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Biography: Dr. Peter West-Oram is a Lecturer in Bioethics at BSMS, having joined the medical school in September 2017. Prior to moving to Brighton, he was a Senior Research Fellow in the Division of Biomedical Ethics at Christian-Albrechts-University, Kiel, Germany. He holds a PhD in Philosophy from the University of Birmingham, where he wrote his dissertation on the subject of global health justice, and the nature, justification and extent of rights to health care.

*Vicious Solidarities and Global Ethics*

While there are many definitions of solidarity, most agree that solidarity groups are defined by the similarities between members which motivate them to support, and cooperate with, their fellows. In this context, solidarity is typically seen as a pro-social force, and to be closely connected to the process of delivering justice. Historically, relatively stable, deeply ingrained features of persons, such as religion or nationality, have been seen as the primary sources of such similarity which have enabled solidarity between compatriots or co-religionists.

Recently however, it has been noted that more transient features of persons may also serve as the basis for solidarity. Further, globalisation has provided opportunities for novel solidarities to emerge, by enabling meaningful social, cultural, and recreational relationships between people who may be separated by great distances, and who have never met in person. Such relationships may be deep and lasting, or shallow and transient, but both types may transcend national, regional, or religious boundaries. Simultaneously however, the twenty-first century has also seen the startling re-emergence and rise to prominence of nationalist, populist groups, which have had a profound impact on the global polity. To illustrate, the result of the Brexit referendum, and the election of Donald Trump on an overtly racist, and nationalist campaign platform were both driven by the kind of inward looking, exclusionary solidarity with which I am concerned in this paper. Correlatively, wealthy countries and their citizens have displayed reluctance to extend entitlements to comprehensive care to refugees and undocumented migrants, or to contribute meaningfully to the provision of care to the citizens of poor countries. Here, the boundaries of the group to which duties of solidarity are owed, are defined both narrowly and rigidly – membership of the group is limited to a narrow range of people, and it is very difficult if not impossible to become a member.

In this paper I argue that while both kinds of solidarity group, cosmopolitan and inclusive, and nationalist and exclusionary, differ wildly in their assessment of the significance of historical social and political boundaries, both categories of group engage in their own form of solidarity, some forms of which may be actively harmful for non-group members. Thus, while solidarity has often been seen as a pro-social endeavour, it must be recognised that solidarity is itself morally neutral – it is what is done with it that counts. In challenging this pro-social assumption, I outline a taxonomy of types of solidarity group, and explain how different types of solidarity group differ from, relate to, and interact with one another. My goal in doing so is to develop a heuristic for evaluating and responding to the actions of anti-social solidarities, which undermine or prevent the pursuit of justice.

*Key Words*

* Solidarity
* Globalisation and Social Justice
* Nationalism
* Vulnerability and Social Exclusion
* Cosmopolitanism