

1 **Jack, Jill, and Jane**
2 **in a Perfect Moral Storm**

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9 **S**tephen Gardiner's *A Perfect Moral Storm* is a wonderful
10 book. It goes a long way towards explaining why we have
11 failed to act on climate change. I agree almost entirely with
12 its broad conclusions and with most of its specific claims. The
13 author and I are comrades in the struggle, and like-minded in the
14 ways that matter most. Still, there is an important difference
15 between us. I do not want to overstate this difference nor
16 exaggerate its significance. However, I believe that articulating
17 this difference can help clarify why moral arguments have largely
18 failed to move us to respond to climate change.

19 Gardiner and I agree that our response to climate change
20 constitutes a "profound ethical failure" but we disagree about the
21 nature of this failure.¹ Gardiner thinks that we have moral norms
22 and concepts that apply that we are not living up to. Thus we are
23 the proper subjects of moral condemnation. He charges us with
24 "willful self-deception and moral corruption"(11). I do not deny
25 that with respect to some of our climate change contributing
26 behavior there are applicable moral norms which we fail to live

¹ The quoted words are from the flyleaf of Stephen M. Gardiner, *A Perfect Moral Storm: The Ethical Tragedy of Climate Change* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). Parenthetical page references are to this book.

1 up to, and that willful self-deception and moral corruption are to
2 some extent involved in our contributions to climate change as
3 they are in many other areas of life. My claim is that with much of
4 our practical reason, both moral and prudential, we do not have
5 adequate norms and values that motivate us to address climate
6 change. This is a “profound ethical failure”—or to use another of
7 Gardiner’s descriptions, a “tragedy”—but it is not the same kind
8 of failure or tragedy as failing to live up to one’s principles. In my
9 opinion, the really profound moral challenge of climate change
10 consists in formulating and implementing new moral norms and
11 concepts that are adequate to the problems we face in this
12 unprecedented period in human history.

13 In the next section I present an analogy that is intended to
14 help explain why we do not see many acts that contribute to
15 climate change as presenting serious moral challenges. I then
16 respond to Gardiner’s criticisms of my use of this analogy. In the
17 following section I discuss an analogy that Gardiner has offered
18 between a case drawn from Jane Austin’s novel, *Sense and*
19 *Sensibility*, and some challenges that we face with respect to
20 climate change. Finally, I draw some conclusions.

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I

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Jack and Jill

25 Most of the time we do not subject people’s actions to moral
26 evaluation. This may be because we consider most of what people
27 do to be ‘their business,’ belonging to a private sphere that is
28 beyond the reach of morality. Or it may be because we regard
29 most of what people do to be morally permissible. Generally our
30 moral thinking only consciously engages when something strikes

1 us as not quite right. There are also acts that come to our
2 attention because they are morally exemplary or ‘beyond the call
3 of duty,’ but these occur less frequently than the feeling that
4 something has gone wrong. Various moral theorists would like to
5 dislodge this way of seeing things, but nevertheless this is more or
6 less the view that is embedded in common sense morality. When
7 it comes to acts, the most fundamental distinction in our
8 prevailing moral consciousness is between those that are morally
9 suspect and those that are not, and we see most of what people
10 do as in some way for some reason outside the domain of moral
11 evaluation.

12 A paradigm of an act that is morally suspect is one that has the
13 following characteristics. An individual acting intentionally harms
14 another individual; both the individuals and the harm are
15 identifiable; and the individuals and the harm are closely related in
16 time and space.

17 Consider an example.² Suppose that Jill has parked her bicycle
18 on the porch of her house and then gone inside to make dinner.
19 Jack, who has been looking for a bicycle to steal, sees Jill’s bicycle
20 on the porch, cuts the lock, and rides off. The following is an apt
21 characterization of this case:

22 1. Jack intentionally steals Jill’s bicycle.

² I introduced these cases in “The Moral and Political Challenges of Climate Change,” in *Creating a Climate for Change: Communicating Climate Change and Facilitating Social Change*, edited by S. Moser and L. Dilling (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 475-482, and discussed them further in *Reason in a Dark Time: Why the Struggle Against Climate Change Failed—And What It Means for Our Future* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014). These examples were inspired by J. Glover, “It Makes No Difference Whether or Not I Do It,” *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Supplementary Volumes 49 (1975), 171-209.

