

I. СОВРЕМЕННАЯ МЕТАЭТИКА (ИЗБРАННАЯ БИБЛИОГРАФИЯ)

В библиографический список включены аннотированные англоязычные труды, изданные в последние годы (2000 – 2015).

I. MODERN METAETHICS_SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY

The bibliography is arranged chronologically (in descending order).

1. Silk, A. (2015) “**Nietzschean Constructivism: Ethics and Metaethics for All and None,**” in *Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy*. Vol. 58, Issue 3, pp. 244-280.

Abstract

This paper develops an interpretation of Nietzsche’s ethics and metaethics that reconciles his apparent antirealism with his engagement in normative discourse. Interpreting Nietzsche as a metaethical constructivist—as holding, to a first approximation, that evaluative facts are grounded purely in facts about the evaluative attitudes of the creatures to whom they apply—reconciles his vehement declarations that nothing is valuable in itself with his passionate expressions of a particular evaluative perspective and injunctions for the free spirits to create new values. Drawing on Nietzsche’s broader epistemological and psychological views, I develop a distinctive, and genuinely Nietzschean, version of constructivism. On this account, evaluative properties are grounded in affective valuations of the new philosophers. The proposed interpretation synthesizes a variety of disparate features of Nietzsche’s writings and improves on existing interpretations in the literature. The resulting version of constructivism is also worthy of attention in contemporary theorizing. The fruits of understanding the distinctive form of Nietzsche’s ethical theory are an illuminating example of how metanormative inquiry can undergird normative evaluation in practice.

Subjects: ethics -- research; metaethics; research; constructivism (psychology); philosophers; Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm

2. Forcehimes, A. T. (2015) “**On L. W. Sumner's ‘Normative Ethics and Metaethics,’**” *Ethics*. Vol. 125, Issue 4, pp. 1142–1144.

Subjects: normativity (ethics); metaethics; ethics; neutrality; moral attitudes; justification (ethics)

Abstract

An essay on the article “Normative **Ethics** and **Metaethics**,” by L. W. Sumner is presented. It offers a history of metaethical theories, the neutrality requirement and collapse argument and examines the substantive and classificatory moral commitments in **metaethics** that are not violating neutrality. The author relates the identification of metaethical theories that do not dissipate even at the failure of collapse argument or when restricted in the sense of justification.

3. Fraser, B. J. (2014) “**Evolutionary debunking arguments and the reliability of moral cognition,**” *Philosophical Studies*. Vol. 168, Issue 2, pp. 457-473.

Abstract

Recent debate in metaethics over evolutionary debunking arguments against morality has shown a tendency to abstract away from relevant empirical detail. Here, I engage the debate about Darwinian debunking of morality with relevant empirical issues. I present four conditions that must be met in order for it to be reasonable to expect an evolved cognitive faculty to be reliable: the environment, information, error, and tracking conditions. I then argue that these conditions are not met in the case of our evolved faculty for moral judgement. Keywords Evolutionary debunking argument Evolution of morality Reliabilism Error theory “But then with me the horrid doubt always arises whether the convictions of man’s mind, which has been developed from the mind of the lower animals, are of any value or at all trustworthy. Would any one trust in the convictions of a monkey’s mind, if there are any convictions in such a mind?” Letter from Darwin to W. Graham, July 3rd 1881 (Darwin correspondence project number 13230).

Subjects: metaethics; ethics -- study & teaching (higher); philosophy & cognitive science; academic discourse; judgment (ethics); evolution & philosophy

Introduction

Evolutionary debunking arguments (EDAs) that target morality are not new (Ruse and Wilson 1986; cf. Darwin 1881). Nor are EDAs restricted to targeting morality (Sullivan 2009; Dyke 2011). But ‘Darwinian debunking’ has been much discussed in recent metaethics (Joyce 2006a; Street 2006; Huemer 2008; Mason 2010; White 2010; Wielenberg 2010; Brosnan 2011; Kahane 2011). The surge of interest has produced an increasingly nuanced and sophisticated literature. However, a frustrating trend has emerged as EDAs against morality have been more and more widely debated, namely, a tendency to abstract away from relevant empirical detail. This paper aims to correct for this tendency by engaging the debate with relevant empirical issues. (...)

4. Kitcher, P. (2014), “**Is a naturalized ethics possible?**,” *Behaviour*, No 151, pp. 245-260

Abstract

I offer an account of the evolution of ethical life, using it to elaborate a meta-ethical perspective and a normative stance. In light of these discussions, I attempt to answer my title question.

Keywords: ethics, evolution, ethical progress, ethical method, naturalistic fallacy.

Introduction

Philosophical thought about ethics is typically dominated by the vision of a 'theory of everything ethical', some grand system of principles that would yield an unambiguous decision about the goodness of every state of affairs or the rightness of every action (see, for a prominent recent example, Parfit, 2011). Within that perspective, ethical naturalism consists in connecting central ethical predicates — 'good' or 'right', say — to natural properties. So utilitarians declare that states are good insofar as they maximize the aggregate balance of pleasure over pain across all sentient creatures (Bentham, 1988), and ambitious sociobiologists propose that actions are right if they promote the proliferation of human DNA (Ruse & Wilson, 1986). Views of this sort are routinely criticized on the grounds that they not only fail to deliver the correct ethical judgments about particular cases, but also are guilty of the primal sin of inferring judgments of value from judgments of fact (the so-called 'naturalistic fallacy'). (...)

5. Clipsham, P. (2014), “**Does empirical moral psychology rest on a mistake?**” *Philosophical Studies*, Vol. 170, Issue 2, pp. 215-233.

Abstract

Many philosophers assume that philosophical theories about the psychological nature of moral judgment can be confirmed or disconfirmed by the kind of evidence gathered by natural and social scientists (especially experimental psychologists and neuroscientists). I argue that this assumption is mistaken. For the most part, empirical evidence can do no work in these philosophical debates, as the metaphorical heavy-lifting is done by the pre-experimental assumptions that make it possible to apply empirical data to these philosophical debates. For the purpose of this paper, I emphasize two putatively empirically-supported theories about the psychological nature of moral judgment. The first is the Sentimental Rules Account, which is defended by Shaun Nichols. The second is defended by Jesse Prinz, and is a form of sentimentalist moral relativism. I show that both of the arguments in favour of these theories rely on assumptions which would be rejected by their philosophical opponents. Further, these assumptions carry substantive moral commitments and thus cannot be confirmed by further empirical investigation. Because of this shared methodological assumption, I argue that a certain form of empirical moral psychology rests on a mistake.

6. Baima, N. (2014) “**The Problem of Ethical Vagueness for Expressivism,**” *Ethical Theory & Moral Practice*, Vol. 17, Issue 4, pp. 593–605.

Subjects: ethics; vagueness (philosophy); philosophy; metaethics; theory of knowledge; expressivism (ethics); expression (philosophy)

Abstract

Ethical vagueness has garnered little attention. This is rather surprising since many philosophers have remarked that the science of ethics lacks the precision that other fields of inquiry have. Of the few philosophers who have discussed ethical vagueness the majority have focused on the implications of vagueness for moral realism. Because the relevance of ethical vagueness for other metaethical positions has been underexplored, my aim in this paper is to investigate the ramifications of ethical vagueness for expressivism. Ultimately, I shall argue that expressivism does not have the resources to adequately account for ethical vagueness, while cognitivism does. This demonstrates an advantage that cognitivism holds over expressivism.

(...)

7. Fletcher, G.; Ridge, M. (2014) *Having It Both Ways: Hybrid Theories and Modern Metaethics*, Oxford University Press, 320 pp.

A recent trend in metaethics has been to reject the apparent choice between pure cognitivism, where moral (and other normative) judgments are understood as representational or belief-like states, and pure non-cognitivism, where they are understood as non-representational or desire-like states. Rather, philosophers have adopted views which seek in some way to combine the strengths of each side while avoiding the standard problems for each. Some such views claim that moral judgments are complexes of belief-like and desire-like components. Other views claim that normative language serves both to ascribe properties and to express desire-like attitudes. This collection of twelve new essays examines the prospects for such 'hybrid views' of normative thought and language. The papers, which focus mainly on moral thought and talk, provide a guide to this debate while also pushing it forward along numerous fronts.

(...)

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8. Miller A. (2014) *Contemporary Metaethics. An Introduction*, Oxford University Press, USA, 51 pp.

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Preface

This book is intended to provide a critical overview of some main themes and issues in contemporary metaethics. I set the scene with discussions of Moore and Ayer, and follow up with examinations of more recent figures: Blackburn, Gibbard, Mackie, Wright, Harman, Sturgeon, Railton, Wiggins, Jackson, Pettit, Smith and McDowell. It will be apparent to anyone with a knowledge of the rich scene presented by contemporary metaethics that many important figures and issues do not get considered in the book. In a work of this length and scope that could not be helped. In addition, it seemed to me that a substantial discussion of some main facets of the territory would be more interesting, and ultimately more helpful, than a superficial tour of a much larger area. And where possible I have tried to make small contributions to the ongoing debates, which I hope will be of interest to the professional as well as the student. (...)

