NOTES

1 The problems of metaethics

1 I obtain this number by comparing the WHO's estimate that each year 3 million girls in Africa are at risk for genital cutting (see http://www.who.int/reproductive-health/publications/fgm/fgm_statement_2008.pdf) to their estimate that 10 percent of genital cutting procedures are type III.

2 See http://www.who.int/reproductive-health/publications/articles/lancetfgm.pdf, figures 1 and 2, p. 3.

3 Ibid., figure 2, p. 3.

4 See http://www.who.int/reproductive-health/publications/fgm/fgm_statement_2008.pdf, p. 29.

5 According to the US State Department: http://www.state.gov/g/wi/rls/rep/crfgm/10047.htm

6 See, for example, de Waal (1996); Haidt (2001); Greene *et al*. (2001); Greene and Haidt (2002); Nichols (2004); and Joyce (2006).

7 http://www.care.org/

8 http://www.oxfamamerica.org/

9 Though this view is often called the Humean Theory of Motivation, not everyone agrees that Hume really believed it.

10 The shopping-cart analogy is from Anscombe (1957, 56–7). Smith (1994, chapter 4) is another important and classic discussion of the Humean Theory of Motivation, and I take its name from him.

2 The noncognitivist turn

1 Etymologically, the name appears to be derivative from Ogden and Richards' (1923) characterization of some uses of language as 'emotive'.

2 The description that I have given of Ayer's view in the main text is controversial; see

exercises 8 and 9 for further discussion.

3   See Stevenson (1944, 82).

4   Ibid., 206.

5   It is a little bit anachronistic to see Ayer and Stevenson as reacting directly to this Very Big Idea; nevertheless, I think that it is particularly instructive to understand their views in opposition to it.

6   See also Hare (1952, 11–12).

3 The Frege–Geach problem, 1939–70

1   It is worth noting that noncognitivist treatments of 'boo!' *do* trivially satisfy the compositional constraint, because 'boo!' doesn't really figure in complex sentences. What is difficult about the Frege–Geach problem is that moral words like 'wrong' and 'should' *do* figure in complex sentences – all of the very same kinds of complex sentences as non-moral words like 'quick' and 'large'. This is what noncognitivists need to be able to explain.

2   See, for example, Strawson (1949).

3   See Wittgenstein (2005).

4   There are two ways to think about the symbols that I will be introducing, such as '~'. One is to treat them as an artificial language in which their meaning is stipulated to be captured by the truth tables. If we think about them that way, then it is uncontroversial (because true by stipulation) that '~' obeys the truth tables, but controversial whether 'not' just means '~'. This is the way of thinking usually employed in logic textbooks. On another way of proceeding, however – the way I use in this book – '~' is stipulated to be a kind of shorthand for 'it is not the case that', and what is controversial is whether its meaning can be captured by the truth table.

5   The idea that imperatives can be characterized as performatives in this way comes from Karttunen (1977).

6   Faith-based conditionals are discussed in Dreier (2009).

4 Expressivism

1   A mental state *type*.

6 The Frege–Geach problem, 1973–88

1   It is worth noting that nearly everything is controversial in philosophy, and the validity of *modus ponens* has been questioned by some philosophers – for example, see McGee (1985); Lycan (2001); and Kolodny and MacFarlane (unpublished). I'll continue to assume for our purposes in this book, however, that *modus ponens* is valid; if it turns out that *modus ponens* is valid only under restricted circumstances, then that is what noncognitivists would need to explain instead.

2   Careful readers will note that '&' and '~' are here being used as a different kind of connective, so that '[P]&~[Q]' picks out the state of being in the state of mind expressed by 'P' and not being in the state of mind expressed by 'Q'. Elsewhere in the text, '&' and '~' are sentential connectives. If we were going to discuss Blackburn's

HOA account at any greater length, it would be important to distinguish between them.

3   I am grateful to Johannes Schmitt for the idea behind exercises 5–8.

7 The Frege–Geach problem, 1988–2006

1   Just to be clear about the notation: putting square brackets around a sentence yields a name for a mental state, and putting vertical lines around a name for a mental state yields a name for a disagreement class.

