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MORAL EPISTEMOLOGY

Introduction

Moral epistemology is the study of moral knowledge and related phenomena. The recorded history of work in the field extends (at least) 2,500 years to Socrates's inquiries into whether virtue and expertise in governance can be taught. Every major moral theorist since then has advanced theses about the possibility of moral knowledge and those modes of thinking, feeling, and reasoning that are most conducive to improvements in moral outlook. Though the study of moral language and the metaphysics of morality received more attention by Western philosophers in the 20th century, interest in moral epistemology has grown in recent years as theorists have turned to advances in the scientific study of moral development and moral judgment—and their origins in biological and cultural evolution—in the hopes of shedding new

light on the old questions. By further understanding the processes that give rise to our moral beliefs, and the critical evaluation and consequent evolution of moral frameworks, we hope to gain further insight into what distinguishes those rational, reasonable, or well-considered moral views that would seem to comprise moral knowledge from those irrational, false, or unduly biased judgments that fall short. This article begins by describing general overviews of moral epistemology, moves on to consider historically important accounts of moral knowledge, and then addresses contemporary scientific accounts of moral judgment, moral development, and the foundations of moral response in our evolved biology. With these elements in place, it moves on to moral skepticism and the question of whether we have any moral knowledge; moral nihilism, or the view that there are no moral truths to be known; and the extent and nature of fundamental moral disagreement: perhaps the most common route to skepticism about morality. The "special" topics that follow these core concerns demonstrate the breadth and richness of the field. We would seem to have "intuitions" of the morality of certain actions, people, or institutions. Some (non-skeptical) theorists liken these intuitions to perceptions of color or beauty. Others argue that desires provide non-inferential knowledge of value, that basic moral principles are self-evident, or that we can directly infer "ought" from "is." Theorists discuss, among other things, the reliability of ordinary processes of moral judgment, the role of coherence and reflection in augmenting the rationality of folk moral views, the possibility of theoretical moral knowledge akin to scientific knowledge, and the rationality of basing one's moral views on testimony.

General Overviews

Brink 1989 and Timmons 1998 distinguish metaethics from other forms of inquiry into morality and moral epistemology from other areas of metaethics. Arrington 1989 traces the recent history of moral epistemology from the "non-cognitivist" accounts of Stevenson and Hare to the rationalism of Nagel, the realism of McDowell, and the relativism of Harman. Audi 1999 distinguishes four approaches: empiricism, rationalism, intuitionism, and non-cognitivism. *Utilitarian empiricism* claims the intrinsic goodness of something can be inferred from its being desired by people for its own sake and equates the rightness of an act with its promoting intrinsic goodness so understood. *Kantian rationalism* identifies right actions with those performed from maxims that pass a test of universalizability, the validity of which is known in an a priori, non-inferential manner. *Intuitionism* holds that a variety of principles are self-evident: Those who

understand them are justified in believing them (on the basis of that understanding) in a manner sufficient for knowledge. *Non-cognitivism* might be thought to imply epistemological moral skepticism, but there are norms we employ to assess feelings and commitments, so a non-cognitivist might construct a substantive moral epistemology. Enoch 2011 briefly surveys various skeptical challenges to realist conceptions of morality and argues that they are inessential because, "There is no distinctive epistemology of moral belief" (p. 154, n. 6). The true challenge is to explain the correlation between considered moral judgments and the judgment-independent facts that make them true. The last three chapters of Shafer-Landau 2003 and its defense of moral realism are similarly devoted to epistemological matters. According to Shafer-Landau, moral skepticism is self-undermining because it is a philosophical thesis, and if there is insufficient evidence to support our basic moral beliefs there is insufficient evidence to support any philosophical view. Sinnott-Armstrong 2008 and Zimmerman 2010 are two recent book-length treatments of moral epistemology. Sinnott-Armstrong 2008 ultimately endorses *moral contrastivism*: if nihilism is not ruled out via fiat we cannot have moral knowledge. But we can know that certain actions are immoral and others moral relative to the assumption that nihilism is false. Zimmerman 2010 finds all arguments for moral skepticism wanting. One can come to know that a particular act of villainy was immoral by directly inferring as much from one's knowledge of its value-neutral properties. Knowledge of the general principles that underwrite these inferences can be acquired with the aid of imagination and normal affective experience.

Arrington, Robert L. *Rationalism, Realism and Relativism: Perspectives in Contemporary Moral Epistemology.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989. [ISBN: 9780801423024]

Arrington documents the rise and fall of non-cognitivist theories of morality and evaluates the forms of cognitivism that have been formulated in their wake. In the final chapter, Arrington defends "conceptual relativism." The rules that constitute our morality cannot be justified, but they do not need to be. They and their correlative ends are simply what we mean by "morality."

Audi, Robert. "Moral Knowledge and Ethical Pluralism." In *The Blackwell Guide to Epistemology.* Edited by John Greco and Ernest Sosa, 271–302. Oxford: Blackwell, 1999. [ISBN: 9780631202905]

In the first half of his essay, Audi distinguishes four approaches to moral epistemology: empiricism, rationalism, intuitionism, and non-cognitivism. In the essay's second half, Audi

further describes intuitionism, distinguishes several subspecies of the view, and argues in favor of a "moderate" form, which countenances both inferential and non-inferential knowledge of common sense moral principles and both inferential and non-inferential knowledge of the moral properties of particular actions.

Brink, David. *Moral Realism and the Foundations of Ethics*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1989, chapter 1. [ISBN: 9780521350808]

Brink provides a brief summary of the history of analytic metaethics that distinguishes the epistemological questions involved in this area of inquiry from those of a more metaphysical, semantic, and (purely) psychological nature.

Enoch, David. "Epistemology." In *Taking Morality Seriously*. By David Enoch, 151–184. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. [ISBN: 9780199579969]

Enoch argues that "there is no distinctive epistemology of moral belief." Moral realists must simply explain the correlation between our core moral beliefs and the moral facts. Enoch's explanation rests on the assumption that our survival and reproduction (or various factors that promote such survival, e.g., well-being and reciprocated trust) are themselves good.

Shafer-Landau, Russ. *Moral Realism: A Defense*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. . [ISBN: 9780199259755]

Chapters 10–12 are devoted to epistemological issues. We cannot impugn nihilism on grounds acceptable to a nihilist, but if this entails skepticism, it does so whether or not we adopt a realist conception of moral facts. Skepticism is self-undermining and the process that leads an agent from knowledge of the facts to a judgment of what she ought to do often generates knowledge because of its reliability.

Sinnott-Armstrong, Walter. *Moral Skepticisms*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. [ISBN: 9780195342062]

Sinnott-Armstrong surveys a wide range of skeptical positions and positive accounts of moral knowledge. He ultimately endorses a form of "moral contrastivism." If nihilism is not ruled out via fiat we cannot have knowledge of any positive moral proposition. But we can know that certain actions are immoral and others moral relative to the assumption that nihilism is false.

Timmons, Mark. "Metaethics and Methodology." In *Morality without Foundations*. By Mark Timmons, 9–31. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. [ISBN: 9780195117318]

Timmons distinguishes metaethics from normative ethics and differentiates the epistemological component of metaethics from its semantic and ontological elements. He then tries to motivate his commitment to methodological and ontological naturalism and to situate various metaethical positions (and their constituent epistemologies) in relation to this commitment.

Zimmerman, Aaron. *Moral Epistemology*. New York: Routledge, 2010. [ISBN: 9780415485531]

Zimmerman discusses a number of arguments for moral skepticism and a variety of non-skeptical accounts of moral knowledge, dividing the latter into rationalist and empiricist camps. According to Zimmerman, one can directly infer "ought" from "is" without the aid of intuitions or cognitive "seemings." Knowledge of the general principles that underwrite these inferences or verify their reliability can then be acquired with the aid of imagination and affective experience.