9. Jacobs, J. (2013), "The Fact/Value Distinction and the Social Sciences," *Society*. Vol. 50, Issue 6, pp. 560–569.

Subjects: metaethics; ethics; theory of knowledge; values; social sciences; Research and Development in the Social Sciences and

Keywords: Humanities; Antirealism; Cognitivism; **Metaethics**; Noncognitivism; Objectivity; Realism; Subjectivity

Abstract

Metaethics is an especially illuminating context for exploring the relation between facts and values. There are good reasons in favor of a cognitivist, realist interpretation of moral value, and some of the elements of that interpretation suggest bases for rejecting the alleged fact/value distinction in social scientific explanations. Some of the main objections to the alleged fact/value distinction and to expressivist interpretations of moral value are articulated, with a view to showing their relevance to the understanding of social phenomena more broadly. Also, the way in which rationality inevitably involves normativity is discussed because it is a crucial consideration in regard to understanding the normative aspects of issues the social sciences seek to explain.

The present discussion addresses some of the concerns in Professor Gorski's paper, focusing chiefly on metaethical issues. However, in the second half of this paper I comment on facts and values in the social sciences more broadly. While the claims in that section are very programmatic and require considerable elaboration, the metaethical discussion should make it fairly clear why I believe the general contours I sketch out in the second half are defensible. The philosophically interesting aspects of those issues and the metaethical issues are interrelated in various ways, including some common epistemological features, and explanatory affinities. (...)

10. Kalderon M. E. (2013) "Does metaethics rest on a mistake?" *Analysis Reviews*, Vol. 73, No 1, pp. 129–138.

One consequence of the professionalization of philosophy is its ever increasing specialization. Within the normative domain, what has come to be known as metaethical inquiry is increasingly conducted independently of substantive ethical reflection. Even if this trend is intelligible given the economic and institutional pressures that spawned it, it is reasonable to wonder if insights are lost and distortions and illusions introduced by focusing exclusively on the limited perspective of metaethical inquiry. Dworkin laments this trend and is sceptical about contemporary metaethics. The division between 'first-order', 'substantive' normative inquiry and 'second-order', 'meta' normative inquiry has come to seem natural to us and is fundamental to the way we standardly present these topics in our teaching. But it has not always been so. Thus, for example, Rawls (2000) has claimed that the moral philosophies of Hume and Kant cannot intelligibly be presented in this way. Instead, they exemplify what he calls a 'philosophical ethics'. Both Hume and Kant address metaphysical and epistemological questions about ethics, but they do so in a way that is not independent from substantive ethical reflection. Dworkin, in the first part of *Justice for Hedgehogs*, presents an alternative to the prevailing orthodoxy that is distinct from Rawlsian philosophical ethics but similar to it. According to Dworkin, all second-order, metanormative claims are to be understood, fundamentally, as

first-order, substantive, normative claims. If true, then meta-normative inquiry, or what passes for it, could not intelligibly be conducted independently of substantive, normative reflection. If Dworkin is right, then contemporary metaethics rests on a mistake. (As will emerge, this echo of Prichard 1912 is deliberate.) (...)

11. Yetter-Chappell, H.; Chappell, R. (2013) “**Mind-body meets metaethics: a moral concept strategy,**” *Philosophical Studies*, Vol. 165, Issue 3, pp. 865–878.

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to assess the relationship between anti-physicalist arguments in the philosophy of mind and anti-naturalist arguments in metaethics, and to show how the literature on the mind-body problem can inform metaethics. Among the questions we will consider are: (1) whether a moral parallel of the knowledge argument can be constructed to create trouble for naturalists, (2) the relationship between such a ‘Moral Knowledge Argument’ and the familiar Open Question Argument, and (3) how naturalists can respond to the Moral Twin Earth argument. We will give particular attention to recent arguments in the philosophy of mind that aim to show that anti-physicalist arguments can be defused by acknowledging a distinctive kind of conceptual dualism between the phenomenal and the physical. This tactic for evading anti-physicalist arguments has come to be known as the Phenomenal Concept Strategy. We will propose a metaethical version of this strategy, which we shall call the ‘Moral Concept Strategy’. We suggest that the Moral Concept Strategy offers the most promising way out of these anti-naturalist arguments, though significant challenges remain.

Keywords Naturalism Metaethics Phenomenal concept strategy Moral Twin Earth Open question argument Knowledge argument

1 Introduction Familiar debates in the philosophy of mind between dualists and physicalists are predicated on an assumption of realism about conscious experiences, the remaining question being whether or not this real phenomenon is purely physical in nature. As the aim of our paper is to explore the connections between these arguments in the philosophy of mind and the naturalism/non-naturalism debate in metaethics, we will make a parallel assumption of moral realism. That is, we should be understood throughout as focusing on the debate between cognitivist naturalists and nonnaturalists, mirroring the debate between (realist) physicalists and dualists. We further assume that the epistemic and explanatory gaps that anti-physicalist arguments rely upon should be taken seriously, and likewise in the metaethical domain. So we will focus our attention on synthetic (rather than analytic) naturalist views. The first half of this paper focuses on exploring and relating anti-naturalist and antiphysicalist arguments in metaethics and philosophy of mind. §2 considers the connections between the Open Question Argument against metaethical naturalism and the Knowledge Argument against physicalism about consciousness, and explains why appeals to standard a posteriori identities (like water = H₂O) cannot help the naturalist. §3 explores a moral version of the Knowledge Argument, and introduces an important distinction between procedural and substantive idealizations of agents. §4 explains the Moral Twin Earth argument, and the general structure that an adequate response will need to take. Finally, §5—the heart of the paper—explores how metaethical naturalists might address all these anti-naturalist arguments by developing a moral analogue of the physicalist’s Phenomenal Concept Strategy. (...)

12. Bloomfield, P. (2013) “**Error Theory and the Concept of Morality,**” *Metaphilosophy*, Vol. 44, Issue 4, pp. 451–469.

Subjects: error; ethics; self-interest; conduct of life; metaethics

Abstract

Error theories about morality often take as their starting point the supposed queerness of morality, and those resisting these arguments often try to argue by analogy that morality is no more queer than other unproblematic subject matters. Here, error theory (as exemplified primarily by the work of Richard Joyce) is resisted first by arguing that it assumes a common, modern, and peculiarly social conception of morality. Then error theorists point out that the social nature of morality requires one to act against one’s self-interest while insisting on the categorical, inescapable, or overriding status of moral considerations: they argue that morality requires magic, then (rightly) claim that there is no such thing as magic. An alternate eudaimonist conception of morality is introduced which itself has an older provenance than the social point of view, dating to the ancient Greeks. Eudaimonism answers to the normative requirements of morality, yet does not require magic. Thus, the initial motivation for error theory is removed.

Keywords: error theory, queerness, eudaimonia, metaethics, morality

13. Shafer-Landau, R., ed. (2013). *Oxford Studies in Metaethics: Vol. 8*. Oxford University Press, USA, 352 pp.

Oxford Studies in Metaethics is the only publication devoted exclusively to original philosophical work in the foundations of ethics. It provides an annual selection of much of the best new scholarship being done in the field. Its broad purview includes work being done at the intersections of ethical theory with metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of language, and philosophy of mind. The essays included in the series provide an excellent basis for understanding recent developments in the field; those who would like to acquaint themselves with the current state of play in metaethics would do well to start here.

Introduction

Our volume opens with a chapter on value theory by Christine Korsgaard. Her foil in this effort is G. E. Moore, who thought that axiological investigations must begin with the notion of what is intrinsically valuable. He thought that appropriate candidates could be identified by means of his famous isolation test, and that the notions of being good for someone, and of being (say) my good, were wholly derivative from the notion of intrinsic value. As Moore saw things, the only sense in which something is my good is the sense in which it is intrinsically valuable, and possessed by me. Korsgaard thinks that this is all wrong, and sets out to issue an extended corrective that gives conceptual and normative priority to relational good. (...)

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14. Schulte, P. (2012), "The Difference Between Moral and Rational "Oughts": An Expressivist Account," *Ethical Theory & Moral Practice*, No 15, pp. 159–174

Abstract

Morality and rationality are both normative: the moral claim "you ought to help others" is a genuine normative judgment, as well as the rational maxim "you ought to brush your teeth twice a day". But it seems that there is a crucial difference these two judgments. In the first part of this paper, I argue that this difference is to be understood as a difference between two kinds of normativity: demanding and recommending normativity. But the crucial task is, of course, to explain the difference. In the second part of this paper, I suggest that metaethical expressivists can provide a good explanation: by extending the analysis of ordinary (nonnormative) demands and recommendations to normative judgments, they can formulate a convincing account that captures the key differences between morality and rationality.

Keywords: Metaethics, Normativity, Expressivism, Moral judgments, Rationality, Speech acts

When the reverend says that we ought to help others, she is making a moral judgment. When the dentist says that we ought to brush our teeth twice a day, she is making a judgment of rationality. As competent speakers of our language, we easily recognize this difference, and we usually take it for granted; but on reflection, it is quite puzzling. Both types of judgment contain the same crucial terms, e.g. "ought", "right", "should" or "must", both are primarily directed at actions, and both are action-guiding, i.e. both have normative force. Yet, moral judgments and judgments of rationality still belong to clearly distinct categories. This raises complex questions. What exactly does the difference between these judgments amount to? How can it be explained? And what is the relation between moral judgments and judgments of rationality? (...)

15. Hussain, N. J. Z. (2012) "Metaethics and Nihilism in Reginster's *The Affirmation of Life*," *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, Issue 43, pp. 99–117.

Subjects: nihilism (philosophy); metaethics; values; subjectivity; affirmation of life: Nietzsche on overcoming nihilism

Abstract: Bernard Reginster, in his book *The Affirmation of Life: Nietzsche on Overcoming Nihilism*, takes up the challenge of figuring out what Nietzsche might mean by nihilism and the revaluation of values. He argues that there is an alternative, normative subjectivist interpretation of Nietzsche's views on nihilism and revaluation that makes as much sense as – indeed, he often clearly leans toward thinking that it makes more sense than – a fictionalist reading of Nietzsche. I argue that his arguments do not succeed. Once we have looked carefully at the details of the positions and the arguments ascribed to Nietzsche, the fictionalist option is the more charitable interpretation of the texts. I focus on the metaethical issues that play a central role for Reginster in his articulation of Nietzsche's nihilism and Nietzsche's strategy for overcoming nihilism.
(...)