1 In this case Jack intentionally acts in such a way as to
2 knowingly harm another individual.³ Both the perpetrator and
3 victim (Jack and Jill) are clearly identifiable, and they are closely
4 related in time and space. This case is a clear candidate for moral
5 evaluation, and most of us would resoundingly say that what Jack
6 did was wrong.

7 Consider, however, what happens when we alter the case
8 along various dimensions. We may still see the case as a candidate
9 for moral evaluation but its claim to be a paradigm weakens.
10 Consider the following examples:

11 2. Jack is part of an unacquainted group of strangers, each of
12 which, acting independently, takes one part of Jill's bicycle,
13 resulting in the bicycle's disappearance.

14 3. Jack takes one part from each of a large number of bicycles,
15 one of which belongs to Jill.

16 4. Jack and Jill live on different continents, and the loss of Jill's
17 bicycle is the consequence of a causal chain that begins with
18 Jack ordering a used bicycle at a shop.

19 5. Jack lives many centuries before Jill, and consumes materials
20 that are essential to bicycle manufacturing; as a result, it will
21 not be possible for Jill to have a bicycle.

22 In 2 we transform the agent who harms Jill into an
23 unstructured collective. In 3 we reduce the amount of harm that

³ There are some ambiguities about intentional action so let me stipulate the following. When I say that an agent intentionally *phi*s, I will mean that the agent acted intentionally and that *phi*-ing would be a reasonable description of the act from the agent's point of view whether or not the agent acted under that description.

1 Jack causes Jill to a minimum. In 4 we disrupt the spatial
2 contiguity between Jack and Jill and cancel Jack’s *mens rea*.⁴ In 5
3 we cancel Jack’s *mens rea* and also disrupt the temporal contiguity
4 between Jack and Jill. Each case, I claim, is less of a paradigm for
5 moral evaluation than Case 1. Indeed, some would not see
6 anything morally questionable about Jack’s actions in 4 and 5. 2
7 and 3 may still be seen as candidates for moral evaluation, but less
8 obviously so than 1. People who see Jack’s action as wrong in 2
9 and 3 are likely to see it as less wrong than in 1.

10 Now consider Example 6 which incorporates all of the
11 changes serially considered in examples 2-5.

12 6. Acting independently, Jack and a large number of
13 unacquainted people set in motion a chain of events that
14 causes a large number of future people who will live in another
15 part of the world from ever having bicycles.

16 For many people this is just an abstract description of normal,
17 everyday behavior. There is nothing suspect about it at all. For
18 other people the perception persists that there is something
19 morally questionable about this case. This is because what some
20 people take to be at the center of a moral problem persists: some
21 people have acted in a way that harms other people. However,
22 most of what typically accompanies this core has disappeared,
23 and this is why some people do not see this case as presenting a
24 moral problem. Even for those who do see this case as presenting
25 a moral problem, the wrongness of the acts and the culpability of
26 the agents are greatly diminished in comparison to Example 1. In
27 Example 6 it is difficult to identify the agents, the victims, and the
28 causal nexus. Nor does it appear that anyone has intentionally

⁴ *Mens rea*’ is Latin for “guilty mind.” In many cases it is regarded in the law as a necessary condition for criminal liability.

1 deprived future people who will live in another part of the world
2 from ever having bicycles. The fact that they will not have
3 bicycles is just a consequence of Jack and others getting on with
4 their lives. In these circumstances it is difficult for the network of
5 moral concepts that involve responsibility and harm to gain
6 traction. In my opinion it is Example 6 that bears the greatest
7 resemblance to the climate change case. If I am right about this
8 then it is not surprising that many people do not see climate
9 change, at least with respect to individual responsibility, as
10 presenting a moral problem.

11 Stephen Gardiner and others have challenged this analogy.⁵
12 Some of the charges involve claims to the effect that the stakes
13 are much lower in the Jack and Jill case than in the climate change
14 case; that our contributions to climate change involve collective
15 endeavors and not only individual actions; that our reasons for
16 performing acts that contribute to climate change are often much
17 more trivial than Jack's reasons for acting in ways that contribute
18 to future people not having bicycles; that climate change affects
19 present people who are citizens of our own countries and people
20 who are not poor, as well as future people who are citizens of
21 other countries and are poor. Collecting these thoughts Gardiner
22 offers the following analogy which he thinks is closer to the case
23 of individuals acting in a way that contributes to climate change
24 case than my Case 6:

25 7. George and his buddies like to have big firework displays over the river.
26 These shoot burning debris into the air, predominantly over the poorer
27 neighborhoods on the other side. This has already imposed and continues

⁵ Stephen Gardiner, "Is No One Responsible for the Climate Change Tragedy: Climate Change as a Challenge to Our Ethical Concepts," in *The Ethics of Global Climate Change*, edited by D. Arnold (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 38-59. Peter Singer and Rebecca Tuvel have also challenged this analogy in talks and unpublished comments.