Anthologies

Darwall, et al. 1997 is a widely used collection that includes Gilbert Harman's "causal exclusion" argument against moral realism, J. L. Mackie's arguments for nihilism from fundamental disagreement and the purported "queerness" of objective prescriptions, the "new" realism of Wiggins and McDowell that models injustice and cruelty on colors, and Rawls's constructivist proposals. Campbell and Hunter 2000 introduces ten essays on moral knowledge from philosophers who accept a "naturalized" approach that seeks to ground accounts of moral knowledge on the scientific study of moral judgment and action. Highlights include Louise Antony's defense of moral heuristics (understood as invalid but generally reliable patterns of inference), and the debate between Andy Clark and Paul Churchland on the various roles played by social skill, imitation of paradigms, and (articulable) rules in moral cognition and learning. Gowans 2000 and Moser and Carson 2001 focus on moral disagreement and anthropological differences in moral code. Gowans 2000 excerpts Richard Shweder and Terence Turner on descriptive relativism; J. L. Mackie, Bernard Williams, and David Wong on the question of which metaphysics of morality best explains or models the facts about moral disagreement; David Brink's defense of moral realism; Martha Nussbaum's defense of moral knowledge founded on empirical knowledge of human nature; and Alan Gewirth's defense of moral knowledge grounded in a priori knowledge of the structure of rationality. One highlight of Moser and Carson 2001 is Michele Moody-Adams's argument in "The Empirical Underdetermination

of Descriptive Cultural Relativism," that even tradition-bound cultures contain a diversity of moral views and possibilities for moral change and improvement; another is Martha Nussbaum's defense of a non-relativistic virtue theory in "Non-Relative Virtues." Sinnott-Armstrong and Timmons 1996 contains twelve important essays focused primarily on the possibility of theoretical moral knowledge. Highlights include Robert Audi's discussion of intuitions and intuitionism in "Intuitionism, Pluralism and the Foundations of Ethics" and Geoffrey Sayre-McCord's defense of a coherence theory of justified moral belief in "Coherentist Epistemology and Moral Theory." Timmons 1990 contains important work on the varying roles played by experience, reflection, and coherence in providing us with justified moral judgments, as does Graper Hernandez 2011, which is focused on Audi's work. Perhaps the most diverse collection is Paul, et al. 2001, which brings together work on the history of moral epistemology, the best methodology for constructing moral theories, and the epistemic status of (non-theoretical) moral and social skill or unreflective virtue.

Campbell, Richmond, and B. Hunter, eds. *Moral Epistemology Naturalized.* Canadian Journal of Philosophy Supplementary Volume 26. Calgary, AB: University of Calgary Press, 2000. [ISBN: 9780919491267]

Campbell and Hunter introduce ten important essays on moral knowledge from philosophers who accept a "naturalized" approach to epistemology and develop novel ways of reconciling naturalism with the existence of moral knowledge. Louise Anthony's defense of moral heuristics and the debate between Andy Clark and Paul Churchland on the various roles played by social skills, imitation of paradigms, and (articulable) rules in moral cognition and learning are highlights.

Darwall, Stephen A. Gibbard, and Peter Railton. *Moral Discourse and Practice: Some Philosophical Approaches.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997. [ISBN: 9780195107494]

This important collection includes Gilbert Harman, "Ethics and Observation," J. L. Mackie's arguments for nihilism, John McDowell and David Wiggins on the idea of a moral sense, and John Rawls, "Kantian Constructivism in Moral Theory," which articulates his "contractualist" idea that just principles are those we would choose were we to deliberate in circumstances designed to embody our considered views on fairness.

Gowans, Christopher. *Moral Disagreements: Classic and Contemporary Readings.* London: Routledge, 2000. [ISBN: 9780415217118]

Gowans introduces readers to important historical texts (Sextus Empiricus, Aquinas, Montaigne, Hume, and Nietzsche) on moral disagreement and the challenge it presents to those defending objective moral truths. Nussbaum defends moral knowledge founded on empirical knowledge of human nature. Narayan argues that relativist ideology undermines feminist goals. Berlin, McIntyre, and Rawls combine a limited moral realism with constructivism or relativism in certain domains of moral or political inquiry.

Graper Hernandez, Jill. *The New Intuitionism.* London: Continuum, 2011. [ISBN: 9781441170828]

Ten new essays on moral epistemology focused on intuitionist models in general and Robert Audi's work in particular. Highlights include Audi's introduction and conclusion, which describe the ways in which Audi has further refined the moral intuitionism developed by Sidgwick, Moore, and Ross. We have intuitive intellectual knowledge of self-evident principles articulating our prima facie duties and intuitive perceptual (often emotion-based) knowledge of the moral status of token actions.

Moser, Paul K., and Thomas L. Carson. *Moral Relativism: A Reader.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001. [ISBN: 9780195131307]

The important essays collected here examine the thesis that claims of moral obligation are only true relative to some ways of life but not others, the anthropological record of diversity in moral outlook and the evidence this might provide for relativism, the coherence of moral relativism as a positive doctrine, and the question of whether facts about human nature can ground a non-relative morality.

Paul, Ellen F., Fred Miller Jr., and Jeffrey Paul, eds. *Moral Knowledge.* Vol. 18. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001. [ISBN: 9780521006033]

Thirteen essays dedicated to moral epistemology. Highlights include Shelly Kagan's argument in "Thinking about Cases" that moral intuitions require vindication with a metaphysics of morals, Julia Annas's argument in "Moral Knowledge as Practical Knowledge" that virtue consists in "knowing how" to act rather than "knowledge that" certain actions are called for, and Geoffrey Sayre-McCord's reconstruction of Mill's moral epistemology in "Mill's 'Proof' of the Principle of Utility."

Sinnott-Armstrong, Walter, and Mark Timmons. *Moral Knowledge? New Readings in Moral Epistemology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996. [ISBN: 9780195089899]

Twelve essays from preeminent ethicists mainly focused on the possibility of theoretical moral knowledge. Highlights include Robert Audi's discussion of intuitions and intuitionism in "Intuitionism, Pluralism and the Foundations of Ethics" and Geoffrey Sayre-McCord's defense of a coherence theory of justified moral belief in "Coherentist Epistemology and Moral Theory." The volume contains an annotated bibliography citing a great deal of work on moral epistemology from 1970 to 1995.

Timmons, Mark, ed. *Spindel Conference 1990: Moral Epistemology.* Papers Delivered at the Ninth Annual Spindel Conference Held at Memphis State University from October 4–6, 1990. Southern Journal of Philosophy 29.Suppl. Memphis, TN: Department of Philosophy, Memphis State University, 1990. [ISBN: 9789993984955] [class:conference proceeding]

Timmons collects seven original essays, each paired with a considered response. Tollhurst discusses the epistemic relation between experience and moral judgment, Timmons raises a "moral twin earth" problem for realism, DePaul catalogues the varieties of moral knowledge, and Alan Goldman argues that we must equate moral truth with maximally coherent belief if we are to avoid moral skepticism. Donohue and Sinnott-Armstrong contribute a bibliography of work published from 1971 to 1990.

Encyclopedia Entries

Singer 1973, Sinnott-Armstrong 2011, and Zimmerman 2011 address the central arguments for moral skepticism and offer various lines of response. Campbell 2011 and Tramel 2005 discuss skepticism, positive accounts of moral knowledge and justified moral belief, and various special topics as well, including the possibility of non-inferential moral knowledge grounded in experience or understanding, the role intuitions can and should play in theory construction, epistemological arguments against realist metaphysics of morals, and feminist critiques of classical moral epistemology. DePaul 2006, Jones 2005, and Lemos 2002 manage not only to explicate large parts of the field, but also to argue for substantive theses. Lemos 2002 argues for a Chisholmian approach to moral epistemology that starts with particular cases rather than criteria and lends support to intuitionism. Just as one has a sense of a sunset's beauty without inferring that it is beautiful from beliefs about its color, etc., one might have a sense of the immorality of an act without inferring this from one's belief that it has the value-neutral characteristics upon which its immorality supervenes. In contrast, Jones 2005 argues that

intuitionists must implausibly argue that one party to a fundamental moral dispute fails to adequately understand the claim (or appreciate the particular facts) at issue. Jones describes the attempt to arrive at good provisional starting points for ethical reflection as the "filtering problem," and she explains how seemingly objective constraints on considered moral judgments—such as impartiality and calmness—have been rejected by feminist philosophers as expressions of masculine forms of cognition. Her solution is to expand the notion of wide reflective equilibrium to include considered moral judgments themselves. DePaul 2006) accepts a similar conclusion and argues that there is no real alternative to the method (so amended) as it boils down to taking everything one can into account and reflecting on this information as best one can. Jones 2005 also discusses Mark Timmons's "structural" contextualism, according to which the justification of an individual's belief must be relativized to the standards operative in her community, and Jones argues it sets the bar for justified moral belief "too low. . . [as] gender and social status have been accepted as regress-stopping reasons and many currently accepted mid-level generalizations such as 'Stealing is wrong' are open to ideological critique" (p. 76).

