

Abstract

Some soldiers experience strong emotional outbursts and bodily discomfort – such as disgust, dizziness, fainting, nausea, vomiting and crying – in the moment of committing or witnessing atrocities. This dissertation delivers a systematic examination of this complex phenomenon that I call “perpetrator disgust”.

The central point of dispute is the moral significance of perpetrator disgust. Does the perpetrator’s bodily response indicate a subliminal awareness of the moral wrong of the act?

I argue that perpetrator disgust can in some cases reflect a moral conflict, but warn against conflating it with a committed moral judgment.