16. Sauer, H. (2012) **“Morally irrelevant factors: What's left of the dual process-model of moral cognition?”** *Philosophical Psychology*, Vol. 25, No. 6, pp. 783–811.

Current developments in empirical moral psychology have spawned a new perspective on the traditional metaethical question of whether moral judgment is based on reason or emotion. Psychologists and cognitive neuroscientists such as Joshua Greene argue that there is empirical evidence that emotion is essential for one particularly important subclass of moral judgments: so-called “deontological judgments.” In this paper, I scrutinize this claim and argue that neither the empirical evidence for Greene's dual process-theory of moral judgment nor the normative conclusions it is supposed to yield can be maintained. More specifically, I argue that the evidence from neuroimaging relies on a problematic reverse inference, that the behavioral data are flawed, and that the findings from focal brain damage do not support the model. From a normative point of view, Greene fails to show that we ought to discount the intuitions that give rise to deontological judgments because they respond to morally irrelevant factors: firstly, I show that they do not pick up on the factors Greene deems to be morally irrelevant in the first place, and secondly, I argue that there generally is reason to trust our deontological intuitions.

Keywords: Dual Process Theory; Joshua Greene; Metaethics; Moral Judgment; Trolley Problem

Introduction

Is moral judgment based on reason or emotion? Current developments in empirical moral psychology (Haidt&Kesebir, 2010; Sauer, forthcoming) have spawned a novel perspective on this traditional metaethical question. This old issue is now being approached with new methods: research on psychopathy and acquired sociopathy suggests that emotions are necessary for moral judgment (Blair, 1995; Damasio, 1994; Nichols, 2004; Prinz, 2006), the tight relationship between moral judgments and feelings of disgust (Eskine, Kacirik, &Prinz, 2011; Haidt, Rozin, McCauley, &Imada, 1997; Schnall, Haidt, Clore, & Jordan, 2008; Wheatley &Haidt, 2005) seems to show that emotions are also sufficient for moral judgment, and the phenomenon of moral “dumbfounding” (Haidt, 2001) raises the suspicion that moral reasoning might be a matter of mere confabulation (Uhlmann, Pizarro, Tannenbaum, & Ditto, 2009). In this paper, I examine a more specific claim that is part of this recent trend in the psychology of moral judgment. Psychologists and cognitive neuroscientists such as Joshua Greene (Greene, Sommerville, Nystrom, Darley, & Cohen, 2001) have argued that there is empirical evidence that emotion is essential for one particularly important subclass of moral judgments: so-called “deontological judgments,” which traditionally have been accounted for by Kant and Kantian moral theory. This thesis runs counter to most of philosophical mainstream, which takes consequentialism to be the natural ally of metaethical sentimentalism (because emotional concern for the well-being of others seems to be what makes us susceptible to the normative significance of utilitarian considerations), and positions that stand in the Kantian tradition to cohere best with metaethical cognitivism (because acknowledgment of rational principles seems to be what makes us susceptible to the demands of pure practical reason).
(...)

17. Dreier, J. (2012) **“Quasi-Realism and the Problem of Unexplained Coincidence,”** *Analytic Philosophy*, Vol. 53, No. 3, pp. 269–287

Introduction: Ethics and Our Sensibilities

All the evening, alone, she questioned herself. Her trouble was terrible; but was it a thing of her imagination, engendered by an extravagant sensibility, or did it represent a clear-cut reality, and had the worst that was possible actually come to pass?
Henry James, *Washington Square* (chapter 30) (Catherine)

Like Catherine, we can question our own evaluative assessments of our circumstances. We seem to be able to separate the possibility, in thought, that our judgment represents a clear-cut reality from the possibility that the sentimental color of our world is a thing of our imagination. What this separation amounts to, though, is a question for metaethics. Here is my way of characterizing a view in metaethics commonly called ‘sensibility theory’: our ethical sensibilities have explanatory priority over the ethical facts. This characterization is vague, or at least broad, for it encompasses two rather different approaches to metaethics. One is constructivism, according to which the ethical facts are constituted by our sensibilities. Another is expressivism, according to which the illuminating account of ethical language and thought proceeds by telling us about the state of mind expressed by that language and at work in that thought, adding that these states are products of our sensibility rather than our capacity for representation.

(...)

18. Wisdom, J. (2012) **“Why a Diachronic View of Base Property Exemplification is Necessary in Metaethics,”** *Metaphysica*, Vol. 13, Issue 1, pp. 43–50.

Subjects: metaethics; ethics; theory of knowledge; philosophy; essays

Abstract

In a recent issue of this journal, JornSonderholm presents two main criticisms of my 2008 case for a diachronic view of base property exemplification in metaethics. This essay contends that neither of Sonderholm’s criticisms hit their mark, and that there are additional reasons to adopt a diachronic view of base property exemplification. Thus, the case for a diachronic view of base property exemplification in metaethics is stronger than previously thought. Keywords Moral supervenience . Base property exemplification . Wisdom, Jeff .Metaethics 1 Introduction JornSonderholm has recently argued that when it comes to the supervenience of the moral on the non-moral, there is no good reason to adopt a diachronic view of base property exemplification (Sonderholm 2011). A diachronic view of base property exemplification is one that considers the causal history of the subvening or “base” entities upon which a moral property or set of moral properties supervenes.¹ By contrast, a synchronic view of base property exemplification “is only concerned with whether a particular exemplification of a property or set of properties occurs at a time, regardless of what processes were responsible for bringing them about.” (Wisdom 2008:431.)

(...)

19. Kirchin S. (2012) *Metaethics*, Palgrave Macmillan. 206 pp.

When we say that sharing is morally good and that murdering is wicked, what are we doing? Are we picking out existing moral values? Can our judgements be correct and incorrect? How do moral values fit into the natural world? Do moral values even exist? How do our moral judgements relate to how we are motivated to act? Metaethics is an argumentative textbook that considers these and other metaethical questions in a lively and clear manner. As well as discussing all of the main metaethical positions, a new idea – metaethical pluralism – is introduced. Chapters cover central topics in the subject, including: • Moral realism: initial thoughts • Moral realism: naturalism and reductionism • Moral error theory • Noncognitivism • Sensibility theory • Moral motivation Metaethics is aimed at upper-level undergraduates and postgraduates, but should appeal to anyone with an interest in the area.

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20. Shafer-Landau, R., ed. (2012). *Oxford Studies in Metaethics: Vol. 7*. Oxford University Press, USA, 371 pp.

Oxford Studies in Metaethics is the only publication devoted exclusively to original philosophical work in the foundations of ethics. It provides an annual selection of much of the best new scholarship being done in the field. Its broad purview includes work being done at the intersections of ethical theory with metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of language, and philosophy of mind. The essays included in the series provide an excellent basis for understanding recent developments in the field; those who would like to acquaint themselves with the current state of play in metaethics would do well to start here.

Introduction

This volume of Oxford Studies in Metaethics offers a nice indication of the substantial breadth of topics that can be found within the field. The volume opens with a contribution by David Copp, who examines the implications for moral and political philosophy of recent work in so-called "experimental philosophy." Copp surveys some of the more important empirical studies about moral belief formation and argues that they do not have the skeptical implications they are often thought to have. In casting doubt on these skeptical conclusions, Copp argues that we need to reconceive the goal of moral theorizing. It is not best seen as the search for moral truth, realistically construed, but rather in a more Rawlsian framework, according to which moral theory, when done well, succeeds in capturing the details of our "moral sensibility." • (...)

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21. Adams, Z. (2011) "**Moral Mistakes**," *Philosophical Investigations*, No 34:1, pp. 1–21.

Introduction

The division of philosophy into distinct fields of study (ethics, philosophy of mind, philosophy of language, etc.) as well as the division of these fields into further subfields (practical ethics, normative ethics, metaethics, bioethics, etc.) has many consequences, both positive and negative. One consequence is that as fields become specialised, certain views often become entrenched within them, to the point where becoming a specialist can entail either implicitly or explicitly coming to accept these views. With specialisation, in other words, the primary question about certain views often becomes not whether they are true, but how best to explain why they are true. One might take the development of such consensus to show that genuine progress is being made and that these fields have finally established themselves as respectable self-standing areas of inquiry, on a par with fields outside of philosophy that exhibit similar agreement about the data that stand in need of explanation. Alternatively, one might worry that this agreement is misleading and that these distinct so-called areas of philosophy cannot be pursued independently of one another in the manner that increasing professional specialisation demands. In this paper, I provide reasons for leaning towards the latter of these responses. I do this by critically examining a view that I call the moral supervenience criterion (MSC). It is no exaggeration to say that various forms of this view enjoy almost universal acceptance within contemporary metaethics.¹ As one prominent metaethicist puts it, this view is "accepted by nearly everyone writing about the nature of value."² I argue that in spite of this widespread acceptance, there is no good reason to believe it is true.