Campbell, Richmond. "*Moral Epistemology[http://http://plato.stanford.edu]*." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Edited by Edward N. Zalta. Stanford, CA: Stanford University, 2011. [class:dataSetItem-database]

Campbell addresses arguments for skepticism from moral disagreement; skepticism derived from the supposedly "internally" motivating nature of moral judgments; the difficulties with identifying moral facts with other (natural or scientific) facts or instead positing irreducible moral truths; the epistemological importance of moral genealogies with an emphasis on accounts that invoke natural selection; how different conceptions of epistemology impact debates on moral knowledge; and feminist critiques of traditional moral epistemology.

DePaul, Michael. "Intuitions in Moral Inquiry." In *Oxford Handbook of Metaethics*. Edited by David Copp, 595–623. Oxford University Press, 2006. [ISBN: 9780195147797]

DePaul considers a number of methods for constructing moral theories and defends the use of intuitions filtered for known sources of bias and unreliability. There is no real alternative to the method of wide reflective equilibrium as it boils down to taking everything one can into account and reflecting on this information as best one can.

Jones, Karen. “Moral Epistemology.” In *Oxford Handbook of Contemporary Philosophy*. Edited by Frank Jackson and Michael Smith, 63–85. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. [ISBN: 9780199242955]

Jones surveys and rejects several arguments for moral skepticism, leaving open one premised on the greater ease of demonstrating the reliability of perception in comparison to moral cognition. She advocates a focus on folk moral thought rather than theory construction, rejects Audi’s intuitionism, argues that ideology critique should be used to filter our intuitions, and advocates a social approach focused on “the role of socially available background beliefs in justification” (p. 84).

Lemos, Noah. “Epistemology and Ethics.” In *Oxford Handbook of Epistemology*. Edited by Paul K. Moser, 479–512. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Lemos discusses arguments from disagreement and explanatory exclusion and suggests that as “knowledge” is an evaluative term, moral and epistemological non-cognitivism must stand or fall together. He evaluates reflective equilibria accounts of theory selection, foundationalist and coherentist views of justification, and the experiential approaches of Brentano and Meinong. He concludes that we needn’t validate our moral intuitions on the basis of beliefs about rationality or the logic of moral terms.

Singer, Marcus. “Moral Skepticism.” In *Skepticism and Moral Principles: Modern Ethics in Review*. Edited by Curtis L. Carter. Evanston, IL: New University Press, 1973.

Singer distinguishes and argues against five varieties of moral skepticism: the subjectivist thesis that moral judgments are not truth-apt, the emotive theory that moral claims are mere expressions of feeling, the relativist claim that there is no basis on which to decide moral disputes, the egoist thesis that moral arguments are pointless because people always act from perceived self-interest, and the fatalist claim that we cannot alter our determined course.

Sinnott-Armstrong, Walter. “*Moral Skepticism[http://plato.stanford.edu]*.” In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Edited by Edward N. Zalta. Stanford, CA: Stanford University, 2011. [class:dataSetIem-database]

Sinnott-Armstrong distinguishes moral skepticism into practical, alethic, and epistemological varieties. Skeptics deny that we have reason to act morally, that there are moral truths, or that we ever have reason to believe that a given action is immoral. Epistemological skepticism is further distinguished into Pyrrhonian and Dogmatic varieties, which can either deny or refuse

to acknowledge moral knowledge or rational moral belief. Arguments for these positions are described and critiqued.

Tramel, Peter. "*Moral Epistemology[http://www.iep.utm.edu/mor-epis/]*." In *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Edited by James Fieser and Bradley Dowden, 2005. [class:dataSetItem-database]

Tramel distinguishes traditional foundationalist, coherentist, contextualist, and skeptical theories of moral knowledge and the justification of belief, discussing "non-traditional approaches," including reliabilism, non-cognitivism, ideal decision, and "politicized" theories (primarily feminist epistemology). The entry concludes with a discussion of the prospects for a fully naturalized moral epistemology and the role moral epistemology plays in metaethics more generally.

Zimmerman, Aaron. "Moral Skepticism." In *International Encyclopedia of Ethics*. Edited by Hugh LaFollette, . Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell,2011. [ISBN: 9781405186414]

Zimmerman surveys historically influential skeptical and nihilistic views of morality with an emphasis on epistemological skepticism and doubts about the motivational force of moral thinking.

Historically Important Accounts

Plato (b. 428 BCE–d. 347 BCE) records Socrates' demonstrations that moral knowledge is difficult (if not impossible) to articulate and defends the intellectualist thesis that knowledge of a certain kind is sufficient for virtue (Plato 1997). Since virtue is necessary for happiness and no one knowingly frustrates his own happiness, an agent's failure to act virtuously is a sure sign of ignorance. Aristotle (b. 384 BCE–d. 322 BCE) allows that an entrained disposition to choose and act in concord with the mean between extremes of some passion is a basic form of virtue (Aristotle 1984). But full wisdom requires an understanding of the ends each virtue serves, how these ends are best integrated, and the ways in which virtue instills happiness in the absence of horrible tragedy. Hume 2010 argues that traits are judged to be virtues when we adopt the perspective of the trait's possessor or his immediate circle and experience approbation. Exceptions include a non-consequentialist regard for property rights and the "monkish virtues." Kant 2012 argues that we have intuitive knowledge of the validity of common sense moral imperatives as well as non-inferential knowledge of the accuracy of universalizability as a test of

the moral permissibility of adopting such imperatives. Kant tries to demonstrate that we have the autonomy we need to refuse to adopt policies we know cannot be universalized. Sidgwick 1981 argues for the self-evidence of three normative principles that lead to a vacillation between egoism and utilitarianism. In contrast, Moore 1929 rejects utilitarianism and claims that all moral concepts can be analyzed in terms of intrinsic goodness, which must be intuited a priori. Ross 1930 claims that we must use intuition to resolve conflicts between our prima facie duties in a manner that resists codification into rules but is nevertheless rational. Rawls 1971 rejects both utilitarianism and intuitionism; the methodology the author employs to this end has been dubbed the search for wide reflective equilibrium. Our considered judgments about justice are the products of a cognitive faculty, which we can assume is largely reliable. Theorists should construct the most coherent extension of its deliverances, revising them when necessary. The overall conception of justice that results must mesh with an acceptable metaphysics of persons and a realistic account of moral development, promote the stability and peace of a society organized in accord with its precepts, and provide a citizenry with a justification for their fundamental laws and institutions that they can rationally accept upon reflection.

Aristotle. *Nichomachean Ethics.* Translated by W. D. Ross and J. O. Urmson. In *The Complete Works of Aristotle.* Vol. 2. Edited by Jonathan Barnes. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984. [ISBN: 9780691099507]

Aristotle identifies basic virtue with an entrained disposition to follow the mean between extremes. Wisdom requires an understanding of the ends each virtue serves and how these are best integrated to yield happiness in the absence of horrible tragedy. His method is to dismiss skepticism, survey common opinions, and evaluate a limited range of theoretical alternatives. Ethical generalizations admit exceptions and a community's shared morality must remain flexible and adaptable.

