me to accept such attitudes as reactive. Finally, I outline why I believe the self-reflexive reactive attitudes provide the foundation upon which all the other reactive attitudes rest.

1 Introduction
In his influential essay entitled “Freedom and Resentment” P. F. Strawson outlines a number of emotions that he believes are essential to human practices of moral responsibility [6]. Such feelings are labeled by Strawson as reactive attitudes, and are broken into three broad categories: the personal reactive attitudes, the generalized or vicarious reactive attitudes, and the self-reactive attitudes. In this paper, I examine relevant portions of “Freedom and Resentment” – as well as noteworthy secondary literature on this essay – in order to clarify the essential features of such reactive attitudes. Based upon this work, I propose a definition of the reactive attitudes that outlines the set of necessary conditions which must be met in order to give rise to a given reactive attitude. I then expand upon Strawson’s work (as captured in my definition of reactive attitudes) by proposing two additional categories of reactive attitudes: self-reflexive reactive attitudes and second-personal reflexive reactive attitudes. In addition to explaining the new categories of reactive attitudes
that I seek to introduce, I set forth reasons that lead me to accept such attitudes as reactive. Finally, I outline why I believe the self-reflexive reactive attitudes provide a foundation upon which all the other reactive attitudes rest.

2 Strawson's Reactive Attitudes: A Taxonomy and Overview

There exists no unanimous opinion concerning the precise nature of those attitudes which Strawson himself recognizes as reactive. In fact, several interpretations have emerged which represent varied perspectives concerning the matter under consideration.\(^1\) However, this is not to say that sufficiently firm conclusions regarding the nature of the reactive attitudes are impossible to reach. For although Strawson himself does not offer a formal definition of the reactive attitudes, he nonetheless provides his readers with multiple examples of particular emotions that he believes qualify to receive this label. In so doing, Strawson places the reactive attitudes into three broad categories which we will consider in turn.

The first type of reactive attitudes are those which Strawson labels as the “personal reactive attitudes.” Such attitudes

> “rest on, and reflect, an expectation of, and demand for, the manifestation of a certain degree of goodwill or regard on the part of other human beings towards ourselves” [6, p. 85].

Elsewhere, Strawson characterizes the personal reactive attitudes as

> “reactions to the quality of others’ wills toward us, as manifested in their behavior: to their good will or indifference or lack of concern” [6, p. 85].

Such personal reactive attitudes are therefore those attitudes which address the way that one feels based upon how others treat him. As I show

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\(^1\) That a conclusive opinion concerning the nature of the reactive attitudes has not been reached may be in large part due to the fact that Strawson himself was not intent upon explicating precisely what he understood reactive attitudes to be. Instead, he sought simply to employ the notion of reactive attitudes for the broader purposes set forth in “Freedom and Resentment.” Consequently, his essay leaves many issues open for further discussion and therefore precludes agreement among Strawson scholars. Notable (though divergent) scholarship concerning the nature of the reactive attitudes includes the following: Ayer [2]; also contained in [8] is Bennett [3]; P. F. Strawson himself replies to Ayer and Bennett in [7]; also see [9, p. 1-50 passim]; [10, 4, 1]. For a survey of some of the most disputed issues at play in this debate, see note 4 below.
later in this essay, however, mere interaction is not sufficient to give rise to a reactive attitude. Furthermore, not every emotion that results from interaction with another person is justifiably given this label. It is not only important that one is reacting to another individual. It is also necessary that the “quality of [another’s] will” toward oneself provides the impetus for the attitudes that arises. In this way such attitudes truly are reactive, for they respond specifically to another’s actions and attitudes toward oneself. According to Strawson, examples of such personal reactive attitudes include gratitude, resentment, forgiveness, love, and hurt feelings.  

The second grouping put forth by Strawson is the “generalized” or “vicarious reactive attitudes.” According to Strawson, such attitudes

“rest on, and reflect, exactly the same expectation or demand in a generalized form [as the personal reactive attitudes]; they rest on, or reflect, that is, the demand for the manifestation of a reasonable degree of goodwill or regard, on the part of others, not simply towards oneself, but towards all those on whose behalf moral indignation may be felt, i.e., as we now think, towards all men” [6, p. 85].