22. Fisher, A. (2011) *Metaethics: An Introduction*, Acumen Publishing, 200 pp.

Abstract

Do moral facts exist? What would they be like if they did? What does it mean to say that a moral claim is true? What is the link between moral judgement and motivation? Can we know whether something is right and wrong? Is morality a fiction? "Metaethics: An Introduction" presents a very clear and engaging survey of the key concepts and positions in what has become one of the most exciting and influential fields of philosophy. Free from technicality and jargon, this book covers the main ideas that have shaped metaethics from the work of G. E. Moore to the latest thinking. Written specifically for beginning students, this book assumes no prior philosophical knowledge. This book highlights ways to avoid common errors, offers hints and tips on learning the subject, includes a glossary of core terms, and provides guidance for further study.

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Preface

This book is intended for anyone who is new to metaethics. It is a survey of some of the main developments in the field over the past hundred years. It evolved from teaching material I have been developing over the past eight years. I thank all those students who took my metaethics course and helped me reflect on the best way to present these issues. While I was teaching it became clear that, although there are a number of excellent detailed books covering metaethics, for example Alexander Miller's *An Introduction to Contemporary Metaethics* (2003), what was needed was a simpler book that would act as a springboard into the subject. I toyed with the idea of "An Introduction to An Introduction to Contemporary Metaethics" - but only momentarily! This is that book and I hope it will be a gateway into further studies in metaethics. I would like to thank certain friends who have read and commented on complete drafts of the book. Rosie Fisher's insightful comments were massively helpful. Janet Fisher made me think and rethink the process of writing and could spot an error at fifty paces. I thank you both for your indefatigable efforts. I am lucky to work with excellent colleagues. Jonathan Tallant and Christopher Woodard read a complete draft and kept me on my philosophical toes throughout. A number of others read specific chapters and gave very helpful comments. Isabel Gois, Uri Leibowitz, Gregory Mason and Neil Sinclair, I thank you all. I am

particularly grateful to two anonymous reviewers for *Acumen* whose amazingly helpful and honest comments meant this book is far more accessible and readable than it was.
(...)

23. Smith M.B.E. (2010) “**Does Humanity Share a Common Moral Faculty?**” *Journal of Moral Philosophy*, No 7, pp. 37–53

Abstract

The history of ethics contains many moral faculty theories, which usually are sorted by their metaphysics. The usual suspects include moral rationalism (Richard Price, Kant), moral sentiment theory (Hutcheson, Hume, Smith) and the varieties of ethical naturalism. Moral faculty theories differ importantly upon yet another dimension, on how widely it is distributed. Some, the Platonic elitists (Plato, J.S. Mill, R.M. Hare), suppose that moral truth can be discerned only by philosophical argument. Hence, they ascribe a revisionary task to normative theory, that of correcting nonphilosophers’ moral errors. Others, the communalists (Aquinas, Hume, W.D. Ross), hold that the moral faculty is universally distributed. Hence, they hold that normative theory’s task is not to revise, but rather to discern and explain the shared moral conception that we all apply in our ordinary moral lives. I here offer arguments to support communalism.

Keywords: catechistic ethics, common moral conception, intuitionism, metaethics, moral faculty

It is manifest [that a] great part of common language, and of common behavior over the world, is formed upon supposition of such a moral faculty; whether called conscience, moral reason, moral sense, or divine reason; whether considered as a sentiment of the understanding, or as a perception of the heart; or, which seems the truth, as including both. Joseph Butler (1736)

Philosophers love to dream up examples, to reflect upon what would be true were various possibilities real. They do not regard this as aimless speculation, but rather an important way to test philosophical principles. For example, were the moon really green cheese, everyone would agree that you could not know that it is only paper. Many would take such agreement to be conclusive evidence in favor of the familiar principle that knowledge implies truth. They thereby make these assumptions: firstly, that those to whom such examples are addressed share a conception of knowledge which allows them recognize instances of it, and secondly, that it is epistemology’s task to describe and explain this common conception. It is otherwise hard to see how shared intuitions about examples could have any probative force for questions of philosophical principle. (...)

24. Liberman A. (2010) **Book Review: “David Copp, *Morality in a Natural World: Selected Essays in Metaethics*. Cambridge University Press, New York. 361 pp.”** *The Journal of Value Inquiry*, Vol. 44, Issue 1, pp. 127–134.

In “*Morality in a Natural World*,” David Copp makes a thorough and detailed investigation into the possibility of a naturalistic account of morality. Copp claims that naturalism is the default position that pre-theoretically seems most plausible and makes the most sense, and his purpose in writing “*Morality in a Natural World*” is to “motivate [moral] naturalism sufficiently that the attempt to deal with the objections [to it] will seem worthwhile” (p. 33). In the course of ten essays, three of which are previously unpublished, he offers a broad defense of moral naturalism, responding to common objections and focusing on the difficulty associated with accounting for the normativity of morality under a naturalist theory. In the course of doing so, Copp offers a society-centered theory as a plausible version of naturalism. The book is not intended to be an irrefutable defense of naturalism or of the society-centered view, but rather to establish that moral naturalism is a robust and viable alternative to nonnaturalism, moral error theory, and **non-cognitivism**. Copp offers a thorough and detailed picture of a naturalist framework for metaethics, and, at very least, successfully motivates serious consideration of moral naturalism as a viable and complex theory. This book would be of interest to anyone interested in metaethics, and contains useful discussions of moral epistemology, moral semantics, and questions of normativity and moral motivation in particular, though Copp also raises important questions and issues that will likely have broad philosophical appeal and import. Though some of the discussions are a bit dense, Copp adequately explains any complex theoretical assumptions or terminology he introduces, making the book accessible even to those without extensive background knowledge. After briefly outlining the society-centered theory in the introduction, Copp argues in Part One that moral properties are natural properties, that natural properties are empirical properties, and that therefore moral properties are empirical. He then tackles epistemological challenges to his theory, especially the objection that the theory makes moral knowledge merely sociological. He discusses the possibilities of self-evident moral truths and of moral necessities, both of which he argues can be accounted for under his theory. In Part Two, Copp argues for realist-expressivism, or the thesis that moral predicates both express conative attitudes and ascribe properties; he also outlines how his semantic theory can be used to respond to anti-naturalist objections from Terence Horgan and Mark Timmons. In Part Three, Copp discusses the normativity of morality and addresses the normativity constraint. He distinguishes between three grades of normativity, arguing that morality probably does not possess the strongest grades, and that the fact that naturalism cannot account for authoritative or motivational normativity is therefore not a decisive strike against it. Copp argues that neither moral reasons nor self-interested reasons automatically override each other, though moral reasons are self-grounded in morally good people. He concludes that such self-grounded reasons are not necessarily overriding, but do deserve a priority in deliberation. Copp’s account of morality and of normativity in general is a standards-based account. He draws a distinction between moral propositions and moral standards. One believes propositions

but subscribes to standards, which are the “semantic contents expressed by imperatives” (p. 14). The truth-conditions of normative properties can be understood in terms of standards, such that a “normative proposition of type K is true if and only if a corresponding standard of type K has the K-relevant truth-grounding status” (p. 14). In order for a proposition to count as normative, it must nontrivially entail the existence of a standard with an appropriate truth-grounding status. Copp accordingly argues that moral propositions are normative because they entail properly grounded moral standards. He states that common sense dictates that a society needs a social moral code in order to meet its needs. (...)

25. Preti, C. (2010) **Book review: “Terry Horgan and Mark Timmons, eds. *Metaethics After Moore*”.** **Oxford University Press, 2006. 410 pp.***The Journal of Value Inquiry*. Vol. 44, Issue 4, pp. 557–560.

This book is a collection of 16 essays, seven of which have already been published in the *Southern Journal of Philosophy*, 41 (2003). The editors assert in the Preface that the essays “represent recent work in metaethics after, and in some cases directly inspired by, the work of Moore.” It has been easy to fasten a variety of discussions in ethics, even tenuously, onto Moore, and this was especially prevalent in 2003, on the occasion of the 100 year anniversary of the publication of the Moore’s seminal *Principia Ethica*. Does this collection clothe itself in Moorean garb as a matter of convenience, or is there a genuine link to Moore’s work? If so, is it successful? To answer that, it might be necessary to briefly consider how Moore’s work might ‘directly inspire’ recent metaethics. Moore himself would not have recognized the expression, but *Principia Ethica* has long been considered the locus classicus for metaethics – defined here as the concern to answer second-order nonmoral questions, such as those that arise in the investigation of the nature of moral discourse and moral content. (...)

26. Brady M., ed. (2010). *New Waves in Metaethics (New Waves in Philosophy)*. Palgrave Macmillan, 311 pp.

Metaethical questions have occupied some of the greatest philosophers: Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas, Kant, Hume and Nietzsche, amongst many others, have all written on issues about the nature of moral thinking and moral practice. In the last 40 years, interest in metaethics has increased greatly, driven by developments in other areas of philosophy - principally, philosophy of language, philosophy of mind, metaphysics and philosophical psychology. This collection presents original and ground-breaking research on metaethical issues from some of the very best younger philosophers working in this field. Topics covered include: * the nature of practical reasons * naturalist and non-naturalist approaches to metaethics * expressivist accounts of moral language, * aesthetic, epistemic and social normativity.

Metaethics occupies a central place in analytical philosophy, and the last forty years has seen an upsurge of interest in questions about the nature and practice of morality. This collection presents original and ground-breaking research on metaethical issues from some of the very best of a new generation of philosophers working in this field. (...)

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27. Rottschaefer, W. A. (2009), “**Moral Agency and Moral Learning: Transforming Metaethics from a First to a Second Philosophy Enterprise,**” *Behavior and Philosophy*, No 37, pp. 195-216.