8 Truth and objectivity

1   Observe that this kind of transcendental argument does not assume any kind of transcendental *idealism* – that is, it does not assume that if it is rationally inconsistent to think something, then it is true. The 'transcendental turn' in the argument is not justified by any further assumption that makes the transcendental argument valid; it merely makes rational sense in that given what the argument has established so far, it is rationally inconsistent to deny the argument's conclusion. So the transcendental step of the argument is more like the step from realizing that it is irrational to throw money down the toilet to the decision not to throw money down the toilet, than like the step from realizing that P and that if P, then Q, to drawing the conclusion that Q.

2   Compare Kant (1997); Hare (1981); and Korsgaard (1996).

9 Epistemology

1   Note that neither Dorr nor either of his commentators, Enoch (2003) or Lenman (2003), characterizes the problem as a dilemma; all assume that the second fork is obviously to be avoided.

2   Another way of seeing that the wishful thinking problem is distinct from the Frege–Geach problem – a point which Dorr himself highlights – is that the Frege–Geach problem arises in full force for expressivist theories in any domain – including theories about probability judgments, epistemic modals, or indicative conditionals. For example, an expressivist about probability judgments might hold that to think that the probability of P is 60 percent is to have a credence of 60 percent in P, an expressivist about epistemic modals might hold that to think that Jack might be in Seattle is to have a positive credence that Jack is in Seattle, and an expressivist about indicative conditionals might hold that to have a confidence of n that if you ask, she'll say 'yes', is to have a conditional credence of n in the proposition that she'll say 'yes', conditional on the proposition that you ask. (For more on expressivist theories in other domains, see Chapter 11.)

All of these theories face the traditional Frege–Geach problem, and need to explain how the sentences of which they seek to provide a special account can combine in complex sentences with the right semantic properties – including validating the right arguments. The Frege–Geach problem is a *general* problem for expressivist theories. But none of these theories face the wishful thinking problem

or any analogue of it, for there is nothing problematic about the idea that a subject could come to be justified in forming an ordinary descriptive belief about a matter of fact, on the basis of having a credence of 60 percent in P, on the basis of having a positive credence that Jack is in Seattle, or on the basis of having full credence in the proposition that she'll say 'yes', conditional on the proposition that you ask. Forming beliefs on the basis of other cognitive attitudes – such as levels of credence or conditional credence – is not intuitively problematic in the way that wishful thinking is, so there is no second fork to the dilemma. So this further supports the view that the wishful thinking problem is a distinct problem facing expressivist views in *metaethics*, and arising in *epistemology*, rather than from considerations from the philosophy of language.

3   Things are slightly more complicated in the case in which Edgar is justified in accepting P1 only on the basis of testimony. See exercises 6–9.

4   Lenman (2003, 272).

5   Ibid., 269 (italics in original).

6   A further limitation of Lenman's strategy derives from an important distinction between what epistemologists call *propositional* and *doxastic* justification. You have a propositional justification for believing that *p* if you have evidence that would make it rational for you to believe that *p* – even if you do not actually believe *p*, or if you believe that *p*, but only on the basis of evidence that does not really support it. But you are *doxastically* justified *in* believing that *p* only if you are rational in believing *p*, because you believe it on the basis of your evidence that supports it. On a natural way of understanding Lenman's strategy, it explains why Edgar has a *propositional* justification for drawing the conclusion, but it can explain why Edgar is doxastically justified in accepting the conclusion only if Edgar actually *relies* on the more complicated reasoning that Lenman appeals to. But even if the rest of Lenman's claims are right, this further claim is even more implausible.

10 The hybrid gambit

1   I am grateful to Ryan Hay for this exercise.

11 Prospects and applications

1   See, in particular, Egan *et al*. (2003) and MacFarlane (forthcoming).

2   For the principle of reflection, see van Fraassen (1984).

3   This exercise is borrowed from Edgington (1986).