Hume, David. *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals.* Edited by Tom L. Beauchamp. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. [ISBN: 9780198751847]

Originally published in 1751. Hume argues that most traits are judged virtues because they are immediately agreeable or generate positive affect when we adopt the perspective of the trait's possessor or his immediate circle. Exceptions include a non-consequentialist regard for property and the so-called monkish virtues. Hume gives a debunking explanation of the latter.

Our belief in the virtue of justice is explained by our sympathetic identification with the long-term interests of society.

Kant, Immanuel. *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals.* Edited by Mary Gregor. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2012. [ISBN: 9781107008519]

Originally published in 1785. Kant posits non-inferential a priori knowledge of the validity of common sense moral rules and the accuracy of universalizability as a test of the moral permissibility of adopting a maxim. He tries to demonstrate (in a wholly a priori manner) that we have the capacity to act (or choose to act) from reason alone by refusing to adopt a policy precisely because we have recognized that it cannot be universalized.

Moore, G. E. *Principia Ethica*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1929.

Originally published in 1903. Moore claims that all moral concepts can be analyzed in terms of the concept of intrinsic goodness, but that this concept resists analysis. The nature of intrinsic goodness (so understood) cannot be inferred from observations and knowledge of value-neutral facts but must instead be intuited a priori.

Plato. *The Complete Works*. Edited by John M. Cooper. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997. [ISBN: 9780872203495]

Plato's Socrates demonstrates that if virtuous people know how to live virtuously they cannot articulate this knowledge. Plato initially defends the intellectualist thesis that knowledge of a certain kind is sufficient for virtue, explores the analogy between virtue and craftsmanship, defends the innateness of moral ideas, and offers a conception of moral learning as articulation of facts tacitly known.

Rawls, John. *A Theory of Justice.* Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971. [ISBN: 9780674880108]

Rawls argues that our considered judgments about justice are the products of a cognitive faculty. Theorists are supposed to work toward an "ideal reflective equilibrium" by seeking coherence between the products of this shared sense of justice, the principles and general conceptions of justice these intuitions support, and the best supported psychological and sociological theories on offer to arrive at the best theory it is possible for them to attain.

Ross, W. D. *The Right and the Good.* Oxford: Clarendon, 1930.

Ross argues that we have non-inferential, a priori knowledge of the moral status of individual acts. We can use this knowledge to infer several general moral principles articulating our prima

facie duties. But there is no first principle we can use to resolve tensions between prima facie duties when they arise. Intuition allows virtuous people to resolve these conflicts in a manner that resists codification but is nevertheless rational.

Sidgwick, Henry. *The Methods of Ethics.* 7th ed. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1981. [ISBN: 9780915145294]

Originally published in 1874. Sidgwick argues for three principles: (1) brute differences between people do not justify differential treatment, (2) brute differences between times do not justify differential treatment, and (3) the good of one person is just as important as the good of another from the perspective of the universe. Neither the individual's perspective nor the perspective of the universe is rationally compulsory, resulting in a "dualism of practical reason" (p. xiii; cf. p. 404, fn.)

Rationalist Accounts of Moral Knowledge

Rationalist accounts posit substantive moral knowledge not grounded in sense experience. Aquinas 1948 argues that wisdom requires an accurate conception of our function—happiness in the perfection of various rational capacities—that can be achieved only by "rectifying" our passions. Knowledge of what to do in a context is grounded in knowledge of proper human functioning and the actions that tend to promote it. But the most basic moral principles are natural laws—e.g. *Good should be pursued and evil avoided*—that are akin to *Nothing can both be and not be* in epistemic status. Audi 2004 offers a contemporary defense of self-evident moral principles and the rational intuition of moral truth. Reflection on the meaning of a moral principle can supply one with a justification for believing it sufficient for knowledge. The immorality of treating someone as a mere means to one's ends can be known in something like the way we know that it takes four generations to produce a great-grandchild. Leibniz 1996 and Prichard 1912 compare moral knowledge to knowledge of mathematics. I must measure to discover the lengths of things, but once this is done I can know by reflection alone what is shorter than what. Similarly, an agent must use her senses to observe that one man gave another a gift, but she can then infer a priori that the latter owes the former gratitude. Nagel 1970 grounds its rationalism on claims about the nature of deliberation. Our knowledge that we should not treat others in ways to which we would object is grounded in the realization that reasons for action must be "agent-neutral" in form. Purported reasons for action that are reasons only "for"

particular agents conflict with this constitutive principle. The rationalism of Korsgaard 1996 is similarly "non-epistemic." Humans are essentially reflective. We evaluate our motives by assessing maxims licensing our acting on them. According to Korsgaard, Kant's universal law formulation of the categorical imperative requires that we act from laws but not necessarily moral ones; morality is insured if we respect the imperative in its other formulations. Properly interpreted, these tests lay bare the structure of theoretical and practical reasoning; their validity cannot be reasonably rejected. Peacocke 2004 and Setiya 2012 defend contemporary forms of rationalism that argue for moral beliefs that are de fault justified because necessary for the possession of the moral concepts we use in their formation.

Aquinas, Thomas. *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas.* New York: Benziger Bros., 1948.

Originally published in 1260. Moral knowledge requires an accurate conception of human nature, the ends that complete it, and knowledge of how to realize them in a given context. But the most basic normative principle, "Good should be pursued and evil avoided," is a natural law akin to logical truths in epistemic status. Wisdom requires the "rectification" of appetites that incline us to our good—happiness through perfection—in a decidedly imperfect fashion.

Audi, Robert. *The Good in the Right.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004. [ISBN: 9780691114347]

Audi argues that we can know a moral principle by understanding and reflecting on its meaning. The state of understanding justifies belief in what is understood in a manner sufficient for knowledge. For example, the immorality of treating someone as a mere means to one's ends might be known in something like the way in which we know that it takes four generations to produce a great-grandchild. See especially chapters 1–2.

Korsgaard, Christine. *Creating the Kingdom of Ends*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996. [ISBN: 9780521496445]

Humans are essentially reflective agents who are compelled to assess or evaluate their motives. We evaluate prospective inclinations, desires, and drives by seeing whether a rule or imperative licensing our acting on them passes the tests imposed by the categorical imperative in all its various formulations. But the principles that lay bare the structure of this reasoning are constitutive of agency and so cannot be reasonably rejected.

Leibniz, Gottfried. *New Essays on Human Understanding.* Translated and edited by Peter Remnant and Jonathan Bennett. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996. [ISBN: 9780521572118]

Published in 1765. Leibniz posits a set of universal ethical principles antecedent to God's decree (natural laws) that we must follow to be just. These laws are compared to mathematical truths in their being necessitated by the immutable nature of things and ideas. The three most general principles are "to hurt no one" (*neminem laedere)*, "to give each his due" (*suum cuique tribuere)*, and "to live honorably" (*honeste vivere).*

Nagel, Thomas. *The Possibility of Altruism.* Oxford: Clarendon, 1970. [ISBN: 9780198243441]

Nagel argues that there is something incoherent about a thoroughgoing egoism. Our knowledge that we should not treat others in ways to which we would object is grounded in the realization that reasons for action must be "agent-neutral" in form. Purported reasons for action that are only reasons for particular agents conflict with this abstract, fully general property of coherent deliberation or practical reasoning.

Peacocke, Christopher. *The Realm of Reason.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. [ISBN: 9780199270729]

See chapters 7–8. Peacocke employs a two-dimensional semantics to model the claim that certain moral principles are not just necessary but a priori knowable. Though it posits mind-independent moral truths known independently of experience, the rationalism for which Peacocke argues is supposed to be "moderate" insofar as it explains moral knowledge by appealing to necessary conditions on grasping moral concepts rather than causal interactions between people and an independent moral reality.

Prichard, Harold A. "Does Moral Philosophy Rest on a Mistake?" *Mind* 21.81 (1912): 21–37.

Prichard argues that an obligation can be deduced from knowledge of one's relation to others. One immediately apprehends that gratitude is the fitting response to kindness as one immediately sees that a closed three-sided figure has three interior angles. One who doubts whether he ought to act morally should reflect on the interpersonal relations in which that obligation consists so that he may once again feel its force.