1 increasingly to impose, a serious risk on many people in the area that their
2 houses will catch on fire. George and his buddies are aware of this risk,
3 keep saying that they will cut back, buy safer fireworks, contribute funds to
4 the fire department in the poorer neighborhoods, and so on. But they
5 don't. Instead they keep making the displays bigger. They like fireworks.
6 (They could like other things too. But they are used to fireworks.)⁶

7 Gardiner thinks that “this example conveys a sense of moral
8 severity substantially beyond Jack 6” and that this shows that my
9 claim that “our concepts of individual moral responsibility must
10 be extended or revised requires further defense.”⁷

11 Gardiner and I agree that the cases that are most analogous to
12 many actions that contribute to climate change (my Case 6, his
13 George 7) are less morally valanced than a paradigm case of
14 moral responsibility (my Case 1, his George 1).⁸ What we disagree
15 about is the distance between Case 6 and George 7, and the
16 paradigms of morally valanced acts. I claim that the distance is so
17 great that we tend to see the acts that are most analogous to some
18 of those that contribute to climate change as not morally urgent
19 or perhaps not morally valanced at all. Gardiner, on the other
20 hand, sees these acts as conveying a sense of moral severity, even
21 if not to the same degree as the paradigms.

22 It is helpful to clarify the disagreements. My claim is not that
23 many of the acts that contribute to climate change are best seen
24 as like Case 6, but rather that through the lens of common sense
25 morality we in fact tend to see these acts as analogous to Case 6.
26 What Gardiner seems most clearly committed to is that we ought

⁶ *Ibid.*, 47.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 47.

⁸ In George 1, George steals Sanjay's smoke alarm and then sets fire to Sanjay's house while Sanjay is asleep inside. He does this because he is bored and would like a little excitement.

1 to see many acts that contribute to climate change as more like
2 his George 7 than my Case 6. Since my claim is about how we
3 tend to see such acts and Gardiner's claim is about how we ought
4 to see them, we do not yet have a disagreement. However, since
5 Gardiner thinks that his George cases undermine my argument he
6 is committed to the claim that we do tend to see some central
7 acts that contribute to climate change as more analogous to
8 George 7 than to my Case 6. This, I think, is incorrect. Although
9 empirical research would be required to show this conclusively, it
10 seems obvious to me that people do not see driving an SUV,
11 overheating a house, or flying in an airplane as like throwing
12 fireworks over poor parts of town. Whatever the weaknesses of
13 my Case 6, it is closer to how most people see some actions that
14 contribute to climate change than George 7.

15 I am also skeptical about Gardiner's claim that we ought to see
16 such actions as analogous to George 7. George 7 fails to capture
17 the temporal and spatial dislocations, and indirect relations
18 between individual acts that contribute to climate change and
19 climate change damages. Nor are most such acts as gratuitous,
20 well-understood, or inherently risky as shooting burning debris
21 into the air for purposes of entertainment. Still, analogies are not
22 identities and argument can go on indefinitely about which
23 hypothetical cases are the best analogies to various actions.

24 What is most important is to see that I use the Jack and Jill
25 cases in what is largely an explanatory project. I want to
26 understand why we generally do not see our individual actions
27 that contribute to climate change as morally valenced. It can be
28 asked why we should be interested in this explanatory project.
29 One answer is that insofar as we are interested in understanding
30 and managing the real problem of climate change then
31 appreciating people's actual motivational patterns matters.
32 However, as Gardiner astutely notices, there is another more

1 fundamental reason why I think this project is important. For me
2 and much of the philosophical tradition, there is a conceptual
3 connection between morality and motivation; the study of one
4 necessarily implicates the other. Defending this claim and spelling
5 out the exact nature of the relations involved are obviously
6 beyond the purview of this paper. Gardiner is right to point out,
7 however, that this commitment is part of what informs my
8 project, and different theoretical starting points might lead one to
9 focus on different questions and assess their significance
10 differently.