Elsewhere, when speaking of the personal reactive attitudes, Strawson more succinctly characterizes them as

“reactions to the qualities of others’ will, not towards ourselves, but towards others” [6, p. 85].

Paradigmatic examples of the personal reactive attitudes result when one party is indignant or disapproves of the actions of another. “What we have here,” explains Strawson,

“is, as it were, resentment on behalf of another, where one’s own interest and dignity are not involved” [6, p. 85].

The third and final category of reactive attitudes that Strawson provides are those which he labels as the “self-reactive attitudes.” These, according to Strawson, are those “attitudes associated with demands on oneself for others” [6, p. 86]. Such attitudes arise within the context of interpersonal relationships, and address the way that one feels based upon how he treats (or fails to treat) another party. A husband, for instance, may manifest a self-reactive attitude when he fails to treat his wife as he believes she would expect to be treated. As Strawson explains, these emotions include

\(^{2}\)For more on ‘love’ and ‘hurt feelings’ see note 3 below.
“feeling bound or obliged, feeling compunction, feeling guilty or remorseful or at least responsible, and the more complicated phenomenon of shame” [6, p. 86].

3 The Conditions that Give Rise to the Reactive Attitudes

From what has been introduced above, it is clear that the reactive attitudes are necessarily tied to interpersonal relationships. This is, in fact, one of the central emphases that Strawson stresses in “Freedom and Resentment.” As Strawson explains,

“I want to speak of...the non-detached attitudes and reactions of people directly involved in transactions with one another” [6, p. 74].

Such emotions are not brought about purely as the result of a given solitary act, but instead are inescapably placed within the context of second personal relationships. It is the inescapably second-personal nature of the reactive attitudes that I seek to capture in what I will label as the interpersonal condition, a state of affairs that must be met in order to give rise to any reactive attitude. The importance of the interpersonal nature of the reactive attitudes is evidenced by Strawson’s assertion that the reactive attitudes are reactions to transactions that take place between two parties. It is important to note, however, that although reactive attitudes are not necessarily present in all second-personal interaction, they may not arise outside of the context of such relationships. That is, the fulfillment of the interpersonal condition is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for the existence of the reactive attitudes.

Though it is clear that reactive attitudes are inescapably tied to interpersonal relationships, what is less clear are those means (that is, if any such means actually exist) by which one may distinguish the reactive attitudes from any other emotion that may arise within the context of second-personal interaction. As John Martin Fischer has noted,

“P. F. Strawson—and various others in the Strawsonian tradition—think of [reactive] attitudes as the wide array of emotions characteristically present in interpersonal relations” [5, p. 94].

Although the ambiguity surrounding the nature of the reactive attitudes is unlikely to be resolved altogether, there is, in fact, more that can be said concerning the necessary conditions which must exist in order to
give rise to any of the attitudes that may fall within this broad range of emotions.

The second necessary condition which must be met in order to give rise to the reactive attitudes is what I will call the interpretive condition. As Gary Watson explains, the reactive attitudes “depend upon an interpretation of [another’s] conduct” [10, p. 259]. In the process of interpreting the actions of the other party, one makes more explicit the interpersonal nature of such interaction, while at the same time introducing a qualitative judgment about the activities involved.\(^3\) Such qualitative judgments again refer to the “quality of another’s will toward us,” [6, p. 85] for the reactive attitude is a response to whether or not the other has treated us in a manner consistent with the way we expect to be treated in a given situation. Mere interaction between parties therefore is not sufficient, for at least one of those parties involved must assess the other in a way which places a value upon their actions. As Jonathan Adler notes,

“The reactive attitudes imply judgments that attribute responsibility to the actor, not merely causally, but for fault or liability” [1, p. 892].