Setiya, Kieran. *Knowing Right from Wrong*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. [ISBN: 9780199657452]

Setiya claims that we cannot have ethical concepts without being reliable judges of what can and what cannot satisfy them. He argues, on this basis, that the reliability of our ethical judgments is insured a priori.

Empiricist Accounts of Moral Knowledge

Empiricist accounts assign sense experience a central role in the genesis of moral knowledge. Hobbes claims we learn what is good and bad for us by discerning what causes us pain and pleasure, though he also recognizes several "laws of nature" forbidding wanton cruelty, inequity, and ingratitude, which he describes as "theorems" or "conclusions" of reason. Locke 1996 argues against self-evident moral truths and innate moral knowledge of any kind. Even "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" lacks the special epistemic qualities of "What is, is." One must infer that an act is immoral from one's knowledge that God would punish its performance. In contrast, Hutcheson 1971 argues that people are genuinely motivated by compassion and other pro-social emotions and compares our instinctive concern for one another to the deliverances of our senses and aesthetic faculties. Mill's defense of utilitarianism uses facts about what we desire upon reflection to argue that happiness is the only thing that is non-derivatively valuable (Mill 1998). The claim that more of what is valuable is better than less, and the claim that we ought to choose more of what is valuable rather than less, are alternatively treated as meaning postulates and self-evident truths. Nichols 2004 argues that prohibitions on harm arose from cultural evolution shaped by an affective response to the suffering of others that owes its existence to biological evolution. The non-cognitivist account of moral judgment in Gibbard 1990 also assigns a central role to biological evolution, arguing that a "language infused" system of norm acceptance co-evolved with capacities for gossip and argument in early human groups by signaling a speaker's acceptance of rules enforcing consensus. A more realist empiricism in McDowell 1998 compares moral reasons to perceivable qualities. Color concepts and moral concepts capture real similarities and differences between objects, though neither color nor immorality can be understood without an account of our sensibilities. And though we must think hard to discern complex forms of beauty and morality, emotion and affect are nevertheless essential to their discernment. The perceptual model's detractors doubt that moral qualities play the role that colors play in explaining visual perception. They argue that moral judgment requires special training unnecessary for paradigmatic forms of perception, and they

point to cases of moral ignorance and insensitivity that do not seem akin to paradigmatic perceptual impairments such as color blindness. To this end, Bagnoli 2011 argues that moral thinking is more "active" than both color perception and aesthetic appreciation.

Bagnoli, Carla. "Moral Perception and Knowledge by Principles." In *The New Intuitionism*. Edited by Jill Graper Hernandez, 84–105. London: Continuum, 2011. [ISBN: 9781441170828]

After surveying the arguments for and against modeling moral judgment on the perception of color or beauty, Bagnoli argues that moral knowledge is the product of reason not sensibility, where "reason refers to the active rather than passive or receptive aspect of the mind, and exactly in this sense it is opposed to perception" (p. 100). She maintains, however, that the reasoning involved in moral judgment needn't amount to inference.

Gibbard, Allan. *Wise Choices, Apt Feelings*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990. [ISBN: 9780674953772]

Gibbard argues that all moral judgments are "reducible" to judgments about the rationality of guilt, resentment, and alloyed notions, and he goes on to defend a "non-cognitivist" treatment of ascriptions of rationality. Roughly speaking, to think that something is rational is to accept norms that permit it and to call something rational (or to say that it "makes sense") is to express one's acceptance of such norms.

Hobbes, Thomas. *Human Nature and De Corpore Politico*. Edited by John C. A. Gaskin. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994. [ISBN: 9780192836823]

Originally published in 1650. Hobbes argues that knowledge of value is knowledge of the powers things have to cause us pain and pleasure. But he also recognizes several "laws of nature" forbidding wanton cruelty, inequity and ingratitude which he describes as "theorems" or "conclusions" of reason. Scholars differ on whether these laws of nature are a posteriori generalizations as to how we can best avoid death and suffering or divine commands known via conscience.

Hutcheson, Francis. *Illustrations on the Moral Sense*. Edited by Bernard Peach. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971. [ISBN: 9780674443266]

Originally published in 1728. Hutcheson argues against Hobbes that people are genuinely motivated by benevolence, compassion, and other pro-social emotions, and he compares our instinctive concern with one another—the pain we receive from perception of vice and suffering and the pleasure we receive from happiness and virtue—to our sense of beauty and

deformity. It follows from this that moral thinking is no mere pretense masking self-interested deliberation.

Locke, John. *Essay Concerning Human Understanding.* Edited by Kenneth Winkler. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1996. [ISBN: 9780872202184]

Originally published in 1689. Locke argues against self-evident moral truths and innate moral knowledge. Even "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" lacks the special epistemic qualities of "What is, is." Instead, moral knowledge depends on theological knowledge. One must infer that an act is immoral from one's knowledge that an omnipotent wholly benevolent god would punish its performance.

McDowell, John. *Mind, Value and Reality.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998. [ISBN: 9780674576131]

The wisdom of a virtuous agent is the agent's skill at apprehending the right thing to do, which reliably manifests itself in his actually doing the right thing for the right reasons. We cannot accurately characterize or describe the features the virtuous person regards as reasons for action without mentioning his sensibilities, but we cannot adequately characterize his sensibilities without describing the features he represents as reasons for action.

Mill, John Stuart. *Utilitarianism.* Edited by Roger Crisp. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998. [ISBN: 9780198751625]

Originally published in 1861. Mill's defense of utilitarianism uses facts about what we desire upon reflection to argue that happiness is the only thing that is non-derivatively valuable. The claim that more of what is valuable is better than less, and the claim that we ought to choose more of what is valuable rather than less, are alternatively treated as meaning postulates (lending sense to "good") and indubitable or self-evident truths.

Nichols, Shaun. *Sentimental Rules.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. [ISBN: 9780195169348]

Nichols distinguishes distinctively moral judgments from other forms of evaluation on several grounds and argues for a two-pronged account of our belief in the immorality of intentionally inflicting harm on others. The first component is a rule (or widely accepted norm) against inflicting harm that owes its existence to cultural evolution. The second is an affective response to the suffering of others that owes its existence to biological evolution.

Psychological Theories of Moral Judgment

The birth of cognitive science promises to advance the study of moral judgment by psychologists, neuroscientists, and "naturalist" philosophers. Appiah 2008 describes how Frege and Husserl rejected psychological approaches to the study of norms and the rapprochement between philosophy and psychology now occurring. It also discusses in detail the case against the existence of virtues and vices advanced by "situationist" social psychologists, the neurobiology of moral intuitions, and modular accounts of moral thought that cast doubt on its unity. Haidt 2001 and Prinz 2007 both claim that emotions are essential to moral judgment. Haidt argues that moral judgments are caused by emotions and that reasoning is used only to answer criticism. Evidence comes from the "moral dumbfounding" that occurs when subjects are pressed to defend their belief in the immorality of harmless but disgusting acts. According to Haidt, we experience moral intuition-generating emotions toward harm, fairness and reciprocity, hierarchy and respect, purity and pollution, the violation of in-group boundaries, and to exemplars of altruism. Prinz 2007 actually equates moral judgments with emotions, whereas Thagard and Finn 2011 identifies them with a combination of emotions and "cognitive appraisals" and generates a computational (neural-net) model of the process of moral judgment. Casebeer 2003 also develops a connectionist approach and argues that it supports a virtue-theoretic, teleological account of moral facts, whereas Prinz 2007 thinks the evidence favors a strong form of relativism. Greene 2008 argues for a "Dual Process" model according to which deontological judgments are generated by an emotion-constituted neurocognitive system (involving medial prefrontal cortex, posterior cingulate/precuneus; posterior superior temporal sulcus/inferior temporal lobe; orbitofrontal/ventromedial prefrontal cortex, and amygdala) and consequentialist judgments are generated by a reason-constituted neurocognitive system (involving dorsolateral prefrontal cortex and parietal lobe). Evidence for this hypothesis comes from fMRI data revealing increased activation of the former set of neural structures when subjects were reacting to dilemmas featuring "up close and personal" harm and increased activation in the latter structures in response to cases lacking this feature. Berker 2009 raises doubts about the validity of Greene's data and the warrant with which Greene reasons from them to a consequentialist normative theory. Mikhail 2011 allows that emotions are often involved in moral judgment but reports intuitive responses to a number of hypothetical moral dilemmas as evidence that deontic intuitions conform to tacit rules that are likely innate in origin.

