This book contains chapters on various features of Kant's moral psychology and moral theory, with particular emphasis on a conception of rational agency autonomy. The opening chapters explore different elements of Kant's views about motivation, including an account of respect for morality as the distinctive moral motive and a view of the principle of happiness as a representation of the shared structure of non-moral choice. These chapters stress the unity of Kant's moral psychology by arguing that moral and non-moral considerations motivate in essentially the same way. Several of the chapters develop an original approach to Kant's conception of autonomy that emphasizes the political metaphors found throughout Kant's writings on ethics. They argue that autonomy is best interpreted not as a psychological capacity, but as a kind of sovereignty: in claiming that moral agents have autonomy, Kant regards them as a kind of sovereign legislator with the power to give moral law through their willing. The final chapters explore some of the implications of this conception of autonomy elsewhere in Kant's moral thought, arguing that his Formula of Universal Law uses this conception of autonomy to generate substantive moral principles and exploring the connection between Kantian self-legislation and duties to oneself.

Introduction: Plan of the volume
SWINBURNE RICHARD

The theme of this volume is the extent to which humans have a free choice of which actions to perform, and what kind of free choice would
make them morally responsible for their actions. This introductory chapter provides an overview of the contributions to this volume.

**Principled Ethics**

Sean McKeever and Michael Ridge

Published in print: 2006 Published Online: May 2006


Moral philosophy has long treated principles as indispensable for understanding its subject matter. However, the underlying assumption that this is the best approach has received almost no defence, and has been attacked by particularists who argue that the traditional link between morality and principles is little more than an unwarranted prejudice. This book meets this particularist challenge head on and defends a distinctive view called ‘generalism as a regulative ideal’. After cataloguing the wide array of views that have gone under the heading ‘particularism’, the reasons why the main particularist arguments fail to establish their conclusions are explained. Generalism as a regulative ideal incorporates what is most insightful in particularism (e.g., the possibility that reasons are context sensitive - ‘holism about reasons’) while rejecting every major particularist doctrine. The book resists the excesses of hyper-generalist views according to which moral thought is constituted by allegiance to a particular principle or set of principles. It argues that in so far as moral knowledge and wisdom are possible, all of morality can and should be codified in a manageable set of principles, even if we are not yet in possession of those principles. Such principles are not objects of mere curiosity, but play an important role in guiding the virtuous agent.

**Double-Effect Reasoning**

T. A. Cavanaugh

Published in print: 2006 Published Online: September 2006


Consequentialists oppose while absolutists and deontologists rely upon double-effect reasoning (DER) to address hard cases in which good inextricably binds with evil (such as destroying a legitimate military target while concomitantly and foreseeably killing innocents). This book addresses the history, application, and philosophical controversy concerning DER. It traces both the origin of DER in the thought of Aquinas and its development by subsequent ethicists. Considering
consequentialist criticisms, proportionalism, and recent revisions of
double effect, the book argues at length for the reasonableness of DER,
particularly the intended/foreseen distinction. Intent is distinguished
from foresight, and this distinction is applied to the classic cases of
terror and tactical bombing. Most importantly, the book establishes
the ethical relevance of this distinction, grounding its import both in
broadly Aristotelian-Thomistic features of action as voluntary, and in a
Kantian focus on the victim as an end in himself. The book also considers
typically neglected albeit intriguing issues such as DER’s application
to allowings and how constitutional legal systems that incorporate
exceptionless norms employ a legal analogue to DER.

Bioethics and Women
Mary Briody Mahowald
Published in print: 2006 Published Online: September 2006
DOI: 10.1093/0195176170.001.0001
This book deals with bioethical issues relevant to women across the
life span. “Gender justice” is the starting point and the end point
of the author’s approach to the issues addressed. The first section
offers an overview of bioethics, critiques prevalent approaches to
bioethics and models of the physician-patient relationship, and sketches
distinguishing aspects of women’s health care. Classical pragmatists and
feminist standpoint theorists are enlisted in support of “an egalitarian
perspective”, and positions on the moral status of fetuses and those
already born are examined. The second section identifies topics that are
directly or indirectly related to women’s health; these include prenatal
testing, childbirth and newborn decisions, treatment of minors and the
elderly, assisted reproduction, abortion, eating disorders, domestic
violence, breast and gynecological cancer, end of life care, and research
on women. Brief cases illustrate variables related to each topic. Empirical
and theoretical considerations follow each set of cases; these are
intended to precipitate more expansive and critical examination of the
questions raised. The book concludes with discussion of an egalitarian
ideal to be pursued through an ethic of virtue or supererogation rather
than obligation. By embracing this ideal, according to the author, moral
agents support a more demanding level of morality than guidelines or
laws require.
Bioethics
Bernard Gert, Charles M. Culver, and K. Danner Clouser