Abstract

Arguably, one of the most exciting recent advances in moral philosophy is the ongoing scientific naturalization of normative ethics and metaethics, in particular moral psychology. A relatively neglected area in these improvements that is centrally important for developing a scientifically based naturalistic metaethics concerns the nature and acquisition of successful moral agency. In this paper I lay out two examples of how empirically based findings help us to understand and explain some cases of successful moral agency. These are research in moral internalization and aggression management. Using these examples, I sketch some lessons for investigating successful moral learning and moral action. My proposal reflects a common theme in scientifically based philosophy generally: the shift from the armchair methods of analyzing concepts and finding a priori foundations, the enterprise of first philosophy, to an effort to study the phenomena themselves, using empirical findings and theories to answer philosophical questions about these phenomena, an endeavor recently characterized as second philosophy.

Key words: aggression management, experimental philosophy, first philosophy, moral agency, moral learning, moral internalization, second philosophy

In a series of papers John Doris and Stephen Stich (2005, 2006) have described this work in some detail, laying out how empirical studies and empirically based theoretical advances in evolutionary theory, biology, neuroscience, cognitive science, social psychology, and anthropology have provided findings, hypotheses, and empirically supported theories relevant to the traditional subject matter of normative ethics and metaethics. For instance, they have highlighted studies demonstrating the problems with the predominant intuitional methodology of moral philosophers. They note that empirical studies of folk conceptions of moral responsibility have opened up further questions about philosophical analyses of what features of agency are necessary for moral agency and they discuss cross-cultural studies that challenge traditional claims about the distinction of the moral realm from conventional, religious, and prudential realms. (...)

28. De Vries, R.; Gordijn, B. (2009) “**Empirical Ethics And Its Alleged Meta-Ethical Fallacies,**” *Bioethics*, Vol. 23, Issue 4, pp. 193–201.

Subjects: ethics; concepts; metaethics; fallacies (logic); judgment (logic); facts (philosophy)

Abstract

This paper analyses the concept of empirical ethics as well as three metaethical fallacies that empirical ethics is said to face: the is-ought problem, the naturalistic fallacy and violation of the fact-value distinction. Moreover, it answers the question of whether empirical ethics (necessarily) commits these three basic meta-ethical fallacies.

Keywords: empirical ethics, is-ought problem, naturalistic fallacy, fact-value distinction

Introduction

In the last two decades, applied ethicists have increasingly combined empirical (usually social scientific) research with normative-ethical analysis and reflection. This approach is now commonly called ‘empirical ethics’. According to Borry et al., although there are various ways of doing empirical ethics, they all have some basic assumptions in common:

- empirical ethics states that the study of people’s actual moral beliefs, intuitions, behaviour and reasoning yields information that is meaningful for ethics and should be the starting point of ethics;
 - empirical ethics acknowledges that the methodology of the social sciences (with quantitative and qualitative methods such as case studies, surveys, experiments, interviews, and participatory observation) is a way (and probably the best way) to map this reality;
 - empirical ethics denies the structural incompatibility of empirical and normative approaches, and believes in their fundamental complementarity;
 - in its overarching meaning, empirical ethics is not a methodology of doing ethics but a basic methodological attitude to using the findings from empirical research in ethical reflection and decision making.
- (...)

29. Parker, M. (2009) “**Two Concepts Of Empirical Ethics,**” *Bioethics*, Vol. 23, Issue 4, pp. 202–213.

Subjects: ethics; bioethics; facts (philosophy); experience; **metaethics**; fallacies (logic); euthanasia; Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering, and Life Sciences (except Biotechnology)

Keywords: empirical ethics, expressivism, fact/value distinction, naturalistic ethics, principlism

Abstract

The turn to empirical ethics answers two calls. The first is for a richer account of morality than that afforded by bioethical principlism, which is cast as excessively abstract and thin on the facts. The second is for the facts in question to be those of human experience and not some other, unworldly realm. Empirical ethics therefore promises a richer naturalistic ethics, but in fulfilling the second call it often fails to heed the metaethical requirements related to the first. Empirical ethics risks losing the normative edge which necessarily characterizes the ethical, by failing to account for the nature and the logic of moral norms. I sketch a naturalistic theory, teleological expressivism (TE), which negotiates the naturalistic fallacy by providing a more satisfactory means of taking into account facts and research data with ethical implications. The examples of informed consent and the euthanasia debate are used to illustrate the superiority of this approach, and the problems consequent on including the facts in the wrong kind of way.

(...)

30. Shafer-Landau, R., ed. (2009). *Oxford Studies in Metaethics: Vol. 4*. Oxford University Press, USA, 296 pp.

Oxford Studies in Metaethics is the only publication devoted exclusively to original philosophical work in the foundations of ethics. It provides an annual selection of much of the best new scholarship being done in the field. Its broad purview includes work being done at the intersection of ethical theory and metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of language, and philosophy of mind. The essays included in the series provide an excellent basis for understanding recent developments in the field; those who would like to acquaint themselves with the current state of play in metaethics would do well to start here.

Oxford Studies in Metaethics is designed to provide an annual selection of some of the best new work being done in this exciting field. I think that the articles collected here have done an excellent job in fulfilling the aims of this series. They also display, perhaps more than any previous volume in the series, the breadth of issues that nowadays falls within the boundaries of metaethics.

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31. Anderson, S. L. (2008) "Asimov's "three laws of robotics" and machine metaethics," *AI & SOCIETY*, Vol. 22, Issue 4, pp. 477–493.

Abstract

Using Asimov's "Bicentennial Man" as a springboard, a number of metaethical issues concerning the emerging field of machine ethics are discussed. Although the ultimate goal of machine ethics is to create autonomous ethical machines, this

presents a number of challenges. A good way to begin the task of making ethics computable is to create a program that enables a machine to act an ethical advisor to human beings. This project, unlike creating an autonomous ethical machine, will not require that we make a judgment about the ethical status of the machine itself, a judgment that will be particularly difficult to make. Finally, it is argued that Asimov's "three laws of robotics" are an unsatisfactory basis for machine ethics, regardless of the status of the machine.

32. Shafer-Landau, R., ed. (2008). *Oxford Studies in Metaethics: Vol. 3*. Oxford University Press, USA, 336 pp.

Oxford Studies in Metaethics is the only periodical publication devoted exclusively to original philosophical work on the foundations of ethics. It provides an annual selection of much of the best new scholarship being done in the field. Its broad purview includes work being done at the intersections of ethical theory with metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of language, and philosophy of mind. OSME provides an excellent basis for understanding recent developments in the field; those who would like to acquaint themselves with the current state of play in metaethics would do well to start here. Oxford Studies in Metaethics is designed to collect, on an annual basis, some of the best new work being done in the field of metaethics. I'm very pleased to be able to present this third volume, one that has managed so successfully to fulfill the aims envisioned for the series.

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33. Burgess, J. (2007) "Against Ethics," *Ethical Theory & Moral Practice*, Vol. 10 Issue 5, p427-439

Subject Terms: **metaethics, ethics**, skepticism, nihilism (Philosophy)

Abstract

This is the verbatim manuscript of a paper which has circulated underground for close to thirty years, reaching a metethical conclusion close to J. L. Mackie's by a somewhat different route.

The familiar theories of ethics can be divided into two classes. Cognitivist theories (for example, utilitarianism, intuitionism) maintain that there is a body of fact about right and wrong, good and evil, which it is the business of moral philosophy to uncover. According to linguistic theories (for example, emotivism, prescriptivism), proper analysis shows moral judgments to be meant not as assertions about an alleged realm of objective values, but as some quite different type of 'speech act.' Could it be that both types of theory are wrong? Anethicism (or moral skepticism) maintains that they are: Ordinary people's moral judgments are meant as statements of impersonal fact about absolute values, but there are no such objective values, so moral thinking involves a fundamental mistake and illusion. Anethicism is to ethics as atheism is to theology. Many philosophers are aware of the existence of the anethicist position. Indeed T. Nagel has gone so far as to say (personal communication) that 'fear of it has I think been the unspoken motive of most of the recent contortions in metaethics.' Yet until the recent appearance of J. Mackie's *Ethics*, it has been hard to find even one expression of the anethicist position in print. (It has been

hard to find an argument against linguistic theories of ethics that did not end by endorsing cognitivism, and vice versa.) I hope the discussion that follows may help bring further attention to this neglected position. (...)

34. Bloomfield P. (2007) "Two dogmas of metaethics," *Philosophical Studies*, Vol. 132, Issue 3, pp. 439–466.

Abstract

The two dogmas at issue are the Humean dogma that "'is' statements do not imply 'ought' statements" and the Kantian dogma that "'ought' statements imply 'can'" statements. The extant literature concludes these logically contradict each other. On the contrary, it is argued here that while there is no derivable formal contradiction, the juxtaposition of the dogmas manifests a philosophical disagreement over how to understand the logic of prescriptions. This disagreement bears on how to understand current metaethical debate between realists and non-realists about morality in a way not heretofore investigated. The conclusion is that realists have the resources to account for both dogmas, while non-realists, if they strictly adhere to the "'is"/"ought" gap, cannot give an adequate account of why "ought" implies "can".