The introduction of such a notion as fault or liability further highlights the function of the interpretive condition, for such an evaluation either

\(^3\) Of the reactive attitudes presented in the previous section of this paper, love and hurt feelings may appear to be anomalies that are counter-examples to my proposed definition. In particular, love and hurt feelings do not seem to fulfill the interpretive condition or the demand / expectation condition (considered in more detail below). Darwall, in the third chapter of The Second-Person Standpoint, comments on the seemingly odd nature of these reactive attitudes when writing, “Strawson’s examples of ‘love’ and ‘hurt feelings’ may seem to be less straightforwardly second-personal... [but] pretty clearly what Strawson has in mind, however, are loving relations that are maintained by reciprocally recognizing mutual address. And we can place hurt feelings within that same framework” [4, p. 73]. Although Darwall’s explanation is indeed helpful in explaining why Strawson may have included love and hurt feelings in the list of reactive attitudes, I nonetheless remain unconvinced that Strawson should have included them without further explanation. It is my contention that the commonly held notions of love and hurt feelings do not fit squarely alongside the other examples which Strawson has given, and that his inclusion of these attitudes has served to perpetuate the uncertainty that exists as to precisely what the limits of the reactive attitudes are. Also somewhat problematic is Strawson’s reference to “the more complicated phenomenon of shame,” [6, p. 86] which likewise appears incongruous with his other examples of reactive attitudes. Note that Darwall suspects that the inclusion of shame was a mistake on Strawson’s part [4, p. 70, fn. 11]. In trying to provide a general definition of the reactive attitudes I will therefore rely upon Darwall’s more specific understanding of love and hurt feelings, and will ignore shame altogether.
explicitly or implicitly imposes responsibility upon the actions of the other.

The existence or nature of such evaluations are not, however, static or universal. Rather, they too are deeply dependent upon the nature of the interpersonal interaction which exists between parties. When speaking of the personal reactive attitudes, Strawson notes,

“What will, in particular cases, count as manifestations of good or ill will or disregard will vary in accordance with the particular relationship in which we stand to another human being” [6, p. 85].

Here again one observes the distinctly second-personal nature of those necessary conditions which must be satisfied if a reactive attitude is to be manifest. For it is the character of the relationship between two individuals—as evidenced in the quality of will that holds between them—which often plays a significant part in bringing about the reactive attitudes.

That the quality of will which holds between two persons is a central component in bringing about the reactive attitudes is made evident by the fact that a given person $\phi$ may have two distinct reactions to the same action carried out by persons $X$ and $Y$. Suppose that $\phi$ is married to $X$, and has never before met $Y$. Both $X$ and $Y$ may act in the same way toward $\phi$, yet $\phi$’s reaction to $X$ will be drastically different than it will be with regard to $Y$. The reason that $\phi$ may hold $X$ accountable for a given action while at the same time refraining from holding $Y$ accountable (for the very same action) is directly related to whether or not the interpretive condition is operative in $\phi$’s relationship to $X$ and $Y$. Whereas the interpretive condition may hold for $\phi$’s assessment of $X$’s actions, it may not hold for $Y$’s. Consequently, $X$ is held accountable while $Y$ is not. Based upon the differences between the relationships which $\phi$ has with $X$ and with $Y$, $\phi$ may have grounds upon which to assert that $X$ should have acted in a particular fashion, whereas he has no grounds upon which to make a similar demand of $Y$. This is simply to reiterate the fact that mere interpersonal interaction is not sufficient, for the interpretive condition—a condition which is realized variously in every situation—must likewise be met in order to give rise to a given reactive attitude.

The third necessary condition which must be met in order to bring about a reactive attitude is what I will call the demand / expectation condition. I have chosen the label demand / expectation condition in order to allow room for the varied analyses of Strawson’s work that
are encountered in the extant literature on the subject of the reactive attitudes. That such language is merited is evidenced by the following quote wherein Strawson writes,

“The personal reactive attitudes rest on, and reflect, an expectation of, and demand for, the manifestation of a certain degree of goodwill or regard…” [6, p. 85].

Lest one think that such expectation / demand relates only to the personal reactive attitudes, Strawson later explains that

“[the generalized or personal reactive attitudes] rest on, and reflect, exactly the same expectation or demand in a generalized form…” [6, p. 85].