11 12 13 II

14 Steve and Jane

15 In one of the most interesting parts of *A Perfect Moral Storm*
16 Gardiner discusses corruption, a failing that he thinks helps to
17 explain why we pass the costs of our climate changing behavior
18 on to the future, the poor, and nature. He illustrates this failure
19 with an example from Jane Austen’s *Sense and Sensibility*.
20 Gardiner’s discussion is brilliant, but I am skeptical about the
21 extent to which corruption is central and specific to our failures
22 regarding climate change (indeed, it is not entirely clear how
23 central and specific Gardiner thinks corruption is either) and I
24 also wonder about the aptness of the analogy.

25 Gardiner’s concern with corruption stems from his view that
26 the costs of climate change can be passed to the poor, the future
27 and nature (what he calls “buck-passing”), and that we face
28 strong temptations to do so. He writes that

29 If we are tempted by buck-passing, but reluctant to face up to moral
30 criticism for succumbing to it [...] we are likely to be attracted to weak or

1 deceptive arguments that appear on the surface to license such behavior
2 [...] (302).

3 Gardiner distinguishes “moral corruption” and “corruption of
4 the understanding,” and discusses both “corruption in general”
5 and “moral corruption.” As far as I can see, he doesn’t really
6 provide an explicit account of the distinction between moral
7 corruption and corruption of the understanding, though it is
8 possible to infer one from what he says (I think corruption of the
9 understanding is the susceptibility to bad arguments that he
10 mentions). Gardiner seems skeptical that a “strong philosophical
11 account of corruption” (303) can be given, but nevertheless
12 characterizes what he calls “a core case of corruption”:

13 the illegitimate taking advantage of a position of superior power for the
14 sake of personal gain (304).

15 The problem with this characterization is that it is not
16 normally wrong to take “advantage of a position of superior
17 power for the sake of personal gain.” When individuals do this, it
18 is usually regarded as just getting ahead in life. For example, Jack
19 has superior physical power so he becomes a fitness instructor;
20 Jill has superior mathematical power so she becomes a computer
21 scientist. When groups and collectives do this in the political
22 domain, it is simply interest group politics. What distinguishes
23 these from cases of corruption is that they are “legitimate
24 taking(s) of advantage while cases of corruption are illegitimate.
25 Since ‘illegitimate’ is such a general, theory-relative term, this
26 characterization of the core case of corruption seem
27 unilluminating.

28 When it comes to understanding moral corruption Gardiner
29 turns to Kant:

1 The thoughts that I take from Kant are [...] that moral corruption is: (a) a
2 tendency to rationalize, which (b) casts doubt on the validity and/or
3 strictness of moral claims, by (c) seeking to pervert their status and
4 substance, and in doing so (d) aims to make those claims better suited to
5 our wishes and inclinations, and (e) destroys the characteristics in virtue of
6 which we respect them (307).

7 The problem is that Kant (as opposed to some Kantians)
8 actually had very little to say about moral corruption (it comes up
9 mostly in relation to his discussion of “radical evil”). Insofar as
10 Kant has such a notion it seems quite general, most closely
11 connected to the third meaning of ‘corruption’ given in the OED:
12 “moral deterioration or decay; [...] the perversion of anything
13 from an original state of purity [...]. Despoiling of virginity,
14 violation of chastity.”

15 What I take Kant’s view to be, for what it’s worth, is that the
16 source of corruption is in the clash between inclination and
17 reason, is expressed in overvaluing oneself, and made worse by
18 social conditions, especially war. Gardiner thinks that in some
19 cases of moral corruption “it can, from the external perspective,
20 be difficult to find anyone to blame in the usual way” (307). For
21 Kant it would appear that there would be no problem finding
22 someone to blame in a case of moral corruption: it would be the
23 agent who yields to inclination and overvalues himself. The
24 deepest difference between Kant and Gardiner is that Gardiner is
25 interested in corrupt acts while Kant is interested in corrupt
26 agents.

27 Although Gardiner recognizes the difficulty and elusiveness of
28 the concept, he wants moral corruption to be a specific enough
29 notion to be explanatory in the climate change case. There is thus
30 a lack of fit between Gardiner’s desire for a concept that is to
31 some extent central and specific to our failures regarding climate
32 change, and Kant’s rather watery notion.

