

but in fact she argues for better integration of cultural minorities into the major social and political institutions, rather than for state support for separate cultural institutions (such as separate schools). This strikes as an unorthodox reading of multiculturalism, but one that is, in fact, entailed by the ideas developed in the earlier chapters.

In conclusion, Costa's book is a valuable addition to both Rawlsian and civic education scholarship. Her argument for a more robust form of civic education clearly reveals the important role that education can play in search of social justice for the transformation of our non-ideal societies. The book develops some valuable and concrete suggestions about how schools can cultivate the political virtues of reasonableness, tolerance and civility.

MIHAELA GEORGIEVA  
*Maastricht University*

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### **Lying and Deception. Theory and Practice**

THOMAS L. CARSON, 2010  
Oxford, Oxford University Press  
xix + 288pp, (hb) \$65.00

Lying is a critical concept in moral philosophy. There are all sorts of questions one can ask about it: Is it morally acceptable to lie in certain occasions? Is lying always harmful? What is the difference between lying and deceiving? But before anyone addresses any questions about lying, Carson argues in *Lying and Deception, Theory and Practice*, she first needs to know what a lie is (p. 13). Further, he adds 'an important test of any theory of right and wrong or moral obligation is about the morality of lying, whether it gives an adequate account of the morality of lying and deception' (p. 1). By unpacking and defending his proposed definition, his intention is to provide a comprehensive account of lying and to distinguish it from its related terms. The book combines the author's previous work on ethical theory, business and professional ethics and distinguishes itself from most recent works on this topic through its detailed and up-to-date investigation of moral and conceptual issues regarding lying and deception. It certainly satisfies the description 'theory and practice' that appears in its title as it is not restricted to addressing questions on ethical theory since one third of the book is dedicated to the applications of the proposed theory.

The book is divided into three parts. Parts I and II, 'Concepts' and 'Moral Theory', act as the conceptual roadmap for Part III 'Applications'. Throughout the course of it, the author manages to engage with topics of general philosophical interest as well as specific topics pertaining to the morality of lying. These general topics include the notion of the golden rule, the nature of deception and the concept of honesty.

In Part I, Carson revises and elaborates upon a complex account of lying that emerged from his influential paper 'The morality of lying' (*Noûs* 40: 2006); this conception is the groundwork of the rest of the book. The definition is briefly sketched as follows 'A lie is a deliberate false statement that the speaker warrants to be true' (p. 3). In this first

part, the author explores variations on the definition, aiming to address the objections raised against the 2006 article; he also gives a careful consideration of other definitions of lying. He is keen to emphasize the differences between lying and deception and other related concepts such as keeping someone in the dark, concealing and withholding information, 'spin', 'half truths', and bullshit. Lying and deception differ in two respects: first, deception does not require, unlike lying, that one makes a false statement or make a statement at all; second, 'unlike lying the word deception connotes success' (p. 55). The author also offers a great insight and critical appreciation of Frankfurt's account of bullshit (pp. 58–63). There is, however, no reference to self deception.

There are many aspects of Carson's discussion of the variations in the definition of lying that are worthy of comment. The two features that distinguish it from the standard definitions of lying are: the notion of warrant, and the view that lying does not require the intention to deceive. The author goes to a great length to justify both of these features. Regarding the latter, the main argument is that lying is not a form of deception, contrary to most standard definitions, although it involves a breach of trust. But one of the questions this view raises is: what is uniquely wrong about lying, if it is not a form of deception? Is it simply because of the moral presumption that lying is harmful? The author explores various cases of lying without the intent to deceive, and suggests that breaching one's trust is different from the intending to deceive (pp. 22–3). In order to justify his claim he distinguishes between harmful and 'white lies'.