Appiah, Kwame Anthony. *Experiments in Ethics.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008. [ISBN: 9780674026094]

Appiah discusses the case against virtues advanced by "situationist" social psychologists, the neurobiology of moral intuitions and modular accounts of moral thought that cast doubt on its systematicity, arguing that our reactive attitudes are the products of evolution but that this does not undermine their authority or the rationality of those moral judgments we retain upon reflection. "Nature taught our ancestors to walk; we can teach ourselves to dance" (p. 119).

Berker, Selim. "The Normative Insignificance of Neuroscience." *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 37.4 (2009): 293–329.

Joshua Greene argues for consequentialism on the basis of fMRI scans of subjects' responses to moral dilemmas that purportedly show that consequentialist judgments are instantiated in the neural correlates of reasoning and deontic judgments in the neural correlates of emotional response. Berker argues against Greene's presentation of the data derived from these studies and the warrant with which Greene and Peter Singer reason from the data to their normative conclusions.

Casebeer, William D. *Natural Ethical Facts: Evolution, Connectionism and Moral Cognition.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003. [ISBN: 9780262033107]

Casebeer argues for a naturalist approach to the study of morality and a connectionist model of moral cognition. Moral judgments are neurobiological states that enable "skilled coping" with a social environment. Moral facts can be extracted from a biological account of proper human functions beyond reproduction. Though our emotions "mark" value, he affirms, "It is only insofar as our desires are well informed by functional considerations that we ought to satisfy them" (p. 59).

Greene, Joshua. "The Secret Joke of Kant's Soul." In *Moral Psychology.* Vol. 3, *The Neuroscience of Morality: Emotion, Brain Disorders, and Development*. Edited by Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, 35–80. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008. [ISBN: 9780262195645]

Greene reports fMRI studies of the brains of subjects responding to moral dilemmas and argues, on their basis, that our deontic intuitions (e.g., that we should not kill one to save five) have their source in "proponent" emotional reactions that we know, upon reflection, are unreliable sources of information. Knowledge of the anatomy of moral judgment therefore provides an indirect argument in favor of a form of consequentialism.

Haidt, Jonathan. “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail: A Social Intuitionist Approach to Moral Judgment.” *Psychological Review* 108 (2001): 814–834.

Haidt surveys the literature on how unconscious heuristics affect judgments to argue for “social intuitionism.” Moral judgments are typically the products of intuitions (understood as emotions such as disgust), and reasoning is typically social, biased, and employed after the fact to justify judgments if they are challenged. Evidence comes from the “moral dumbfounding” that occurs when subjects are pressed to defend their belief in the immorality of harmless but disgusting acts

Mikhail, John. *Elements of Moral Cognition*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011. [ISBN: 9780521855785]

Mikhail reports his experimental findings on folk deontic judgment, argues on their basis for (innate) tacit knowledge of deontic principles akin to the rules that characterize a native speaker’s linguistic competence, and defends a reading of John Rawls’s early methodology that gives pride of place to the development of a psychological account of our sense of justice in the justification of certain core principles of distributive justice.

Prinz, Jesse. *The Emotional Construction of Morals*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007. [ISBN: 9780199283019]

Prinz discusses a great deal of contemporary neuroscience, developmental psychology, and anthropology in the course of arguing that moral judgments are emotions such as guilt, shame, anger, and sympathy (which are themselves analyzed as somatic sensations coupled with action tendencies). These emotions have the function of reliably detecting response-dependent properties. Moral facts are radically relative and we have no innate (biologically evolved) capacities unique to moral judgment.

Sander, D., D. Grandjean, and K. R. Scherer. “A Systems Approach to Appraisal Mechanisms in Emotion.” *Neural Networks* 18 (2005), 317–352.

Appraisals are cognitive components of variegated emotional experience, which emerges from interacting neural systems. A stimulus is first appraised for relevance (novelty, pleasantness and instrumental value), then its likely causes and consequences, the possibilities for coping with it, the urgency of response, and its fit with internalized norms and social expectations. Each appraisal triggers physiological responses, feelings, motivations, behaviors and further appraisals, which are then “fed back” into the system.

Thagard, Paul, and Tracy Finn. "Conscience: What Is Moral Intuition?" In *Morality and the Emotions.* Edited by Carla Bagnoli, 150–169. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. [ISBN: 9780199577507]

Thagard and Finn argue that moral judgments are best identified with "a particular kind of emotional consciousness, produced by brain processes that combine cognitive appraisal with perception of bodily states" (p. 150) and adopt a classification of the appraisals involved from Sander, et al. 2005 to generate a computational (neural-net) model of the process with sixty-seven nodes representing the activation and interaction of fourteen emotional states and fifteen forms of appraisal.

Psychological Theories of Moral Development

Piaget 1932 defends a "genetic epistemology" of our internalization of moral rules. Norms of fairness are "constructed" by children in each generation through their interactions in games. Kohlberg 1984 describes various approaches to the study of moral development and argues that well-developed children progress through six distinct stages. The author defends his methodology from objections and assesses its implications for moral education and adult cognition. Gilligan 1982 criticizes Kohlberg's theory on several fronts and provides a different account of moral thought as gendered. Women's morality is an ethic of care, whereas men's morality is an ethic of justice. Flanagan 1991 argues against Kohlberg's stages that moral reasoning is heterogeneous throughout a child's development and uses Lawrence Walker's research—updated in Killen and Smetana 2006—to argue that moral thinking is not gendered. People must engage and develop their abilities to live lives they can judge worthy upon reflection but "Even the most complete psychological knowledge . . .will radically underdetermine the ideal forms of human life" (p. 334). Hoffman 2000 emphasizes the role empathy plays in generating anger with criminals, guilt formation, and "inductive" methods of childrearing in which caregivers consistently identify the negative consequences of a child's action and do so with appropriate affect. Empathy is innate but fragile and it must be supplemented with principles of justice to sustain a mature moral personality. Turiel 1998 traces the recent history and current state of theories of moral development while emphasizing the importance of reasoning over emotion. The author agrees with Flanagan on the heterogeneity of moral thinking employed throughout development and against the relativists that diverse

societies contain a similar (if often repressed) concern for basic rights and liberties. Though psychologists have emphasized the role of emotions such as disgust, Bloom 2004 agrees with Turiel that religion, philosophy, and culture affect moral deliberation and decision. The author points out that disgust has often found targets in marginalized groups of people and suggests that pro-social emotion—augmented with reasoned neutrality and concern for distant peoples—provides a better moral guide. Killen and Smetana 2006 includes a wide range of work on moral development written by a diverse range of theorists. For example, the essay authored by Nancy Eisenberg, Tracy Spinrad, and Adrienne Sadovsky differentiates empathy from sympathy and explains their differing roles in moral development, and Marie Tisak looks at models of how individuals encode the intentions of others and how the manner of representation might contribute to aggression.

Bloom, Paul. *Descartes' Baby: How the Science of Child Development Explains What Makes Us Human.* New York: Basic Books, 2004. [ISBN: 9780465007868]

Bloom rejects group selection as an explanation of why animals continue to exhibit behaviors that decrease their individual fitness while augmenting the fitness of non-kin and invokes reciprocity instead. Though empathy is controlled by reasoning in a mature moral agent, Bloom hypothesizes that it is the innate foundation of morality. The most basic form is emotional contagion and it is present in infants and realized in mirror neurons. See especially chapters 4–6.