BIOETHICS: A Systematic Approach is an extensive revision of Bioethics: A Return to Fundamentals. The subtitle has changed in order to emphasize that what distinguishes the authors’ approach to bioethics from almost all others is that it is systematic. It applies the account of morality and rationality presented in COMMON MORALITY: Deciding What To Do (2004) and MORALITY: Its Nature and Justification, Revised Edition (2005) to the moral problems that arise in the practice of medicine. The concept of rationality used to justify morality is the same concept that is used to define the concept of malady or disease. The book offers an account of the concept of death, and provides an account of euthanasia that fits within the systematic account of morality and rationality that have been provided. It also shows that this systematic account explains the controversy about the morality of abortion. There are new chapters on moral disagreements, abortion, and on “what doctors must know”, and significant improvements have been made in the treatment of the concepts of consent and malady. An entire chapter is devoted to the concept of mental maladies. Arguments are also developed against principlism and shows how principlism’s authors’ misunderstanding of this view undermines their criticisms.

Reasons and the Good
Roger Crisp

This book answers some of the oldest questions in moral philosophy. Claiming that a fundamental issue in normative ethics is what ultimate reasons for action we might have, it argues that the best statements of such reasons will not employ moral concepts. The book investigates and explains the nature of reasons themselves; its account of how we come to know them combines an intuitionist epistemology with elements of Pyrrhonist scepticism. It defends a hedonistic theory of well-being and an account of practical reason according to which we can give some, though not overriding, priority to our own good over that of others. The book develops original lines of argument within a framework of some traditional but currently less popular views.
This book traces a complex of issues surrounding moral agency from Kant through Schelling to Kierkegaard. There are two complementary projects. The first is to clarify the contours of German idealism as a philosophical movement by examining the motivations not only of its beginning, but also of its end. In tracing the motivations for the transition to mid-19th century post-idealism to Schelling’s middle and late periods and, ultimately, back to a problem originally presented in Kant, it shows the causes of the demise of that movement to be the same as the causes of its rise. In the process, it presents the most detailed discussion to date of the moral psychology and moral epistemology of Schelling’s work after 1809. The second project — which is simply the first viewed from a different angle — is to trace the sources of Kierkegaard’s theory of agency and his criticism of philosophical ethics to this same complex of issues in Kant and post-Kantian idealism. In the process, it is argued that Schelling’s influence on Kierkegaard was greater than has been thought, and builds a new understanding of Kierkegaard’s project in his pseudonymous works on the basis of this revised picture of their historical background.

The Family in Christian Social and Political Thought

Brent Waters

The book provides a critical and constructive overview of historic and contemporary themes on the family in Christian social and political thought. The principal historic sources examined include Greco-Roman and biblical texts, patristic and medieval literature, and selected Reformation, Puritan, and 19th century authors. The development of modern liberal thought on marriage and family is subjected to extensive scrutiny by surveying the works of some of its leading founders, proponents, and contemporary critics, including a range of Christian theological responses. The chief weakness of late liberalism is that it promotes a voluntaristic vision of civil society, which portrays human associations solely as the outcome of the corporate will of autonomous individuals. The central constructive argument of the book is that such
a vision has effectively eroded an understanding of the family as the most basic and natural form of human association, thereby diminishing contemporary Christian social and political thought. In order to rectify this situation, the philosophical and ideological presuppositions of late liberalism is subjected to critical analysis regarding its understanding of the nature of human associations in general, and the familial association in particular. Building upon this analysis, an alternative set of philosophical, theological, and moral presuppositions are developed, which provide the basis for developing a normative account of the family in opposition to that offered by late liberalism. This alternative account in turn may be used to inform contemporary Christian social and political thought.