It is not enough that the interpersonal condition and the interpretive condition are met. The demand / expectation condition must likewise be accounted for in the existence of any genuine reactive attitude, for without it the reactive attitude itself has no force. In order to see why this is the case, suppose that James exhibits resentment toward Cindy

4Darwall clearly articulates that a demand is implicit in any reactive attitude when explaining that “[T]he reactive attitudes invariably address demands…” As he also notes, “[R]eactive attitudes are ‘forms of communication’ that are simply unintelligible in their own terms without the presupposition that their objects can understand what is being said and act on this understanding” [4, p. 74-75]. R. Jay Wallace ties the reactive attitudes both to expectation and demand when writing “My main contention is that there is an essential connection between the reactive attitudes and a distinctive form of evaluation…that I refer to as holding a person to an expectation (or demand)” [9, p. 19]. Later, however, Wallace speaks more specifically in terms of expectations: “Emotions that are constitutively linked to expectations, in this sense of holding someone to an expectation, are the reactive attitudes” [9, p. 21]. Jonathan Bennett likewise offers somewhat of a mixed message on this matter. At one point Bennett seems to be couching the reactive attitudes in terms of demands when asserting, “The impression is conveyed that to have impersonal or reactive attitudes is just to ‘acknowledge the claims’ of men upon men or of others upon oneself. Strawson does not quite say this, but it is suggested by his silence regarding what else is involved…” [3, p. 41]. In another passage, however, Bennett appears to understand the reactive attitudes in terms of expectation. Bennett writes, “I submit that it helps if the participation and involvements which Strawson emphasizes are seen not primarily as the ground in which reactive attitudes grow but rather as embodied in or consequential upon them; not as required in the past or present, but as implied or suggested or invited for the future” [3, p. 43]. Given my project in this paper, I do not believe that it is necessary further to address such distinctions here. For this reason I have combined the notion of expectation and demand in to one necessary condition that holds if either expectation or demand are present.

5It should be noted that the demand condition may, in fact, not only be a necessary condition for the existence of the reactive attitudes, but may likewise be a sufficient condition for such human emotions. For if one assumes the authority to make a
because she has failed to attend his graduation party. It turns out that James’ resentment toward Cindy is merited only if it is the case that James has adequate grounds upon which to assert that Cindy should, in fact, have been there. Or, to use Strawson’s own language, James’ resentment must “rest on, and reflect, an expectation of, and demand for, the manifestation of a certain degree of goodwill or regard” [6, p. 85] toward James. If it turns out that Cindy is merely a girl upon whom James has a crush, and that there was no reasonable expectation that she was obligated to attend the party, then it would appear that James’ attitude is not reactive in the Strawsonian sense of the term. If, however, Cindy made a firm promise to James that she would attend, and at the last minute decided to go hiking instead, James’ attitude does appear to be validly characterized as reactive. One begins to see, therefore, that in order for the demand / expectation condition to be met, justifiable demands must exist which validate the existence of the reactive attitude that results. The important thing is not only that a demand is made, but that such a demand is likewise merited, for as I pointed out before, without such a justified demand, the reactive attitude has no force, and is instead merely a misguided emotion.

The fourth necessary condition that must be met in order to bring about a reactive attitude is one that must be stated in a negative fashion. This condition, which I will call the non-objective condition assumes that there must exist no reason to view the other from what Strawson calls “the objective standpoint.” As Darwall observes with regard to the objective attitude:

“We take an ‘objective’ attitude toward those we see as unfit for ‘ordinary adult human relationships,’ such as young children and those with ‘deep-rooted psychological abnormality,’ and regard them as appropriately subject to ‘treatment’ or ‘management’ rather than to reactive attitudes and forms of interpersonal address that involve them” [4, p. 69].

The absence of the objective attitude therefore assumes that the party with whom one is engaging is an individual who is, in fact, capable of being held to the appropriate demands associated with the given reactive attitude under consideration. The non-objective condition will be met only in those instances wherein there exists no viable exempting demand on another person, then he is in most cases (either explicitly or implicitly) fulfilling the other conditions which must be met in order to bring about a reactive attitude. This is, at least in part, what I understand to be driving Darwall’s project in [4].
conditions which are applicable to the case under consideration. In the presence of such exempting conditions, one should note that interpersonal and the interpretative conditions may be satisfied, yet because the objective point of view is warranted, a reactive attitude is not present.

