rule. When an agent breaks such a rule in order to do the best thing available to him then what he does is objectively wrong.

Johnson is therefore not only an indirect consequentialist, but also a rule consequentialist. Indeed, his rule consequentialism may lead us to doubt whether he is really an indirect consequentialist at all, since the rationale of (individual or collective) strategies is no longer that they are the best means of satisfying an independent (maximizing) criterion of the right. Be this as it may, Johnson's rule consequentialism should give us pause. It is, I think, easy to see why we would be led to regard consequentially justified rules as right-defining. After all, conventional moral rules have been accepted only if they have come to be used in the assessment of conduct, thus only if they have been internalized as standards of right and wrong. If we are to participate in a social practice capable of generating mutual trust then we must share this attitude towards the rules.

However, it is a further step to erase maximization altogether as our ultimate objective criterion of right and wrong, thus depriving us of the ability to say that violations of justified rules may themselves sometimes be justified. Here Johnson seems not to have fully appreciated the lessons of the legal analogy which he takes so seriously. If I break a (consequentially justified) law in order to advance some particularly worthy cause, then what I have done is unlawful, but it need not be wrong (unjustified). Surely we sometimes want to be able to say the same if I break a (consequentially justified) conventional moral rule for the same reason. However, if we treat the rule as defining what counts as right and wrong, then we will be unable to do so. The problem here, as Johnson himself recognizes in his critique of the standard view, is that the language of right and wrong carries with it a good deal of practical force; it is our most basic and general resource for articulating what agents should or should not do. We cannot afford to relinquish the critical stance which these normative concepts afford us by identifying them with conformity or nonconformity to even the best set of rules—at least not if we are consequentialists.

Although defence of his rule consequentialism is one of the most prominent themes in Moral Legislation, Johnson never quite manages to make a convincing case for it, or to dispel its air of paradox. But even if he has here gone too far, there remains much in this closely argued book which will reward the (patient) reader interested in the prospects of indirect consequentialism. The emphasis on the social dimension of indirect strategies is particularly welcome, as is Johnson's thorough and careful treatment of many other aspects of the current debate.

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Max Black died in 1988. This volume is a collection of papers that he wrote in his late sixties and in his seventies. The papers address some of the wide range
of issues with which Black was concerned during a long philosophical career. The style is relaxed and reflective. The 'perplexities' of the title are savoured rather than resolved. Occasionally Black hints at solutions that he is thinking about, and that he hopes to fill in 'on another occasion'; but more often the suggestion is that the puzzles reflect the ambiguity of our concepts, and that there are no solutions to be found.

Two main themes run through the book. One is a critique of conventional decision theory, with its Bayesian account of probability and its use of the expected utility criterion. Black argues that the standard axioms of decision theory, as formulated by Savage and others, are not quasi-logical or self-evident principles of rationality. The transitivity axiom—that if X is preferred to Y, and Y is preferred to Z, then X is preferred to Z—is usually regarded as the least contestable of all the axioms of decision theory, but Black argues that non-transitive preferences need not be incoherent. It would, he says, make perfectly good football sense to say that Leeds will probably beat Manchester, that Manchester will probably beat Newcastle, and that Newcastle will probably beat Leeds. So why rule out the possibility that preferences over options have a similar structure? The usual objection is that if preferences are non-transitive, it may not be possible to determine which is the best option in a set of more than two. (If X is preferred to Y, Y to Z, and Z to X, which option is best in the set \{X, Y, Z\}? In reply, Black asks why we should presuppose that choices from sets of three options should be determined by preferences which relate to choices over pairs of options.

For Black, Bayesian decision theory is just one of many possible models of rational decision-making. To use the Bayesian model is to impose a particular kind of structure on the world; it is to accept a particular way of describing decision problems. What we are imposing or accepting (for example, the principle that a person has transitive preferences over all options) are no more than the presuppositions of a particular model. The concept of rationality is much broader and much less restrictive than the Bayesian model. What, then, does 'rationality' really mean? Black appeals to 'actual usage' of the word in the community of scholars, and concludes that the concept is inherently ambiguous:

'Rationality' is a concertina word, sometimes swelling . . . to extravagant extension, but at other times contracting to implausibly narrowed stipulations. The concept of rationality, one might say, is incorrigibly elusive (p. 99).

This conclusion parallels the other main theme of the book, that language is, and cannot but be, ambiguous. On this aspect of Black's work, I can claim no expertise. I can only say that I enjoyed reading what he had to say. In two chapters, Black discusses the role of metaphor, rehearsing and extending the ideas he presented in his book Models and Metaphors (Cornell University Press, 1962). He rejects the 'reductionist' position that there is an unproblematic standard of literal utterance, and that metaphorical utterances can be replaced by literal translations.

Black's own position is summarized in the appropriately metaphorical (and intriguingly self-referential) claim that 'every metaphor is the tip of a submerged model' (p. 62). A metaphorical statement invites the hearer to use one
thing as a model of another. (Black, I take it, is inviting us to use an iceberg as a model of this theory.) The idea of invitation is important: a creative response is required from the hearer. Since so much of the model is 'submerged', there may be many different ways of completing it, all consistent with what has been said. We should not suppose that there is a uniquely correct model, or even that the speaker has a unique model in mind. (The speaker may be expressing a hunch that it is possible to complete the model in an illuminating way, without knowing how to do this.) For Black, there is a further and more radical sense in which metaphors are creative: a metaphor may 'enable us to see aspects of reality that the metaphor's production helps to constitute' (p. 74). How can utterance of a metaphor create an aspect of reality? It is fundamental for Black that 'the world is necessarily a world under a certain description' (p. 74). (This idea also underlies Black's critique of Bayesian decision theory: Bayesian theory presupposes a certain description of the world.) To find a new description of the world, or a new perspective on it, is to bring into existence a new aspect of reality.

In the final chapter, Black explores 'the radical ambiguity of a poem'. Taking a poem by Wordsworth as his example, he argues that poems may be capable of being read in many ways. There may be no sense in which one reading is correct (or even intended by the poet) and the others not. In the case of Wordsworth poem, unquestionably competent critics offer very different readings, even though 'all the relevant information, and much that is irrelevant, is now in full sight'. What is at issue is not a matter of facts, but 'a matter of deciding how to take facts which are in plain view' (p. 190). On my reading, at least, we may take it that Black is inviting us to take poetry as a metaphor for the radical ambiguity which he saw as an inescapable feature of our language and concepts.

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This is a very good book; intelligent, well-written, and incisive. It deals with an important subject: the justificatory defence of liberalism and the relation of that justificatory theory to liberal practice in contemporary America.

Macedo's project is to articulate the ideals, values and principles which underlie liberal institutions and practices. He argues that at the heart of liberal theory and practice is a commitment to public reasonableness, which is embodied in the liberal practice of seeking public justifications of political principles. He identifies a number of liberal practices and theories—the American Constitution, the institution of judicial review, Rawls's A Theory of Justice—that evince this commitment to public reasonableness, i.e., they all seek justifications that are acceptable to reasonable people.

Identifying a commitment to public reasonableness as the core of liberalism