The Constitution of Equality
Thomas Christiano

Published in print: 2008 Published Online: September 2008
DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198297475.001.0001
Item type: book

What is the ethical basis of democracy? And what reasons do we have to go along with democratic decisions even when we disagree with them? And when do we have reason to say that we may justly ignore democratic decisions? These questions must be answered if we are to have answers to some of the most important questions facing our global community, which include whether there is a human right to democracy and whether we must attempt to spread democracy throughout the globe. This book provides a philosophical account of the moral foundations of democracy and of liberalism. It shows how democracy and basic liberal rights are grounded in the principle of public equality, which tells us that in the establishment of law and policy we must treat persons as equals in ways that they can see as being treated as equals. The principle of public equality is shown to be the fundamental principle of social justice. This account enables us to understand the nature and roles of adversarial politics and public deliberation in political life. It gives an account of the grounds of the authority of democracy. It also shows when the authority of democracy runs out. It shows how the violations of democratic and liberal rights are beyond the legitimate authority of democracy and how the creation of persistent minorities in a democratic society, and the failure to ensure a basic minimum for all persons, weaken the legitimate authority of democracy.
A Political Theory of Rights
Attracta Ingram

Published in print: 1994 Published Online: November 2003
Item type: book

This book presents a conception of rights as a type of political claim, justified by a Kantian ideal of autonomy. This justification provides a moral basis for rights independent of law and custom, and tied to an image of citizenship which is appropriate to the practice of pluralist liberal democracy. The book is divided into two parts. Part 1 discusses the concept of self-ownership and the proprietary conception of rights. Part II explores the concept of self-government and the political conception of rights.

Foundations of Liberalism
Margaret Moore

Published in print: 1993 Published Online: November 2003
Item type: book

Foundations of Liberalism is a critical examination of contemporary liberal theories of justice (Gewirth, Rawls, Gauthier, Raz, among others) focusing on the familiar problem of how to relate the personal point of view of the individual to the impartial perspective of justice. Two kinds of problems typically arise from the attempt to ground liberal justice in an individualist foundation. The ‘motivation problem’ refers to the difficulty in explaining why the individual would be motivated to act in accordance with liberal justice. The ‘integrity problem’ refers to the tendency to explain the above by presenting an incoherent or divided account of the person, with one part motivated by self-interest, and the other part, by the impartial rules of justice. The book develops a more plausible account of the relation between self-interest and morality, which avoids these two problems, and which is more similar to the revisionist liberal accounts of Rawls's Political Liberalism and Raz's The Morality of Freedom.

Justice and Punishment
Matt Matravers

Published in print: 2000 Published Online: November 2003
Item type: book

Page 7 of 11
This book attempts to answer the challenge of showing that morality is not a confidence trick or a fetish. It does so by arguing that moral norms are those that rational, self-interested people could accept. The problem is approached by asking by what right some people punish others, and by comparing recent developments in theories of distributive and retributive justice. The first part of the book considers retributive, utilitarian, and mixed theories of punishment. In the second part, recent theories of distributive justice, especially those of Rawls and Gauthier, are examined. It is argued that these theories cannot give an adequate account of punishment. In the final part, an argument is offered for a genuinely constructivist account of morality—constructivist in that it rejects any idea of objective, mind-independent moral values and seeks instead to construct morality from non-moral human concerns; genuinely constructivist in that, in contrast to Rawls, it does not take as a premise the equal moral worth of persons. The conclusion is that a genuine constructivism will show the need for, and justification of, punishment as intrinsic to morality itself.

Impartiality in Moral and Political Philosophy
Susan Mendus

The dispute between impartialists and partialists dominates much modern moral and political philosophy. This book is an attempt to investigate what is at stake between impartialists and their opponents, and to suggest a possible reconciliation. It begins by noting that, in political philosophy, impartiality is normally taken to reflect a belief in the equality of all human beings. However, in a world characterized by plural and competing conceptions of the good, not everyone accepts that all human beings are equal. Belief in equality is part of a comprehensive, and contested, conception of the good. Therefore, if liberal impartiality is to gain support, it must provide an alternative foundation: one which can demonstrate the priority of justice, but which does not depend upon acceptance of a particular conception of the good. I suggest that this foundation is to be found in a form of impartialism that gives centrality to the partial concerns we have for particular others. The fact that we care for particular others can provide a justification for impartialism and can also explain its motivational force.
Conclusion

Daniel Butt

in Rectifying International Injustice: Principles of Compensation and Restitution Between Nations

Published in print: 2008 Published Online: January 2009
DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199218240.003.0007
Publisher: Oxford University Press

The conclusion of the book reviews the three forms of morally relevant forms of connection with historic injustice, based on benefit, on the inheritance of entitlement, and on an ongoing failure to fulfil rectificatory duties. These are presented as complementary but distinct bases for modern day rectificatory duties. It is claimed that taken together, these mean that those who advocate international libertarianism may have to accept the existence of demanding rectificatory duties, which may, in the short run, coincide with the demands of redistributive cosmopolitanism. Though present day individuals and groups may dislike the idea that they can acquire rectificatory duties in an involuntary fashion, without bearing moral responsibility for the original wrongdoing, they nonetheless act wrongly if they do not seek to rectify historic international injustice.