Flanagan, Owen. *Varieties of Moral Personality.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991. [ISBN: 9780674932180]

Flanagan argues that people must develop their abilities to live lives they can value, but there are few other psychological constraints on ethical systems. He rejects supposed gender differences in moral reasoning, which he argues is heterogeneous at each stage of development. Moral backsliding occurs in early adulthood, a person's moral sense outstrips her justificatory abilities, and conscience cannot be adequately characterized as a set of rules.

Gilligan, Carol. *In a Different Voice.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982. [ISBN: 9780674445437]

On the basis of interviews with women on the subject of abortion Gilligan argues that the morality of women is different in kind from the morality of men. Women's morality is an ethic of care, whereas men's morality is an ethic of justice. She criticizes Kohlberg's methodology

for favoring justificatory abilities over interpersonal skills, his failure to interview girls, and his a priori prejudice for justice over care.

Hoffman, Martin. *Empathy and Moral Development.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000. [ISBN: 9780521580342]

Hoffman argues that empathy is "the glue that makes social life possible" (p. 3). He distinguishes five contexts of moral judgment, describes the different role empathy plays in each, and traces its ontogenetic and phylogenetic development. Empathy is an innate, evolved response to suffering, which is rarely absent but developmentally fragile. It can be undermined by aggressive parenting and must be supplemented with principles of justice to sustain a mature moral personality.

Killen, Melanie, and Judith Smetana, eds. *Handbook of Moral Development.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2006. [ISBN: 9780805847512]

Killen and Smetana introduce a collection of twenty-six essays from leading researchers noting that contemporary approaches are "hybrids" of the three warring methodologies that once divided the field: the psychoanalytic theory of Freud, the cognitive-developmental approach of Piaget, and Skinner's behaviorism. Highlights include Lawrence Walker's presentation of evidence against gender differences in moral reasoning and Cecilia Wainryb's evidence for the universality of concern for justice and autonomy.

Kohlberg, Lawrence. *Essays on Moral Development.* Vol. 2, *The Psychology of Moral Development.* San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1984. [ISBN: 9780060647612]

Kohlberg posed moral dilemmas to children and categorized the reasoning they used to justify their resolutions to posit six stages of moral development. The youngest reason in terms of obedience to authority; then grow to consider self-interest; then invoke the need to conform to norms of all kinds; then focus on law and social stability; then invoke human rights; and some finally reach the outlook of Rawls's theory of justice.

Piaget, Jean. *The Moral Judgment of the Child.* New York: Free Press, 1932.

The ways in which children resolve disputes during play lead Piaget to posit two stages of moral development: a heteronomous stage at which young children focus on observable actions and consequences, the demands of authority figures, and instrumental reasons for being moral, and an autonomous stage at which children consider intentions and develop associated

concepts of blameworthiness, responsibility, and freely willed cooperation motivated by a non-instrumental concern with fairness.

Turiel, Eliot. "The Development of Morality." In *Handbook of Child Psychology*. Edited by William Damon, 863–932. New York: J. Wiley, 1998. [ISBN: 9780471178934]

Turiel traces the recent history of theories of moral development while emphasizing developmental heterogeneity and anthropological similarity. In contrast with the "stage theories" of Kohlberg and Gilligan, concerns with justice, welfare, care, autonomy, and collectivity are evident at each point in the development of a child's moral thinking; in contrast with the views of Shweder and Haidt, all these elements are present in the thinking of members of otherwise different cultures.

Moral Belief and Evolution

Evidence exists that several capacities implicated in moral cognition owe their existence to natural selection. For example, Frans de Waal reports chimpanzees that sympathize with and help unrelated conspecifics and show aversion to the violation of social hierarchies (de Waal 2006). There is somewhat less evidence that our sense of justice evolved biologically. Machery and Mallon 2010 reports de Waal's observations that capuchins reject cucumbers at a higher rate when they observe conspecifics receiving grapes. But this effect is not observed among capuchin males. And while most humans forgo benefits to punish those who have authored a substantially unequal distribution when playing the "ultimatum game," other primates do not, and there are substantial cultural differences in which distributions humans reject. Darwin identified moral cognition with a suite of emotions and attitudes that evolved via group selection and were modified by language and higher intelligence, and he argued that many, if not all, of our obligations depend on contingent features of human social structure. He affirmed the existence of altruism but suggested that we take as "the standard for morality" not the greatest happiness of all concerned, but the general good of the community, where "the term, general good, may be defined as the rearing of the greatest number of individuals in full vigour and health, with all their faculties perfect, under the conditions to which they are subjected" (Darwin 1981, p.145). Churchland 2011 explores the role that oxytocin and mirror neurons play in realizing the reactive attitudes Darwin cites by generating an empathetic understanding of the minds of others, and she describes the kinds of pro-social behavior that are propagated by mimicry and reinforced by

rewards and punishments. She argues that moral cognition is rooted in the neurobiology of parental care, skill at solving problems that arise during cooperative activity, and the capacity to trust. Ruse 1988 argues that our moral norms are malleable but supported by biologically evolved capacities and draws skeptical or nihilist conclusions; Street 2006 similarly argues against moral realism on evolutionary grounds. Sober 1994 agrees that our moral sense did not augment fitness by tracking moral truth but compares moral norms to statistical rules: They are meant to improve behavior, not explain it. Wielenberg 2010 tries to rebut a number of arguments from the biological evolution of basic moral capacities to skepticism about moral knowledge by arguing that the reliability of our moral beliefs is conceptually insured.

Churchland, Patricia Smith. *Braintrust: What Neuroscience Tells Us about Morality*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011. [ISBN: 9780691137032]

Churchland argues that moral cognition is rooted in the neurobiology of parental care, skill at solving problems that arise during cooperative activity, and the capacity to expand one's circle of trust. She explores the role that oxytocin and mirror neurons play by generating an empathetic understanding of the minds of others, and she emphasizes the kinds of pro-social behavior propagated by mimicry and reinforced by rewards and punishments.

Darwin, Charles. *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981. [ISBN: 9780691082783]

Originally published in 1871. Remorse, repentance, shame, and regret, when conjoined with the resolution to act differently in the future, constitute the core of a human's moral sense. Citing herd animals that warn each other of predators and baboons that enforce norms with slaps, Darwin argues that these traits evolved via group selection, as "those communities, which included the greatest number of sympathetic members, would flourish best, and rear the greatest number of offspring" (pp. 157–158).

de Waal, Frans, ed. *Primates and Philosophers: How Morality Evolved.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006. [ISBN: 9780691124476]

De Waal supplies evidence that nonhuman primates experience empathy and enforce social norms to argue against the "veneer theory" that humans are essentially self-interested and morality is a cultural overlay. The volume includes in-depth commentaries by Robert Wright, Christine Korsgaard, Philip Kitcher, and Peter Singer that raise the question of exactly which capacities distinguish human moral thinking from that evidenced by other apes.

Machery, Edouard, and Ron Mallon. “Evolution and Morality.” In *The Moral Psychology Handbook.* Edited by John Doris, 3–46. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010. [ISBN: 9780199582143]

After discussing Frans de Waal’s work investigating whether nonhuman primates have a precursor to the human sense of justice, Machery and Mallon argue that the capacity for normative cognition is a biological adaptation, but distinctively moral thought is not. They conclude by rejecting Richard Joyce’s attempts to draw skeptical philosophical implications from what is currently known about the evolution of morality.

Ruse, Michael. “Evolutionary Ethics: Healthy Prospect or Last Infirmity.” In *Philosophy & Biology*. Edited by Mohan Matthen and Bernhard Linsky, 27–74. Canadian Journal of Philosophy Supplementary Volume 14. Calgary, AB: University of Calgary Press, 1988. [ISBN: 9780919491144]

Ruse argues that people are not purely self-interested but evolved a capacity to think in general moral terms that has its origins in dispositions to engage in cooperative activity, which in turn evolved via some combination of individual and kin selection. He draws nihilist conclusions from this hypothesis. He notes: “Morality is . . . a collective illusion put into place by our biology in order to make us efficient social beings” (pp. 41–42).