4 A Provisional Definition of the Reactive Attitudes

Although I have not yet arrived at an exhaustive definition of what the reactive attitudes are, I believe that in the preceding paragraphs I have nevertheless provided an explanation of those requirements which must be met in order for the reactive attitudes to be present. Based upon such necessary conditions, I therefore propose the following definition of a reactive attitude:

A given attitude \((x)\) is justifiably labeled as reactive in the Strawsonian sense only if:

(a) \(x\) satisfies the interpersonal condition, and
(b) \(x\) satisfies the interpretive condition, and
(c) \(x\) satisfies the demand / expectation condition, and
(d) there exists no reason to view the party toward whom the reactive attitude is directed from the objective standpoint (that is, the non-objective condition is satisfied)

I should note that the preceding definition is minimalist in nature. That is, much more could possibly be said about the reactive attitudes—although Strawson himself does not seem interested in saying it. The preceding definition is therefore a mere guide by which I am able to evaluate the parity that exists between Strawson’s account and those additional reactive attitudes which I propose in the following section.

5 Expanding the Scope of the Reactive Attitudes

As a way of expanding Strawson’s account, I would like first to identify and explain what I am here calling the self-reflexive reactive attitudes.

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6Given what I have written above about the sufficient nature of demand / expectation condition, the perceptive reader will recognize that whenever \((c)\) is satisfied, so too will the other conditions be met. What is here labeled as \((c)\) may therefore be considered a more concise account of the broader set of conditions offered above. Since one of the goals of this paper is to unpack the ambiguities contained within Strawson’s minimalist account of the reactive attitudes, I have chosen the more detailed account offered here as opposed to defining the reactive attitudes by way of \((c)\) alone.
When speaking of this additional category of reactive attitudes, I am referring to those attitudes that result from the way in which a given individual acts (or fails to act) toward himself. I consider the self-reflexive reactive attitudes to be very similar to Strawson’s understanding of the self-reactive attitudes, yet with one very important distinction. As noted earlier, Strawson conceives of the self-reactive attitudes as those “attitudes associated with demands on oneself for others” [6, p. 86]. Much like the self-reactive attitudes, the self-reflexive reactive attitudes stem from demands upon oneself. However, in the case of the self-reflexive reactive attitudes, such demands are not directed toward others, but are instead directed back upon the same individual who makes the initial demand under consideration. In this way, such attitudes are self-reflexive, for the demands that are made are those which have the same person as both the one making the demand and as the individual toward whom the demand must be fulfilled. Although not explicitly second-personal, these attitudes are nonetheless second-personal in spirit since two parties (although loosely construed) are involved.\footnote{Bennett likewise alludes to the second-personal quality which may be found in the attitudes which one holds toward himself. He writes, “A self-reactive attitude does involve an important ‘interpersonal’ relation: remorse, for instance, can be represented as a confrontation... between one’s present self and some past self” [3, p. 44].}

The self-reflexive reactive attitudes find their genesis in the failure or success of an individual to live in accord with those demands which he has placed upon his own life. Such standards of conduct represent a claim that a given individual has directed toward himself, and therefore provide the basis from which the reactive attitude may develop. Examples of such self-reflexive reactive attitudes include—but undoubtedly are not limited to—disappointment in oneself, self-resentment, self-love or loathing, pride, or dissatisfaction with one’s actions or dispositions.

Second-personal reflexive reactive attitudes—which are the second addition I am proposing to Strawson’s initial trinity of reactive attitudes—likewise result from the way that a given individual acts (or fails to act) toward himself. In this way, the second-personal reflexive reactive attitudes are similar to the self-reflexive reactive attitudes discussed above. However, whereas the self-reflexive reactive attitudes involve only one individual who has failed or succeeded in living in accord with the demand he has placed upon himself, in the case of the second-personal reflexive reactive attitudes there is an additional party involved. That is, the second-personal reflexive reactive attitudes relate to the way in which person A reacts to person B’s success or failure in living in accord with
those demands which person B has imposed upon himself. Examples of
the second-personal reflexive reactive attitudes include disappointment
in the actions of others, taking pride in others’ actions, other-directed
regret, other-directed pride, disdain for the actions of another, and dis-
satisfaction concerning another’s moral growth.8