1 Gardiner wishes to emphasize features of moral corruption
2 that center on our “vulnerability,” susceptibility to “temptation,”
3 and attraction to “weak or deceptive arguments” that serve our
4 interests. These are features that are endemic to being human and
5 it is difficult to see how they are especially explanatory in the
6 climate change case. The antiquity and centrality of temptation in
7 the Judeo-Christian tradition is evidenced by the story of Eve
8 being tempted by the serpent. For that matter it is evidenced by a
9 birthday card that I recently saw that read, “No need to lead me
10 into temptation. I can find it all by myself.”

11 From my perspective the most important fact with respect to
12 the ethics of climate change is that we do not morally valance
13 many of the actions that contribute to the problem. However, it
14 is true that some actions that contribute to climate change are
15 morally valanced. Let us suppose for present purposes what I do
16 not believe: that all of the following are examples of moral failure
17 with respect to climate change.

18 A. I know that I ought to stay home and work on my climate
19 change book but my desire to be with my lover wins (again),
20 and instead I fly to Shanghai for the weekend.

21 B. I know that I ought to cut back on my carbon emissions
22 but I’m not sure by how much and in what ways, so I continue
23 to emit too much.

24 C. I believe that climate change will be devastating but I could
25 be wrong (maybe the deniers are right, maybe we’ll be saved
26 by some undiscovered feedback in the climate system, maybe
27 adaptation or geoengineering will be successful), so I reduce
28 my emissions a little and feel a little guilty about not reducing
29 more.

1 D. I was going to ride my bike to school today but it was a
2 little chilly out, so I decided to drive instead.

3 Notice how easy it is to think of analogues to these cases from
4 other domains:

5 A') I know that I ought to visit my Aunt but my desire to go
6 surfing wins (again).

7 B') I know that I ought to give more to charity but I'm not
8 sure how much more or to which charities, so I continue to
9 give what I know is too little.

10 C') I think that I ought to be vegan but I'm not sure that there
11 isn't some argument that I haven't thought of that might
12 relieve me of this obligation, so I'm a little more vegan than I
13 would otherwise be and feel a little guilty when I go for the
14 eggplant parmagian.

15 D') I set out to volunteer at the soup kitchen, but the bus was
16 late, so I decided not to bother after all.

17 In some of these cases I know that what I am doing is wrong
18 and I choose to live with the consequences (as some Hollywood
19 vamp said to her weak willed partner, "Do you want to be a good
20 person or do you want to be with me?"). In other cases I try to
21 do what is right but am easily deterred. In still other cases I
22 believe that some act is right but I don't believe it strongly
23 enough to actually do it. We can taxonomize these failings in
24 various ways (akrasia, hypocrisy, bad faith, corruption, and so on).
25 These categorizations can be contested and others proposed, and
26 these or other categorizations may or may not be illuminating

1 Now consider Gardiner’s proposed analogy between our
2 responses to climate change and the case from Jane Austen that
3 he presents. In the Austen case, Henry Dashwood wishes to
4 provide for his second wife and their children after his death, but
5 the terms of his estate require that the estate passes to John, his
6 son by his first wife. On his deathbed Henry extracts a promise
7 from John that he will look after Henry’s second wife and their
8 daughters. John promises, apparently sincerely, but under the
9 influence of his wife, Fanny, his resolve continuously weakens in
10 an almost comical way. Ultimately, John does nothing at all to
11 keep the promise.

12 Gardiner writes:

13 Our interest lies in Austen’s vivid account of how easily John Dashwood
14 moves from accepting a serious and apparently unassailable moral
15 commitment to help his stepmother and half-sisters into dismissing that
16 commitment almost entirely. Her tale illustrates just how seductive and
17 familiar the devices of moral corruption are, and how vulnerable we are to
18 them [...] (310).

19 The clarity of the Dashwood’s [*sic*] folly helps us to see many of the corrupt
20 arguments in the climate debate for the dangerous temptations they are
21 (337).