Commentary 7.5

Jonathan Sinclair-Wilson

in Addressing Tipping Points for a Precarious Future

Published in print: 2013 Published Online: January 2014
DOI: 10.5871/bacad/9780197265536.003.0023
Publisher: British Academy

Tipping points are troublesome metaphors. They may be more the products of our own imagination than any possible reality. Confusion and uncertainty, together with the possible suddenness and catastrophe, make our imaginings even more lurid. We depend on models but more so because they are the only ones we use to predict. We may reach a state of justifiable alarm, but this is not a recipe for purposeful collective action. What is now required is a sense of common humanity which instils hope and courage and a sense that a better future is still within our grasp.
Introduction
Margaret Moore

in Foundations of Liberalism

Published in print: 1993 Published Online: November 2003

Publisher: Oxford University Press
DOI: 10.1093/0198273851.003.0001

This chapter defines the main terms and the project of the book, and specifically situates the problem of the relation of self-interest and morality in the larger philosophical context.

Corporal Knowledge
Jennifer Glancy

Published in print: 2010 Published Online: May 2010

Publisher: Oxford University Press
DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195328158.001.0001

Drawing on representations of bodies in sources from Paul to Augustine, this book focuses on the question of what is known in the body and demonstrates why that question is significant for a cultural history of Christian origins. The inevitable cultural habituation of bodies influenced Christians of the first centuries to replicate the habitus of the wider culture—that is, the hierarchical patterns of social relations familiar throughout the Roman Empire, despite the seeming incompatibility of those embodied patterns of relations with the good news of Christian preaching. A study of corporal epistemology, this volume builds on a sequence of in-depth analyses of texts, historical problems, and theological questions. How does Paul manage to position his whippable body as a source of knowledge and power? How did the corporal conditioning of the Roman slaveholding system infiltrate Christian moral imagination and sexual ethics? What do primitive images of Mary in childbirth suggest about ancient—and modern—understandings of maternal epistemology? The book is informed by the work of theorists of corporeality, including Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Pierre Bourdieu, and Linda Martín Alcoff. What is known in the body is informed by but ultimately exceeds the grid of social location. Framing questions about corporal knowledge offers new insights into bodies, identities, and early Christian understandings of what it means to be human.
Spectator Theory
D. D. Raphael

in The Impartial Spectator: Adam Smith's Moral Philosophy
Published in print: 2007 Published Online: May 2007
Item type: chapter

Explanation of moral judgement in terms of the feelings of spectators is found in Hutcheson and Hume as well as in Adam Smith. Smith's theory marks an advance on the other two.

Oughts and Thoughts
Anandi Hattiangadi

Published in print: 2007 Published Online: September 2007
Item type: book

This book provides a response to the argument for meaning scepticism set out by Saul Kripke in Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language. Kripke asks what makes it the case that anybody ever means anything by any word, and argues that there are no facts of the matter as to what anybody ever means. Kripke's argument has inspired a lively and extended debate in the philosophy of language, as it raises some of the most fundamental issues in the field: namely, the reality, privacy, and normativity of meaning. The book argues that in order to achieve the radical conclusion that there are no facts as to what a person means by a word, the sceptic must rely on the thesis that meaning is normative, and that this thesis fails. Since any 'sceptical solution' to the sceptical problem is irremediably incoherent, the book concludes that there must be a fact of the matter about what we mean. In addition to providing an overview of the debate on meaning and content scepticism, this book presents a detailed discussion of the contributions made by Simon Blackburn, Paul Boghossian, Robert Brandom, Fred Dretske, John McDowell, and Crispin Wright, among others, to the controversy surrounding Kripke's argument. The issues considered include the normativity of meaning and its relation to the normativity of moral judgments, reductive and non-reductive theories of meaning, deflationism about truth and meaning, and the privacy of meaning.