Perhaps an example will aid in the clarification of what I am sug-
gesting regarding the content of both the self-reflexive reactive attitudes
and the second-personal reflexive reactive attitudes. Consider the fol-
lowing interaction which takes place between a father and his son: the
son, who is not a particularly motivated student, has committed himself
to work more diligently at his studies. Moreover, the son makes known
to his father the promise that he has made to himself concerning his
academic pursuits.9 After having made this commitment to himself, the
son’s actions may serve to bring about a wide range of emotions on both
the part of the son himself and on the part of the father. Suppose that
the son remains true to his commitment, works diligently on his studies,
and over the course of one school year develops skills ascribable only to
an exemplary student. Given such a situation, the son may come to feel
great pride and satisfaction in his work. Such an emotion—which re-
sults from the way in which the son feels based upon how he has treated
himself—is what I am characterizing as a self-reflexive reactive attitude.
The demands which the son has placed upon himself have been met, and
the reactive attitudes of pride and satisfaction result.

The father, on the other hand, will likely exhibit the second-personal
reflexive reactive attitudes in this very same situation. As I explained
earlier, the second-personal reflexive reactive attitudes relate to the way
that one person feels about the fashion in which another has treated
himself. In the hypothetical situation under consideration, the father
will likely come to exhibit other-directed pride as well as satisfaction in
the way in which his son has treated himself. In this way, the manner
in which the son has treated himself provides a basis upon which the
second-personal reflexive reactive attitudes may come to be manifest in

8When using the term “other-directed,” I intend to refer to regret or pride that a
given individual feels for the way in which another person has acted. In this way, the
regret or pride that is felt does not result from the actions of the individual who has
such feelings, but is instead a regret or pride which is directed toward the actions of
another.

9Note that an even more intimately second-personal interaction may occur if the
son not only makes known his intentions, but likewise asks his father to help him
keep the promises that he has made to himself. In such a situation, there appears to
be an overlap between what I am calling the second-personal reactive attitude and
what Strawson speaks of as the personal reactive attitudes.
the father, for the pride and satisfaction which the father feels grow out of the claim that the son has made upon himself and the subsequent answering of this claim.

6 A Critical Assessment of the Proposed Reactive Attitudes

Having explained in greater detail what I mean when referring to the self-reflexive and second-personal reactive attitudes, I may now employ the groundwork that was laid in the first half of this paper. This can be done by showing that the reactive attitudes that I have introduced do indeed satisfy the necessary conditions which were outlined above. I believe that it is necessary to show that this is the case in order to demonstrate that the proposed reactive attitudes do, in fact, exhibit the same general characteristics as the more commonly-accepted reactive attitudes that Strawson introduces in “Freedom and Resentment.” Because of the fact that the self-reflexive and second-personal reflexive reactive attitudes are similar in the ways in which they satisfy the necessary conditions outlined above, rather than looking individually at each reactive attitude, I will instead examine each of the necessary conditions in turn and show how they are satisfied by both the self-reflexive and second-personal reflexive reactive attitudes.

Of all of the necessary conditions outlined above, it may be that the interpersonal condition is the one that is least obviously satisfied by the self-reflexive and second-personal reflexive reactive attitudes. As I mentioned above, when considering the manner in which these reactive attitudes satisfy the interpersonal condition it is necessary broadly to construe the notion of interpersonality. That is, one must not assume that two distinct individuals must be engaged in some moral transaction, but rather that two parties must be involved. I chose the word “party” to make room for the self-reflexive nature of the reactive attitudes under consideration, for in such cases the two parties involved are at times constituted by the same person.\(^\text{10}\) Whether conceived of in terms of Bennett’s past versus present self or—as I prefer—in terms of a hypothetical versus an actual self, there are, broadly construed, two parties involved. Again, although not interpersonal in the strictest sense

\(^{10}\) Again, note that an explicitly interpersonal component may be introduced when speaking of the second-personal reflexive reactive attitudes. This occurred in the case above wherein the son asked the father to hold him accountable for the demands that he made upon himself. In this case, the interpersonal condition is fulfilled in both the narrow and broad sense.
of the term, I believe that the self-reflexive and second-personal reactive attitudes are nonetheless second-personal in spirit.\footnote{I am aware that much more can, and perhaps should, be said at this point about the manner in which the self-reflexive and second-personal reactive attitudes satisfy the \textit{interpersonal condition}. Due to the limitations of this project, however, this task cannot be fully explored here. Nevertheless, I believe that I have provided adequate justification for my assertion that the reactive attitudes are interpersonal in nature by showing that two “parties” are indeed involved in such moral transactions.}