The basic idea of warrant is as follows: 'A warranty of truth is a kind of guarantee or promise that what one says is true' (p. 25). Further, 'if one warrants the truth of a statement, then one promises or guarantees, either explicitly or implicitly, that what one says is true' (p. 26). Of significance is that a speaker can warrant a statement without intending to do so. This cause of concern for Carson leads him to add another condition to his definition: 'the speaker does not take himself to be not warranting the truth of what she says' (p. 29).

In Part II, 'Moral Theory', Carson focuses on arguments against lying and deception from various schools of thought. He considers the views of Kant and his absolute prohibition against lying, act-utilitarians like J.S. Mill, rule-consequentialists like B. Hooker and intuitionists like W.D. Ross. Following a careful consideration of the categorical imperative, Carson points out that the widely discussed prohibition of lying cannot be found in any form of the categorical imperative. The author argues that there are cases in which lying is permissible and in such cases a person's autonomy is not violated. Further, most of the debates about lying and deception between act-utilitarian and their critics are far from conclusive due to the appeal to moral intuitions. Carson offers a definition of the golden rule and of moral reasoning arguing that there is a moral presumption against 'harmful' lying and deception.

In Part III, 'Applications', the author applies the conclusions of Part I and II to a wide range of practical moral issues in public life: deception and withholding information in sales; deception in advertising; bluffing in negotiations; the duty of professionals to inform clients; lying and deception by leaders as an alleged reason for fighting or preventing wars; and distorting the historical record by lying, deceiving, telling half-truths or spinning the facts. Without sacrificing rigour, the author has succeeded in making the examples as accessible as possible to as wide a philosophical audience as possible. For example, he gives an excellent account of the lies and false claims of the German leaders about the causes of Germany's defeat in WWI (pp. 232–40). According

to the myth of ‘the stab in the back’ socialists and Jews were to blame for the defeat of Germany and what followed it. Carson’s example support his thesis that ‘deception and dishonesty about the historical record often create aggravate conflicts and sometimes lead to disastrous consequences and, that, therefore this sort of dishonesty and deception is morally wrong’ (p. 232).

The book concludes with the praise of honesty as virtue (pp. 257–266), which is largely ignored by most moral and political philosophers. There is a distinction between ‘honesty in a negative sense’ (having a strong principled disinclination to tell lies or deceive others) and honestly in a positive sense which involves being candid, open and willing to promote information’. Carson makes the strong case that honesty in the negative sense is a virtue in ordinary circumstances, while in the positive sense it often is not.

Anyone with a philosophical interest in the concept of lying will find Carson’s book rewarding, and it is necessary reading for those interested in the subtle distinctions between lying and its related terms as well as at the latest developments in the growing bibliography on the subject.

ELENI KAKLAMANOY

*Trinity College Dublin*

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### **The Philosophy of International Law**

SAMANTHA BESSON and JOHN TASIOLAS (eds)

Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010

xiv + 611 pp (Pb)

The publication of this book represents an attempt to rectify a deficiency in legal philosophy that has been festering for some time. On the back cover, the publisher has promoted Besson and Tasioulas’s work as ‘the most up-to-date and comprehensive treatment of the philosophy of international law in existence’. Even before I opened the book, I had to agree with this assessment, though to some extent I felt as if the claim was akin to Robinson Crusoe declaring himself king of all he surveyed: when one is alone, it is relatively easy to be the top dog, regardless of merit. Upon reading the volume, I can attest that the work also succeeds on merit in addressing a subject matter in which others have feared, or at least failed, to tread.

Legal philosophy is an ancient discipline, probably nearly as old as law itself. The reason that we can say this with confidence is that legal philosophy begins to develop as soon one begins to justify the creation and imposition of law, and the human mind seems to abhor rules that lack justification. Typically, legal philosophy in one form or another emerges as soon as one argues that those subjected to the law have some sort of moral obligation to obey it. Or, at a slightly more sophisticated level, legal philosophy begins to develop once one acknowledges that the law is not absolute and that there are ‘higher standards’ (or desired goals) against which the law can be compared with, and, if necessary, criticised. The roots of today’s Western legal philosophy are found in the

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