Modern metaethics has been conditioned in large part by two dogmas.1 One comes to us from Hume and is that "'is" does not imply "ought". The other is derived from Kant and is that "ought" implies "can". It seems safe to assume that these two dogmas are accepted, under one interpretation or another, by almost all current theorists of moral philosophy and ethics.2 In general, it is instructive to place dogmas besides one another observing the results and there can be an enjoyable frisson when there is some tension between them. On rare occasions, we find our dogmas contradicting one another and the cognitive dissonance demands conceptual reshuffling. Many philosophers (named below) have thought that our two metaethical dogmas actually contradict one another and though the appearance of this is indubitable there are reasons to be skeptical of the claim. There are, nevertheless, very good reasons for thinking the dogmas are in some way deeply at odds with one another. After presenting these issues at a higher degree of resolution, a moderate resolution of the tension between the dogmas is proposed. It preserves both Hume's initial insight as to how people unwittingly slip between "'is" and "ought" as well as the Kantian thought that our moral obligations are limited by what we are able or "can" do. It is unrealistic to think that the proposed solution is the only possible one. Nevertheless, our discussion of the situation will allow us to grasp an important lesson regarding metaethical debate. The attempt to reconcile the dogmas shows us that if moral non-realists adhere strictly to the "'is"/"ought" gap, they cannot adequately account for basic moral principles, like "ought" implies "can". The moral realist, on the other hand, can make good philosophical sense of the entire situation. As a result, we end up with a good argument for at least a limited form of moral realism which commits one to the existence of logical relations obtaining between normative and non-normative discourse.

(...)

35. Copp, D. (2007) *Morality in a Natural World: Selected Essays in Metaethics (Cambridge Studies in Philosophy)*. Cambridge University Press, 377 pp.

Abstract

Morality in a Natural World. The central philosophical challenge of metaethics is to account for the normativity of moral judgment without abandoning or seriously compromising moral realism. In *Morality in a Natural World*, David Copp defends a version of naturalistic moral realism and argues that it can accommodate the normativity of morality. Largely because of the difficulty in accounting for normativity, naturalistic moral realism is often thought to face special metaphysical, epistemological, and semantic problems. In the ten essays included in this volume, Copp defends solutions to these problems. Three of the essays are new, while seven have previously been published. All of them are concerned with the viability of naturalistic and realistic accounts of the nature of morality or, more generally, with the viability of naturalistic and realistic accounts of reasons. David Copp is professor of philosophy at the University of Florida. He is the author of *Morality, Normativity and Society* and has edited and coedited several volumes, including *The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory*. He served for many years as an editor of the *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* and is currently an associate editor of *Ethics* and the subject editor for metaethics of the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

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Preface

This volume brings together ten essays in metaethics that I have written over the past decade. Three are previously unpublished. All of them aim in one way or another to defend the viability of a naturalistic and realistic account of the nature of morality. They discuss problems for naturalism, chiefly the problem of explaining the normativity of moral judgment, and they suggest or defend solutions to the problems. The point of reprinting the articles is that, taken together, and with the addition of the three new essays, they develop a systematic defense of moral naturalism. Moreover, some of them initially appeared in out of the way places. I see difficulties in each of them, certainly in the previously published essays, difficulties that I wish I had noticed much earlier. I have largely resisted the temptation to make substantive changes, however, because some people will have read the original versions of the essays and I did not want to cause confusion about my views. For this reason, the seven previously published essays in the book are reproduced largely without alteration, except for minor changes. I have changed the style of the notes, and I have added a few substantive notes. Because of this, the notes have been renumbered in some cases. When I wrote the essays, I intended them to be read individually, which means that some points are repeated in more than one, but the result is that each of the chapters in the book can be understood without reading any of the others. The introduction aims to put the chapters into context and to explain some ideas that lie in the background of my arguments. During the past ten years, I have been fortunate in being a member of the philosophy departments at the University of California, Davis; Bowling Green State University; and the University of Florida. Each of these universities generously gave me time for research. I also enjoyed very welcome fellowships with the Philosophy Program at the Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University; the Center for Applied Ethics, University of British Columbia; and the Social Philosophy and Policy Center, Bowling Green State University. I would like to thank each of these institutions, and especially, of course, the people who work in them, for their valuable assistance. So many people have given me help in developing my ideas that I cannot hope to remember them all. In each of the essays I thank by name the people I can remember who gave me comments and suggestions, and I thank the audiences that heard me lecture on the topics of the essays. I am enormously grateful for the time and effort that all of these people invested in helping me. There are some colleagues and friends to whom I owe special thanks, both for their stimulation and intellectual help and for their friendly encouragement. I would especially like to mention a few colleagues at Davis, Bowling Green, and Florida who have had an especially important impact on my thinking, namely, Jerry Dworkin, Michael Jubien, Jeff King, David Sobel, and Jon Tresan. I was very lucky to have them as colleagues. For delightful collegial discussions of issues in moral philosophy, I would like to thank the Davis Ethics Discussion Group, the Ohio Reading Group in Ethics, and the Gator Philosophy and Ethics Discussion Group at the University of Florida. Michael Ridge gave me extensive comments on several of the essays included in this book as well as on my proposal to Cambridge University Press. Walter Sinnott-Armstrong invited me to put together this collection for Cambridge, and he gave me valuable feedback on many of the chapters, including the introduction. He has encouraged me in the development of my views ever since we first talked about them. I owe him and the others I have mentioned a very large debt of gratitude. Marina Oshana has made life easy and pleasant for me and has helped me on many occasions to clarify my thinking with her comments on essays included here. Five cats have shared our home over the years and they have kept me awake to the rhythm of life outside my study. Without such good fortune at home, I could not have written these essays. (...)

36. Jones, K. (2006), “**Metaethics and Emotions Research. A Response to Prinz,**” *Philosophical Explorations*, Vol. 9, No. 1, pp. 45–53

Prinz claims that empirical work on emotions and moral judgement can help us resolve longstanding metaethical disputes in favour of simple sentimentalism. I argue that the empirical evidence he marshals does not have the metaethical implications he claims: the studies purporting to show that having an emotion is sufficient for making a moral judgement are tendentially described. We are entitled to ascribe competence with moral concepts to experimental subjects only if we suppose that they would withdraw their moral judgement on learning that they were fully explained by hypnotically induced disgust. Genuine moral judgements must be reason-responsive. To capture the reason-responsiveness of moral judgement, we must turn to either neo-sentimentalism or to a non-sentimentalist metaethics, either of which is fully compatible with the empirical evidence Prinz cites.

‘Sentimentalism’ names a broad family of views that share the intuition that moral judgements depend on human emotions. According to the simplest versions of sentimentalism, to judge that something is wrong (right) is to have a sentiment of disapprobation (approbation) towards it. According to more complex versions, sometimes called ‘neosenimentalism’ or ‘rational sentimentalism’, to judge that something is wrong (right) is to endorse a sentiment of disapprobation (approbation) towards it. To have a sentiment of disapprobation or approbation towards something is to have a structured cluster of

emotional dispositions and so to have coherent patterns in the occurrent emotions one experiences directed at that thing. So, for example, to have a sentiment of disapprobation towards stealing is to be disposed to feel guilt if I steal, anger or contempt towards you, if you do, and so on. (...)

37. Fantl, J. (2006) **“Is Metaethics Morally Neutral?”** *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*, No 87, pp. 24–44

Abstract:

I argue, contra Dreier, Blackburn, and others, that there are no morally neutral metaethical positions. Every metaethical position commits you to the denial of some moral statement. So, for example, the metaethical position that there are no moral properties commits you to the denial of the (quite plausible) moral conjunction of 1) it is right to interfere violently when someone is wrongly causing massive suffering and 2) it is wrong to interfere violently when only non-moral properties are at stake. The argument generalizes to all metaethical positions.

I. Moral neutrality

In a 1996 article, Ronald Dworkin argues against “Archimedean” theories – theories that “purport to stand outside a whole body of belief, and to judge it as a whole from premises or attitudes that owe nothing to it” (p. 88). Archimedean theories about morality, for example, might say what morality is, or what moral statements involve, or whether moral properties or facts exist. The Archimedean hopes to adopt these metaethical positions while leaving open purely moral matters – to claim, for example, that moral judgments are merely expressions of emotion, but that eating meat is still wrong (or right), abortion still impermissible (or permissible), or whatever other moral claims she wants to make. So, according to R. M. Hare (1965, p. 88), “ethics is morally neutral,” by which he means that “its conclusions neither are substantial moral judgments, nor entail them, even in conjunction with factual premises” (p. 97). J. L. Mackie (1977, p. 16) claims that, in at least some cases, “first and second order views are not merely distinct but completely independent: one could be a second order moral sceptic without being a first order one, or again the other way round.” More recently, in a response to Dworkin, Jamie Dreier (2002, p. 242) argues that “there are metaethical theories that carry no normative moral commitments whatsoever.” And Simon Blackburn, while perhaps not strictly an Archimedean, maintains that expressivist metaethical positions don’t “require ‘reform’ of the face value of ethics.”² I argue, first, that contra the Archimedean, that there are no morally neutral metaethical positions. Every metaethical position commits you to the denial of some moral statement. Sometimes the moral statement denied is not very plausible. If so, the fact that a metaethical position commits you to the denial of that moral statement is not a difficulty for that metaethical position. But sometimes the moral statement denied is quite plausible. In this case, the fact that a metaethical position commits you to the denial of that moral statement is a difficulty for that metaethical position. In this vein, I additionally and briefly argue that any metaethical position that denies the existence of moral properties or makes moral properties a matter of our attitudes will inevitably require the denial of quite undeniable moral statements. Of course, some moral statements are self-contradictory, e.g. it is always wrong to commit genocide and it is always permissible to commit genocide. Other moral statements, even if not self-contradictory, are necessarily irrational to believe, e.g., to distort an example from Dreier, abortion is wrong iff I believe it’s not wrong (to believe the statement, you would assign the same truth value to both sides – a Moorean contradiction). Arguably, every metaethical position trivially commits you to the denials of these moral statements.

