

**BEYOND THE BALANCE OF REASONS:
NORMATIVE REQUIREMENTS AND CONSTITUTIVE AUTHORITY**

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ABSTRACT

The idea that certain rules or roles have normative authority stands in tension with the idea that practical rationality requires agents to act in accordance with the balance of reasons. In order to defend the possibility of normative authority in certain, limited contexts, this paper deploys a conception of practical rationality according to which reasons do not exhaust the considerations at play. There are also, as John Broome has argued, normative requirements. Whereas reasons bear directly upon what ought to be done (are of narrow scope) and are defeasible, normative requirements are indefeasible but bear only indirectly on what ought to be done (they are of wide scope). Developing two examples, that of the called strike in baseball and that of certain democratic judgments, the paper argues that normative requirements can combine with the gappiness of reasons to leave room for normative authority. In the case of the called strike, for instance, there are some pitches about which we should say, not just that it is indeterminate what the right call is, but that the umpire cannot be wrong. Similarly for certain judgments at certain stages of the democratic process.