In the case of both the self-reflexive and the second-personal reflexive reactive attitudes the \textit{interpretive condition} plays a central role in bringing about the relevant reactive attitude. As Strawson notes,

\begin{quote}
“The reactive attitudes imply judgments that attribute responsibility to the actor, not merely causally, but for fault or liability” \cite[p. 892]{Strawson1952}.
\end{quote}

In the case of both the self-reflexive and second-personal reflexive reactive attitudes, there does indeed exist a judgment (that is an interpretation) that the relevant actor has either failed or succeed in answering the demand that has been placed upon him. In the case of the self-reflexive reactive attitude the \textit{interpretive condition} is met through an evaluation of a self-imposed demand. In the case of the second-personal reflexive reactive attitude, the \textit{interpretive condition} is satisfied by an evaluation which is made by a second party. In either case, Strawson’s suggestion that the reactive attitudes imply judgments (or interpretations) is evident.

That the \textit{interpretive condition} can be met implies that a demand does in fact exist. In the case of both the self-reflexive and second-personal reactive attitudes, such a demand concerns the way in which an individual should have acted toward himself. In each instance, the \textit{demand / expectation condition} is met when the individual imposes certain expectations or rules of conduct upon himself. In the case of the son discussed above, the demand condition was met when he imposed upon himself the responsibility of academic progress. Such a demand provided a basis for the self-reflexive reactive attitude which was later exhibited by the son. It likewise satisfied the \textit{demand / expectation condition} for the father, since after such a demand was made, the father was then able to hold his child accountable for living in accord with such strictures. In the more developed case wherein the son not only makes known his goals of academic progress, but likewise asks his father to assist him in such growth, a further and more explicit demand has been made. Therefore,
in either of these two instances, the demand / expectation condition is indeed satisfied.

The final necessary condition, namely the non-objective condition, requires relatively little attention, for it is difficult to reflect upon in general terms. On the contrary, it is most appropriately addressed in light of a particular potential manifestation of the reactive attitude(s) under consideration. That is, when evaluating the appropriateness of a given reactive attitude, one must consider the relevant information in order to determine whether or not the non-objective condition is (or should be) satisfied. If the son discussed above made a commitment to academic excellence, yet several months later learned that he suffered from a significant learning disability, the otherwise appropriate self-reflexive and second-personal reflexive reactive attitudes would no longer be merited. In such a case, Strawson’s suggestion that the objective attitude be employed would instead be appropriate. Based upon the inescapably contextual nature of evaluating whether or not the non-objective condition is met, I can merely assert the following conditional statement regarding this necessary condition: if a particular instance arises wherein a self-reflexive or second-personal reactive attitude is indeed merited, then it will be the case that the non-objective condition will have been appropriately satisfied.

7 The Necessity of the Self-Reflexive Reactive Attitudes

Although a great deal could be said about the importance of the additional categories of reactive attitudes proposed above, in what follows, I will limit my discussion to only one central issue, namely an examination of the theoretical necessity of a fuller understanding of the self-reflexive reactive attitudes. Such a discussion will, I hope, serve to explain why I believe that the self-reflexive reactive attitudes are the most basic of all.

As Strawson notes when speaking of the reactive attitudes that he sanctions,

“All these three types of attitudes are humanly connected. One who manifested the personal reactive attitudes in a high degree but showed no inclination at all to their vicarious analogues would appear as an abnormal case of moral egocentricity, as a kind of moral solipsist” [6, p. 86].

Although Strawson is making this point only with regard to the three categories of reactive attitudes found in his essay, I believe that one
must assert that the additional categories of reactive attitudes that I have proposed should likewise be included in this moral nexus. If it is the case that the attitudes that I have introduced are legitimately considered reactive, then they too must be included within the scope of the moral calculus about which Strawson writes.