38. Swan, K. (2006) **“A Metaethical Option for Theists,”** *Journal of Religious Ethics*, Vol. 34, Issue 1, pp. 3–20.

Abstract

John Hare has proposed “prescriptive realism” in an attempt to stake out a middle-ground position in the twentieth century Anglo-American debates concerning metaethics between substantive moral realists and antirealist expressivists. The account is supposed to preserve both the normativity and objectivity of moral judgments. Hare defends a version of divine command theory. The proposal succeeds in establishing the middle-ground position Hare intended. However, I argue that prescriptive realism can be strengthened in an interesting way.

Key words: John Hare, metaethics, expressivism, moral realism, motivational internalism, divine command theory

I think many people would like the following two sets of features to be true about morality, and indeed speak and behave as if they were true. Firstly, morality is objective. Among those that say moral objectivity requires a theistic grounding, the idea is that God has revealed through his commandments, and by other means as well, moral laws. When human beings make a moral judgment, they have or express a belief concerning a moral state of affairs that is either accurate or inaccurate with respect to those divine laws. Therefore, moral judgments have truth conditions. When these truth conditions are met, as they obviously can be since some moral judgments may be accurate with respect to divine moral law, moral judgments are true. Nontheists may make analogous claims invoking a different standard of objective truth in morality, but, in general, these features of moral judgments are the ones thought to be the best evidence for some type of moral realism.

(...)

39. Lekan, T. (2006) **“Pragmatist Metaethics: Moral Theory as a Deliberative Practice,”** *Southern Journal of Philosophy*. Vol. 44, Issue 2, pp. 253–271.

Subjects: pragmatism; metaethics; ethics; justification (christian theology); idealism; philosophy

Abstract

The paper defends a pragmatist account of metaethics that challenges the standard view of justificatory structure at the heart of many rulebased normative ethical theories. The standard view of justificatory structure assumes that deliberation must be constrained by antecedent justificatory procedures. I consider some of the radical implications of the pragmatist idea that deliberation is the conceptual context within which to interpret, evaluate, and explain moral justification.

1. Introduction

Although “pragmatism” has enjoyed a renewed interest in the last twenty or so years, the primary focus has been the implications of pragmatism in metaphysics and epistemology. It is only recently that philosophers working in the pragmatic tradition have turned their attention to the implications of pragmatism for moral theory. Whatever else it might mean, pragmatism is a metaphilosophical critique of deep assumptions about the very nature of philosophical theorizing. As the name suggests, pragmatism involves a commitment to seeing philosophical theorizing as an extension of our practices. Theorizing is a characteristic of our practices, not a self-contained activity isolated from them. It would therefore be misleading to say that doing moral philosophy pragmatically means applying theoretical conceptions to various practical issues. No pragmatist would deny that philosophers should participate in the process of resolving moral problems. Yet pragmatism as a metaphilosophical position implies something more fundamental than the claim that philosophy should be made relevant. Pragmatist metaethics enjoins philosophers to rethink the relationship of their theorizing to the activities of ordinary moral agents. Specifically, this means that philosophers start with the assumption that serious moral agents engage in a kind of “proto-theorizing” activity. This does not mean that moral philosophers should look for new work because they have nothing to contribute to moral life. Practices and activities such as marriage, childrearing, animal husbandry, medicine, and cooking existed before “experts” began to systematically reflect upon their nature, value, and purpose. Although morality is more important and complex than these relatively self-contained activities, it does make sense to say that “expert” philosophical reflection upon it is an outgrowth of activities already underway. Much moral philosophy forgets this very basic observation, taking its moral theoretic conceptions and distinctions to be “ready-made” independently of real deliberative practices. That is, the task of moral philosophy is foundational—to provide justificatory principles by which moral agents can determine what they ought to do. Moral philosophy, equipped with its special procedures, provides us with the proper normative criteria. Pragmatism recommends that we keep everyday deliberative practices firmly in view as we develop our models of justificatory procedures in our metaethical accounts of morality. (...)

40. Horgan, T., Timmons, M. (2006). *Metaethics after Moore*. Oxford University Press, USA. 412 pp.

Abstract

Metaethics, understood as a distinct branch of ethics, is often traced to G. E. Moore's 1903 classic, *Principia Ethica*. Whereas normative ethics is concerned to answer first-order moral questions about what is good and bad, right and wrong, metaethics is concerned to answer second-order non-moral questions about the semantics, metaphysics, and epistemology of moral thought and discourse. Moore has continued to exert a powerful influence, and the sixteen essays here (most of them specially written for the volume) represent the most up-to-date work in metaethics after, and in some cases directly inspired by, the work of Moore. Contributors include Robert Audi, Stephen Barker, Paul Bloomfield, PanayotButchvarov, Jonathan Dancy, Stephen Darwall, Jamie Dreier, Allan Gibbard, Brad Hooker, Terry Horgan, Connie Rosati, Russ Shafer-Landau, Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, Michael Smith, Philip Stratton-Lake, SigrunSvavarsdottir, Mark Timmons, and Judith Jarvis Thomson.

Preface

Since its publication in 1903, G. E. Moore's *Principia Ethica* has continued to exert a powerful influence on metaethical enquiry. This volume contains sixteen essays that represent recent work in metaethics after, and in some cases directly inspired by, the work of Moore. Seven of the essays were originally presented at the 2002 Spindel Conference commemorating the one hundredth anniversary of the publication of *Principia Ethica* and in celebration of a hundred years of metaethics. They are reprinted here (some slightly revised) from the *Southern Journal of Philosophy*, 41 (2003). Our introduction situates the essays in relation to central themes in Moore's metaethics. We are grateful to the *Southern Journal of Philosophy* for permission to reprint the papers that appeared in the 2003 supplement. We also wish to thank our editor at Oxford University Press, Peter Momtchiloff, for his guidance and support in our work on this anthology. (...)

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Introduction

Metaethics, understood as a distinct branch of ethics, is often traced to G. E. Moore's 1903 classic *Principia Ethica* (PE). Whereas normative ethics is concerned to answer first-order moral questions about what is good and bad, right and wrong, virtuous and vicious, metaethics is concerned to answer second-order non-moral questions, including (but not restricted to) questions about the semantics, metaphysics, and epistemology of moral thought and discourse. Metaethics, then, as a recognized branch of ethics, is part of the philosophical legacy of PE. Moreover Moore's own combination of metaethical views has continued to exert a strong influence on metaethical enquiry of the last hundred plus years, and forms another part of the rich legacy of Principia. The papers in this volume represent recent work in metaethics that reflects the rich philosophical heritage of Moore's PE. They are organized in relation to central metaethical claims defended by Moore—claims that can be put into four main groups: the subject matter of ethics, moral semantics, moral metaphysics, and moral epistemology. In what immediately follows we will briefly summarize the papers, relating them to Moore's metaethical views.

(...)

41. Shafer-Landau, R., ed. (2006). *Oxford Studies in Metaethics: Vol. 1*. Oxford University Press, USA, 400 pp.

Oxford Studies in Metaethics is the only periodical publication devoted exclusively to original philosophical work on the foundations of ethics. It provides an annual selection of much of the best new scholarship being done in the field. Its broad purview includes work being done at the intersections of ethical theory with metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of language, and philosophy of mind. OSME provides an excellent basis for understanding recent developments in the field; those who would like to acquaint themselves with the current state of play in metaethics would do well to start here.

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42. Shafer-Landau, R., ed. (2006). *Oxford Studies in Metaethics: Vol. 2*. Oxford University Press, USA, 280 pp.

Oxford Studies in Metaethics is the only periodical publication devoted exclusively to original philosophical work on the foundations of ethics. It provides an annual selection of much of the best new scholarship being done in the field. Its broad purview includes work being done at the intersections of ethical theory with metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of language, and philosophy of mind. OSME provides an excellent basis for understanding recent developments in the field; those who would like to acquaint themselves with the current state of play in metaethics would do well to start here. (...)

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43. Musschenga, A. W. (2005) "Empirical Ethics, Context-Sensitivity, and Contextualism," *Journal of Medicine & Philosophy*, Vol. 30, Issue 5, pp. 467–490.

In medical ethics, business ethics, and some branches of political philosophy (multi-culturalism, issues of just allocation, and equitable distribution) the literature increasingly combines insights from ethics and the social sciences. Some authors in medical ethics even speak of a new phase in the history of ethics, hailing "empirical ethics" as a logical next step in the development of practical ethics after the turn to "applied ethics." The name empirical ethics is ill-chosen because of its associations with "descriptive ethics." Unlike descriptive ethics, however, empirical ethics aims to be both descriptive and normative. The first question on which I focus is what kind of empirical research is used by empirical ethics and for which purposes. I argue that the ultimate aim of all empirical ethics is to improve the contextsensitivity of ethics. The second

question is whether empirical ethics is essentially connected with specific positions in meta-ethics. I show that in some kinds of meta-ethical theories, which I categorize as broad contextualist theories, there is an intrinsic need for connecting normative ethics with empirical social research. But context-sensitivity is a goal that can be aimed for from any meta-ethical position. Keywords: context-sensitivity, (epistemic) contextualism, empirical ethics I. INTRODUCTION In medical ethics, business ethics, and some branches of political philosophy (multi-culturalism, issues of just allocation and equitable distribution) the literature increasingly combines insights from ethics and the social sciences. (...)

