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[Book Review of] *Beyond the New Morality: The Responsibilities of Freedom*, by Germain Grisez and Russell Shaw

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to be logically sound and scientifically based.

Reasoning in Medicine strikes a good balance between the theoretical and the practical, between the abstract and the concrete. It continually illustrates the various conceptual aspects by reference back to the individual case study: Mrs. Halprin, her disease, her relating of symptoms to her physicians and their response to this. To the "artist-diagnostician" who believes that his judgment is essentially based on intuition and experience alone, elements never denied by the authors, the book will have little to say. But to all those physicians and philosophers who believe that beneath the surface of such judgments lie extraordinarily complex, if implicit, patterns of reasoning, the book is a commendable effort to unpack and elucidate those patterns.

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Beyond the New Morality: The Responsibilities of Freedom

Germain Grisez and Russell Shaw

Third, Revised Edition, Notre Dame, U. of Notre Dame Press, 1988, xi & 256 pp., Index, Paper

Beyond the New Morality: the Responsibilities of Freedom by Germain Grisez and Russell Shaw first appeared in 1974 and underwent a first revision in 1980. This third edition retains, with some important exceptions noted below, the same chapter structure of the earlier editions. The normative ethical theory developed in the new edition will also be familiar to readers of the 1974 and 1980 editions. It is a revised natural law theory that seeks to take into consideration the human agent as practically rational, the human act as free and the human person as end. However, the 1988 edition contains an amplification and clarification and, in one instance, an almost complete re-working of earlier views.¹ This is the result, in part, of the authors' willingness to take into account various criticisms, especially those originating from ethicists who think of themselves as belonging to the Thomistic natural law tradition.²

The partial restructuring of the earlier editions to be found here represents more than a mere cosmetic change. The title changes of Chapter 7 (from "Purposes-Ulterior and Otherwise" to "Human Goods: Reasons for Choices") and of chapter 9 (from "Two Ways of Choosing" to "The First Principle of Morality") signify subtle philosophical developments in the authors' understanding of the psychological elements involved in morally right and wrong action as well as in human action *tout court*. Chapter 12 of the 1980 edition entitled "Duties: Responsibilities in Community", is now chapter 14 and is treated after the chapter entitled "Persons, Means, and Ends" (changed from chapter 13 to chapter 12) and "When Action is Ambiguous" (changed from chapter 14 to chapter 13). I believe that this is a very important structural change. It is well-known that contemporary applied ethics, in its treatment of ethical dilemmas, tends to assimilate our fundamental moral obligations and our duties as members of various communities.³ Conflicts between basic moral obligations are thought to be resolvable in the same way that conflicts between

duties are. One somehow weighs the competing obligations or duties on the subjective scales of one's intuitions in order to determine which of them merit(s) implementation and which deserve(s) to be sacrificed. In their book, Grisez and Shaw distinguish between fundamental human obligations and communitarian duties and show convincingly in chapter 12 and 13 that basic moral dilemmas cannot be non-prejudicially solved in the aforementioned way. In chapter 14, they suggest a number of alternative ways of resolving conflicts among our duties as responsible members of various communities.

The most substantive changes occur in chapters 9 and 11. The two earlier sub-headings of chapter 9 have given way to four sub-headings. The first three of these sub-headings (A. "Matter of Choice;" B. "Two Ways of Choosing"; C. "The First Principle of Morality") are all new and the last sub-heading represents a partial re-working of part of the earlier chapter. Chapter 12, entitled "Guidelines for Love", is a totally revised chapter on the "modes of responsibility" — those moral principles mediating between the first principle of morality and substantive moral norms such as those against the intentional killing of human beings. These two chapters together present what is unique, in some sense, to the ethical theory of Grisez *et al.* The heart of morality and immorality, as they see it, is explicated in these chapters. "Moral truth and moral goodness are a matter of taking fully into account all the principles of practical reason — all the basic human goods" (p. 105) and morally right choice ("inclusivistic choice") "involves an attitude of service to, rather than domination of, the fundamental human goods" (p. 106). Immoral choice, on the other hand, is practically unreasonable, and involves a "kind of self-mutilation . . . a violation (at least incipient) of community, and . . . a rejection of the reality sought by the religious quest". (105)

All in all, this little introductory work, easy to read but rewarding repeated mediation, shows Grisez *et al* in complete possession of their theory.

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References

1. The new edition takes into account developments in the theory since 1980. These developments have appeared in other works, most notably in volume I of the *Way of the Lord Jesus, Christian Moral Principles*, Franciscan Herald Press, 1983. For the most recent presentation of the basics of their ethical theory see *The American Journal of Jurisprudence*, 1987, Vol. 32, Notre Dame Law School, Natural Law Institute, pp. 99-151.
2. One recent extended critique of Grisez's theory is Russell Hittinger's *A Critique of the New Natural Law Theory*, University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, Indiana, 1987.
3. A good example of this methodology can be found in Tom Beauchamp and James Childress, *Principles of Biomedical Ethics*, 3rd Edition, Oxford University Press, 1989.