Reviewer’s report

Title: VALUE PLURALISM IN RESEARCH INTEGRITY

Version: 1 Date: 01 Jul 2019

Reviewer: Michael O'Rourke

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for your very detailed and serious responses to my comments. I appreciate that. I like this version of the paper even more than the last. However, I still have a few comments, mainly focused on new text. They are below by page:

p. 3 - "gives rise to" is interpreted causally, given your response to my comment on the previous version, p. 26. Is that right? (I am assuming "gives rise to" is the converse of "derive from"). I think it would be helpful at some point to make this clear and provide an example, much as you do in the response to the comment on p. 26.

p. 4 - The Background section should be §2, I think.

p. 7 - I appreciate the long response to my concern about the conception of values. And I moved too quickly in my point about values as universals. I would want to argue that taking values to be good-making properties and universals implies that they are good-making properties for anything that has them (and so are "universally good-making" in the sense that if a thing has a value, it is made good in that way), independently of the cultural and historical context of that thing. This seems wrong to me, FWIW. (My choice of 'universally' was probably infelicitous here.) I do respect the decision to avoid deep philosophical waters but I think a footnote acknowledging those waters is called for, both to demonstrate to those of us who are philosophers that you are familiar with the issues and to demonstrate to those of us who are not philosophers that there are interesting related issues here.

p. 11 - Two concerns about the new text and footnote at the end of the Virtues section. First, 'good stewardship' is not found on any list; 'appropriate stewardship' is discussed under norms - is that what you mean to refer to? If one of the codes lists good stewardship, I think you should include it on a list of virtues in this subsection. Second, the footnote creates a direct contradiction with the claim in the text given that you are interpreting values as good-making features. Why not just own in the text the fact that given how you define values, all virtues are values? If virtues are "qualities that make people excellent", they are clearly good-making properties and so values. Of course, this might motivate someone to claim that you really only have two kinds of items (which still preserves pluralism), but it seems reasonable to me that there might be an important
subset of values (viz., the virtues) that deserves special attention, given that RCR codes concern
the practices of people.

p. 11 - How are consequences involved in specification of responsibilities and duties? It seems to
me that if I am responsible for X or if I have a duty to X, then I should X, regardless without
concern for the consequences. Are the consequences here rather the consequences for me if I fail
to meet my responsibilities and duties? That is, if I fail to X and I am obligated to do so, then I
can be criticized for that failure? Maybe this could be modified slightly for clarity.

p. 12 - But of course, intellectual thoroughness is also a value, so this boils down to the inability
to properly compare two values, which arises quite often. Just to belabor the point mentioned
above…

p. 12 - You say: "And one cannot compare an intellectual character trait like open-mindedness
with specific norms, such as 'take the wellbeing of animals into consideration', because they are
radically different sorts of things." What do you mean by compare here? One could expect that a
person who is open-minded might regard that particular norm as one that is a crucial part of their
way of operating in the world. They might take them to be "of a piece", in the sense that one
cannot be open-minded without following norms like that. Is this not comparison? Perhaps not in
the ontological sense; however, I wonder if going practical in this paragraph as you do shifts you
away from the more purely metaphysical point with which you start the paragraph. IMO, given
that this is put forward as an example of a kind of "confusion in assessing behavior in the light of
a code of conduct", failure to compare the virtue and the norm and see the connection between
them in this case would be a much bigger instance of this type of confusion.

p. 17 - I like the new footnote, but I took myself to be disputing what is now footnote 11. The
norm you cite comes under the ALLEA heading "2.6 Collaborative Working", which is pretty
clearly focused on a type of social group, viz., the research collaboration. Team research is
different from individual research (see, e.g., the NIH NCI Team Science Toolkit, https://www.teamscienctoolkit.cancer.gov/Public/Home.aspx), and it is a mistake to think that
a norm that focuses on research collaboration is just a meta-norm. The norm in question is
suggesting that it is bad social practice in this case to (say) assign to one team member the
responsibility for the integrity of the research; rather, this is everyone's responsibility. I think the
paper would be strengthened if you took this paragraph (and its associated footnotes) out and put
collaborative research in the social norm category.

p. 20 - You say, "It is unclear how one can compare the epistemic value of openness with the
professional/legal value of honoring agreements and contracts. Or, better, it seems that they
cannot be compared at all." Once again, I have difficulty with how you use compare. It's easy to
compare them - they mandate different and conflicting types of behavior, as you note. One
enjoins full disclosure, while the other enjoins only partial disclosure at most. The real problem
is what you go on to articulate - when they both apply, their internal conflict (recoverable from
the comparison) makes it difficult to know which one of them one should follow. And FWIW, this seems to me less an example of commensurability than an example of conflict, since they pretty clearly map on to a common scale (i.e., the amount of disclosure).

pp. 22-26 - In my opinion, this section is not relevant to your principal argument and should be elided. Your principal argument concerns pluralism, and the dimensions of pluralism you endorse are metaphysical (i.e., values, norms, virtues) and axiological (i.e., epistemic, moral, etc.). That there are conflicts within a normative category is interesting for those of us who wish to use these codes to direct behavior, but it doesn't help support your point about pluralism at all, unless there is some further dimension of plurality that applies within normative categories. You do say that it points to another dimension of axiological pluralism, but what is that exactly? In my view, this section in its current form is a distraction and your paper would be stronger without it. (Two notes on this comment: (a) Perhaps the idea is that conflict within a category can provide evidence that we need both norms and values, and so is an argument for metaphysical pluralism? I don't see how it points to another dimension of axiological pluralism - you can make out each subsection in terms of the category you start with (i.e., epistemic, moral) without introducing some new type or category of thing. (b) I think the point about conflict is already well-made in the previous section and you don't need a separate section for it, if that is part of your motivation here.)

p. 22 - Does this section require now that we understand both norms and values as falling within each of the 5 categories? If this is a point we need to understand this section, it might be better to find a way of putting it in the main text earlier and not just in a footnote.

p. 25 - I am not sure how the first (Australian code, p. 2) qualifies as a moral norm? The others seem moral, but this one seems exclusively epistemic. (Who have I harmed if I hold on to my findings and choose not to publish them?)

p. 29 - And FWIW, I think it is reasonable to think that different cultures will have different values that influence their knowledge-making practices, and this is also a source of pluralism (e.g., Indigenous cultures vs. colonial cultures).

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