44. Feldman, F. (2005) **“The Open Question Argument: What It Isn’t; and What It Is,”** *Philosophical Issues*, Vol. 15 Issue 1, pp. 22–43

Subjects: ethics; philosophy; meaning (philosophy); **metaethics**; Principia Ethica (Book: Moore); Moore, G. E., 1873-1958

Introductory

Comments Every competent history of 20th Century moral philosophy begins with a discussion of G. E. Moore’s Open Question Argument (or “OQA”). According to a standard view, this argument set the stage for the next hundred years of philosophical reflection on the meanings of the terms of moral appraisal. Every metaethical theory that emerged in this period can be seen as some sort of reaction to OQA. Under the circumstances, one might assume that leading professional moral philosophers would be in fundamental agreement about how the argument is supposed to work, even if they do not entirely agree on its cogency. Unfortunately, this assumption would be false. In their discussions of OQA, even the most respected of philosophers often attribute utterly un-Moorean arguments to Moore. One particularly troubling pattern is common: a philosopher purports to be discussing OQA; he presents a confused argument unlike anything to be found in *Principia Ethica*; he then dismisses the argument with something approaching contempt, suggesting that only a simpleton could have been impressed by this “Moorean” argument. Surely, if one is going to shower contempt on Moore’s argument, one might at least do him the courtesy of showering contempt on an argument he actually presented. (...)

45. Nadeem J. Z. H. (2004) **“The Return of Moral Fictionalism,”** *Philosophical Perspectives*, 18, *Ethics*, pp. 149–187.

Fictionalism has made a comeback over the last two decades as one of the standard responses to ontologically problematic domains.¹ It has been applied to mathematics, modality, unobservables, identity claims, and existence claims.² Moral discourse has struck many as potentially ontologically problematic, but within contemporary analytic metaethics there has been no sustained defense of moral fictionalism.³ Very recently moral fictionalism has also finally begun to return. On the dust cover of Richard Joyce’s new book, *The Myth of Morality*— a sustained defense of moral fictionalism—David Lewis writes: “Moral fictionalism is an idea whose time has come.”⁴ In one sense, Lewis is right: in addition to Joyce’s book there seems to be quite a bit of interest in moral fictionalism though much of it expressed merely in conversation or still in the publication pipeline.⁵ The appeal of fictionalism often lies, I suspect, in its ability to look like a relatively less problematic alternative to both traditional noncognitivism and moral realism: we can do without the noncognitivist’s problematic account of moral language and we can do without the realist’s problematic metaphysics. In this paper I will not argue that moral fictionalism cannot work. Instead I will argue (i) that a correct understanding of the dialectical situation in contemporary metaethics shows that fictionalism is only an interesting new alternative if it can provide a new account of normative content: what is it that I am thinking or saying when I think or say that I ought to do something; and (ii) that fictionalism, qua fictionalism, does not provide us with any new resources for providing such an account. (...)

46. Maitzen, S. (2004) **“A semantic attack on divine-command metaethics,”** *Sophia*, , Vol. 43, Issue 2, pp. 15–28.

Abstract

According to divine-command metaethics (DCM), whatever is morally good or right has that status because, and only because, it conforms to God’s will. I argue that DCM is false or vacuous: either DCM is false, or else there are no instantiated moral properties, and no moral truths, to which DCM can even apply. The sort of criticism I offer is familiar, but I develop it in what I believe is a novel way.

47. Antle, B. J., Regehr, Ch. (2003) **“Beyond Individual Rights and Freedoms: Metaethics in Social Work Research,”***Social Work*, Vol. 48, Issue 1, pp. 135–144

Increasingly, social workers are called on to demonstrate the efficacy of their interventions and to contribute to knowledge building in the social sciences. Although social workers have a long tradition of practice **ethics**, less attention has been given to the unique dimensions of research **ethics** for social workers. A social work model of research **ethics** would consider how to balance highly valued ethical principles that are individually focused, such as self-determination and nonmaleficence (the

obligation to do no harm), with equally important values that have a collective focus, such as justice and beneficence (the obligation to bring about good). This article reviews current principles guiding research **ethics**, such as autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, and justice and provides an outline of the salient issues for social workers as they strive to address individual and collective interests in research endeavors, such as a greater emphasis on the social justice mission and the need to ensure that social justice objectives do not obscure individual rights and freedoms. The article concludes with preliminary recommendations for developing a social work perspective in research **ethics**.

Key words: ethics; research; rights; social justice; values

(...)

48. Brady, M.S. (2003) **“Some Worries about Normative and Metaethical Sentimentalism,”** *Metaphilosophy*, Vol. 34, Issue 1/2, pp. 144–153.

Subjects: ethics; sentimentalism; virtues; normativity (**ethics**)

Abstract

In this response I raise a number of problems for Michael Slote's normative and metaethical sentimentalism. The first is that his agent-based account of rightness needs to be qualified in order to be plausible; any such qualification, however, leaves Slote's normative ethics in tension with his metaethical views. The second is that an agent-based ethics of empathic caring will indeed struggle to capture our common-sense understanding of deontological constraints, and that appeal to the notion of causal immediacy will be of little help here. Finally, it seems to me that Slote's metaethical account will turn out to be much less externalist (and hence, by his own lights, much less plausible) than he suspects.

Keywords: agent-based virtue ethics, deontology, externalism, internalism, metaethics, sentimentalism.

49. Jacobs, J. (2002) *Dimensions of Moral Theory: An Introduction to Metaethics and Moral Psychology*, Blackwell Publishing, 192 pp.

'Dimensions' may well become the standard intermediate text in ethics courses. Jacobs offers a clear, cohesive, and accessible examination of the often mysterious, yet critical content of ethical theory, falling under the rubrics of metaethics (epistemological, metaphysical, and semantic) and moral psychology, which details the major positions and supporting arguments while tracing their historical development, with concinnity (notably, under 150 pages) and a plumb. Citing David McNaughton, Keele University, from the back cover, "There is a real sense of engaging in a continuing dialogue that spans the history of the subject." The book is conveniently, for a sixteen week semester, divided into four sections: Objectivity and Subjectivity, Moral Theory and Moral Psychology, Forms of Moral Theory, Naturalism and Non-naturalism. The book has excellent references, bibliography, and useful glossary. My only reservations are that, because of its compact presentation (a strength), the reading is sometimes haltingly slow. Also, the work of certain important contemporaries such as Parfit and Singer are ignored. However, this superb study is the perfect text to follow a general introduction, such as Rachels, et al., and highly useful for anyone wishing to know more about the more challenging issues informing contemporary ethical discourse and practice.

(...)

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50. Lang, G. (2001) **“The Rule-Following Considerations and Metaethics: Some False Moves,”** *European Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 9, Issue 2, pp. 190–209.

Subjects: ethics; objectivity; philosophy; McDowell, John

Some distinctive and influential strands in John McDowell’s corpus of arguments for the objectivity of value are rooted in reflection on Wittgenstein’s rule-following considerations.¹ In this paper, I shall argue that the rule-following considerations do not supply promising materials for moral objectivism. Neither do the rule-following considerations provide support for the doctrine of particularism, or the doctrine that morality is essentially uncodifiable. As far as these metaethical debates are concerned, the rule-following considerations pretty much leave everything in their place. (This conclusion may be faithful to Wittgenstein’s own general attitude towards his later work (Wittgenstein 1967: Part I, §124). But I do not have the room here to investigate this issue with the care it deserves, so I will not take it as an independent merit of the argument to follow that it accords with this ‘quietist’ approach to Wittgenstein’s later philosophy.) The argument is structured as follows. The Wittgensteinian background to the McDowellian account and McDowell’s interpretation of the rule-following considerations are briefly sketched in §1. In §§2–5, I describe McDowell’s reasons for thinking that the rule-following considerations are a useful resource for moral objectivism. I distinguish three arguments in his writings, which I call the Anthropocentrism Argument, the Shapelessness Argument, and the AntiHumean Argument, respectively. The shortcomings of these arguments are exposed in §§6–9. In §10, I express doubts about the relevance of the rulefollowing considerations to the debate about codifiability and uncodifiability in morality.

(...)

51. Leiter, B. (2000) **“Nietzsche's Metaethics: Against the Privilege Readings.”** *European Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 8, Issue 3, pp. 277–297

I. Framing the Issues

It is, of course, well-known that Nietzsche wanted to effect a revaluation of values: that is, a new assessment of the value of our ‘moral’ values. On at least one plausible construal, Nietzsche held that moral values were not conducive to the flourishing of human excellence, and it was by reference to this fact that he proposed to assess their value. Even if one rejects, however, this specific formulation of the grounds on which the revaluation proceeds, one may still agree that the enterprise of assessing the value of certain other values (call them the ‘revalued values’) invites the following metaethical question: what status -- metaphysical, epistemological -- do the values used to undertake this revaluation (the ‘assessing values’) enjoy? More specifically, one might want to ask questions like: Are the assessing valuations true and the revalued valuations false? Are the assessing valuations justified (in some sense to be specified) while the revalued valuations are not? Are there reasons for everyone to accept the assessing values rather than the revalued values? (...)

52. Shaver, R. (2000) **“Sidgwick's Minimal Metaethics,”** *Utilitas.*, Vol. 12, Issue 3, pp. 261–277.

Abstract

Non-naturalism has a shady reputation. This reputation is undeserved, at least in the case of one variety of non-naturalism - the variety Sidgwick offers. In section I, I present Sidgwick's view, distinguishing it from views with which it is often lumped.[1] In II and III, I defend Sidgwick against recent objections to non-naturalism from motivation and supervenience. In IV, I briefly consider objections which brought about the downfall of non-naturalism at the middle of the century. In V, I consider the role Sidgwick's arguments for non-naturalism play in Method's I.3. In VI, I contrast Sidgwick's attitude toward analytic **metaethics** to that Moore and the non-cognitivists.