Assuming that I am correct in asserting that the self-reflexive and second-personal reflexive reactive attitudes are justifiably connected to Strawson’s original listing of reactive attitudes, then it further appears reasonable to assert that such reactive attitudes are of significant import for human practices of moral responsibility. Of particular interest is the role that the self-reflexive reactive attitudes play in assisting in the formulation of the other attitudes which Strawson labels as reactive. The central point that I wish to make is that the reactive attitudes which Strawson himself sanctions are only able to arise because of the prior existence of the self-reflexive attitudes. It is my contention that in any situation wherein an other-directed reactive attitude arises, the theoretical justification of this attitude derives from the fact that one has first placed himself in a hypothetical situation wherein he is both the actor and the one acted upon. Having provisionally entered into such a situation, one is then able to translate the self-reflexive reactive attitude that he deems appropriate into the corresponding other-directed reactive attitude.

Strawson alludes to the importance of one’s own moral framework as it relates to how we address others when writing:

“In general, though within varying limits, we demand of others for others, as well as of ourselves for others, something of the regard which we demand of others for ourselves” [6, p. 86].

Strawson later writes:

“... [reactive attitudes] and their reception, the reactions to them, really are expressions of our moral attitudes and not merely devices we calculatingly employ for regulative purposes. Our practices do not merely exploit our natures, they express them”[6, p. 96].

In both passages, one observes Strawson hinting at the fact that is our own perspective on moral issues which dictates how we react to how others treat us and how others treat others.

When one finds reasons for resentment or love or disdain, each of these reactive attitudes has their genesis in hypothetical reasoning con-
cerning the way in which we ourselves would hope to act (or be acted upon) in the very same situation. That we can react at all to the situations or actions of others is due to the fact that we are first able to project ourselves into a given situation and determine those instances which are or are not worthy of the reactive attitudes. Though Strawson is correct to consider the notion of reactive attitudes within the context of second-personal relationships, by looking only at this aspect of such attitudes, he misses the point that the other-directed reactive attitudes find their genesis in those attitudes that one has (either hypothetically or actually) regarding one’s self. As a result, Strawson has failed note that the other-directed reactive attitudes gain their validation from the (hypothetical or actual) self-reflexive reactive attitudes.

One might profitably consider the point I am trying to make from the perspective of Kant’s Categorical Imperative: will that which you would like to be a universal. What I am suggesting is that when a given reactive attitude arises, what one is implicitly doing is willing that which he deems an appropriate universal within the context of the hypothetical situation wherein he is both the actor and the one acted upon. When one turn this hypothetical situation onto another individual—that is when he indicts or praises another person using the other-directed reactive attitudes—he is acting based upon the content derived from the mechanism which produces the self-reflexive reactive attitudes. In this way, it is the adoption of self-reflexive reactive attitudes which guides his subsequent reactive attitudes, for the reactive attitudes set forth by Strawson are actually derivative from the more basic notion of the self-reflexive reactive attitude.

8 Conclusion

That such a great amount of attention has been paid to a topic on which Strawson himself wrote comparatively little alludes to the significant importance of Strawson’s seminal treatment of the issue under consideration. Undoubtedly, this essay has only begun to uncover a small portion of the benefit that is to be gleaned from a fuller understanding of Strawson’s reactive attitudes. Perhaps most necessary is a more careful formulation of the ways in which the second-personal re-

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12 When speaking in terms of hypothetical reactive attitudes, I am referring to those instances wherein a reactive attitude is derived from projecting one’s self into a given situation, an act which thereby positions one’s self as both the actor and the one acted upon. Actual reactive attitudes are precisely that, situations wherein one comes to manifest a justified reactive attitude based upon concrete interactions.
flexive reactive attitudes may be of benefit to discussions of morality. Such an examination could no doubt address how it is that such reactive attitudes provide justification for holding others accountable for moral growth. Further benefit is to be gleaned from a fuller consideration of the connection between the second-personal reflexive reactive attitudes and (what I have proposed as the more foundational) self-reflexive reactive attitudes. It is my hope that such work may be profitably undertaken by myself and others in the future, for I am convinced that there exists much benefit to be derived from such further study.\footnote{The author would like to thank Stephen Darwall, Luke D. Potter, and two anonymous referees for their helpful comments on earlier drafts of this paper.}

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