22 Gardiner tries to show in detail that the considerations that
23 Fanny adduces against the claim that John owes strong
24 obligations to his stepmother and half-sisters have analogues in
25 the case of climate change contributing behaviors. He
26 characterizes some of Fanny’s moves in the following way:

27 Some of the moves seek to dispute the application of the
28 moral claim (e.g., *Excessive Burden*; *Prior Entitlement*; *Competing*
29 *Special Relationships*; *Unreasonable Advocates*); others claim that
30 compliance will have unintended bad consequences (e.g.,
31 *Opening the Floodgates*; *Undermining Autonomy*); a third group aims

1 to reduce the magnitude of the moral demand (e.g., *Budget*
2 *Constraint; Demanding Mutual Benefit; Diminishing Victims' Needs;*
3 *Shifting the Playing Field; Blessing in Disguise*); a fourth seeks to
4 undermine the implementation of the duty (e.g., *Onerous*
5 *Logistics; Discretionary Aid; Indirect Methods*); and a fifth group
6 aims to breed resentment on the part of the duty-bearer (e.g.,
7 *Lack of Appreciation; Coveting the Victims' Goods; Recast the Victim*).

8 This is a terrific analysis of Fanny's rhetoric and arguments,
9 and I agree that many of these arguments have analogues in
10 varying degrees to patterns of thought and argument in the
11 climate change debate. But this is hardly surprising. Fanny's
12 moves are pretty generic and are available in almost any
13 reasonably complex moral argument.

14 The most striking analogy between climate change and the
15 Austen case is that they both involve intergenerational
16 relationships. It is generally true that moral motivation flags when
17 those to whom obligations are owed are not present, vivid, or
18 causally efficacious. Because climate change is an
19 intergenerational problem this applies dramatically, as Gardiner
20 persuasively argues. However, even though both the Austen and
21 climate change cases can be said to involve intergenerational
22 relationships, this is misleading. In *Sense and Sensibility* the
23 fundamental moral relationships are among Henry and the
24 contemporaneous relatives who outlive him; in the climate
25 change case the basic moral relationship is between us and non-
26 contemporaneous, non-familialy related, future people. As a
27 consequence, unlike future people in the climate change case, the
28 stepmother and half-sisters could at least in principle call John
29 and Fanny to account. This brings out some further differences
30 between the two cases. Much of the argument in *Sense and*
31 *Sensibility* is in the form of a dialogue while discussion of what we
32 owe future generations in the climate change case is usually

1 conducted as the third-person. The husband/wife nature of
2 Austen’s dialogue contributes to the sense that John is not just
3 trying to figure out the right thing to do, but he is also trying to
4 please Fanny.

5 Another difference is that John’s challenge is to keep a well-
6 understood, widely accepted moral obligation to preserve his
7 father’s intentions with respect to the disposition of his property.
8 We understand deathbed promises: that is why Fanny has to work
9 so hard to overturn it, and why the slide into noncompliance is
10 almost funny. In the climate change case it is not so clear what
11 duties we have and to whom. Whatever is true, we have not
12 assumed duties as clearly and explicitly as John has. Indeed, as I
13 have argued, in order to reach the conclusion that we have such
14 duties at least with respect to many actions, we must revise our
15 moral concepts so that we see ourselves as acting wrongly when
16 we engage in apparently innocent activities that make tiny
17 contributions to harms that distant people will suffer centuries
18 from now. This is quite unlike the obligation to keep a deathbed
19 promise, thus fulfilling the intentions of one’s father.

20 I am not convinced that Gardiner has identified a moral failing
21 that is central and specific to our failure to address climate change
22 that can illuminatingly be characterized as moral corruption,
23 especially not one that can be associated with Kant. While an
24 interesting proposal, I am not convinced by the aptness of the
25 analogy between the Austen case and our failure to respond to
26 climate change. Still, we can also learn from the disanalogies.
27 What I take from the disanalogies that I have identified is that the
28 climate change case is much more difficult than the one that
29 Austen described; and since even a straightforward obligation like
30 the one John is under can be rationalized away, we should be very
31 pessimistic indeed that people will come to see themselves as

1 having duties not to contribute to climate change and then
2 effectively act on them.

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III

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Conclusion: Steve and Dale

7 In this paper I have accentuated the differences between my
8 views and Gardiner's. I have especially emphasized my view that
9 we do not see many of the actions that contribute to climate
10 change as morally valanced, in contrast with Gardiner's view that
11 in many cases we fail to do what is right even by our own lights.
12 Probably neither of us believes that the points that we have
13 emphasized are the whole story. I want to close by bringing out a
14 deep point of agreement. Our failure to act efficaciously in
15 response to climate change indicates a crisis of agency, both in
16 ourselves and in our institutions. Perhaps the greatest challenge
17 of this century is to reconstruct and instantiate forms of
18 individual and collective agency that will enable us to manage the
19 problems that we face to live meaningful lives in a rapidly
20 changing world.

21

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New York University