Sober**,** Elliott. “Prospects for an Evolutionary Ethics.” In *From a Biological Point of View.* Edited by Elliott Sober, 93–113. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994. [ISBN: 9780521471848]

Sober discusses two interrelated problems with either debunking or vindicating moral beliefs on evolutionary grounds: (1) it is hard to assess the varying contributions of biology, enculturation, and reasoning in causing our moral beliefs, and (2) we cannot gauge the soundness of moral arguments or the reliability of moral belief-forming mechanisms without making extra-biological assumptions about the nature of moral truth. He ultimately argues for non-explanatory reasons to assert moral truths.

Street, Sharon. “A Darwinian Dilemma for Realist Theories of Value.” *Philosophical Studies* 127 (2006): 109–166.

Since our basic evaluative tendencies owe their existence to natural selection, Street argues that realists must posit a “relation” between evaluative experience and reproductive fitness on pain of positing widespread error in evaluation. But the resulting form of realism is inferior to an

"adaptive link" account on which fundamental evaluative tendencies did not augment fitness by tracking the truth. Evaluative experience differs from perceptual experience in this regard.

Wielenberg, Erik J. "On the Evolutionary Debunking of Morality." *Ethics* 120.3 (2010): 441–464.

Wielenberg criticizes Richard Joyce, Michael Ruse, and Sharon Street for using evolutionary explanations of moral beliefs to debunk their reliability, the warrant with which we hold them, or realist accounts of their subject matter. The very cognitive capacities necessary to grasp beliefs about rights are sufficient to confer rights, so the assumption of rights is sufficient for the reliability of beliefs about rights.

Moral Skepticism

Joyce 2006 updates the skepticism about genuine altruism in Mackie 1978 by arguing that moral thinking has persisted throughout biological and cultural evolution because a belief in the "practical clout" or ultimate authority of the obligations it is used to proscribe augments the inclusive fitness of those who have it. The author affirms that the realization that our moral beliefs did not augment fitness by accurately representing or tracking the moral truth ought to undermine our warrant for holding them. Snare 1984, Sinnott-Armstrong 2006, and Zimmerman 2010 discuss many different forms of moral skepticism, all of which Zimmerman 2010 rejects. Sinnott-Armstrong 2006 argues that we do not have arguments or evidence that would rationally compel a skeptic to accept the truth of even our most basic (positive) moral claims. The attribution of positively justified moral belief is implicitly "contrastive" and requires the (rationally undetermined) rejection of nihilism. Snare 1984 argues that the existence of moral knowledge is supported by our nonarbitrary use of moral terms and shared forms of moral response, where the case for moral skepticism is based on our ability to describe and explain "the world" without using moral concepts. If we argue that moral facts are "constituted" by phenomena that are mentioned in the best science, the skeptic must argue that moral concepts "cannot be derived from his serious descriptions in a way which would commit him to employing them seriously" (p. 220). In response, we might doubt whether there is a uniquely rational conception of the world in terms of which moral phenomena must be defined or recovered. Doris 2002, Rosen 2004, and Williams 1985 argue for partial forms of moral skepticism. Doris 2002 builds a case against the existence or commonality of virtues and vices

on the basis of experiments in social psychology that show how transient features of the environment greatly impact moral behavior. Rosen 2004 argues that blame is not a fitting response to wrongdoing founded on non-culpable ignorance and argues that, in most cases, we cannot rule out the possibility that an agent's non-culpable ignorance of fact or value motivated her misdeed. Williams 1985 allows that thick virtue-theoretic discourse has substantive conditions of application that, when known to be satisfied, are sufficient for ethical knowledge. But when we evaluate thick ethical concepts for justification and reliability we cannot quell skeptical doubts that undermine this knowledge.

Doris, John M. *Lack of Character.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002. [ISBN: 9780521631167]

Doris argues that the use of virtue-theoretic discourse typically carries with it a commitment to the commonality of stable, consistent, unified patterns of behavior, and he marshals some of the most famous experiments conducted by social psychologists to argue that this commitment cannot be met. The effect that easily varied, transient, "insubstantial" environmental features have on behavior is so great as to impugn the supposed commonality of the virtues and vices.

Joyce, Richard. *The Evolution of Morality.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006. [ISBN: 9780262101127]

Joyce argues that moral thinking has persisted throughout biological and cultural evolution because a belief in the "practical clout" or ultimate authority of the obligations it is used to proscribe augments the inclusive fitness of those who have it. The realization that our moral beliefs did not augment fitness by accurately representing or tracking the moral truth ought to undermine our warrant for holding them.

Mackie, J. L. "The Law of the Jungle: Moral Alternatives and Principles of Evolution." *Philosophy* 53.206 (October 1978): 455–464.

In response to Richard Dawkins's selfish gene theory (see Richard Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976]), Mackie argues that a tendency to reciprocate benefit for benefit and harm for harm might have evolved via group selection given competition for resources between groups that rarely interbreed. He tentatively concludes that "reciprocal altruism" is more stable than pure altruism, that suckers enable cheats, and that ideals of pure altruism are better at replicating than genes promoting genuinely altruistic tendencies.

Rosen, Gideon. “Skepticism about Moral Responsibility.” *Philosophical Perspectives*, *Ethics* 18 (2004): 295–313.

Rosen argues that “confident positive judgments of responsibility are never justified.” The conditions an agent must meet to be justly blamed for a misdeed—because this negative emotion best “fits” her action—may often be satisfied but particular judgments of responsibility—even when aimed at cold-blooded murderers—are all unwarranted because “much of the bad action we ordinarily encounter amounts to action from ignorance in [a] broad sense” (p. 307).

Sinnott-Armstrong, Walter. *Moral Skepticisms.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2006. [ISBN: 9780195187724]

Sinnott-Armstrong argues for “Classy Pyrrhonism.” Moral beliefs can be truly evaluated as justified when we limit the range of alternatives, but none can be truly deemed justified if we include nihilism within the relevant contrast class, as there is no non-question-begging argument against moral nihilism. All doxastic justification is contrastive in nature, and no contrast class is the uniquely appropriate one to consider when evaluating the rationality (or positive epistemic status) of a given belief.

Snare, Francis. “The Empirical Bases of Moral Scepticism.” *American Philosophical Quarterly* 21.3 (1984): 215–225.

To resist moral skepticism we can argue that moral facts are constituted by phenomena that are mentioned in the best science. To rebut this claim, the skeptic must argue that moral concepts “cannot be derived from his serious descriptions” of the world. Moral knowledge might also be defended on the basis of skepticism about “the very possibility of deciding rationally between competing fundamental accounts of the world” (p. 224).

Williams, Bernard. *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985. [ISBN: 9780674268579]

In the course of an important discussion of ethical thought more generally Williams argues that we can use thick concepts such as “cruelty” and “courage” to arrive at ethical knowledge but that the kind of external or objective critique theorists use when evaluating thick ethical concepts for justification and reliability undermines this knowledge and generates skepticism in its wake.

Zimmerman, Aaron. *Moral Epistemology.* New York: Routledge, 2010. [ISBN: 9780415485531]

Zimmerman argues that though moral knowledge cannot be defended with premises or rules of inference acceptable to a determined skeptic, those of us with moral beliefs can effectively defend them from all the skeptical critiques that have been advanced to date. Our moral beliefs are no worse off in this regard than our common-sense beliefs in value-neutral matters.

Moral Nihilism

Mackie 1977 and Joyce 2001 argue for nihilism on several grounds. We ordinarily think that the cruelty of an act is a reason against someone's performing it even if she wants to perform it, doesn't care about kindness, and there is nothing she cares about that she would have to sacrifice by acting cruelly. Joyce and Mackie argue that the existence of such "categorical" reasons for action is a prerequisite for moral truth, but that there are no such reasons. They also argue that nihilism emerges from the best account of moral cognition and disagreement. Harman 1977 argues that moral facts are never necessary components of the best explanations of the value-neutral facts we know through observation. A person's moral beliefs and intuitions are best explained by non-moral facts about her upbringing and context. Harman suggests that if moral facts cannot be known through observation, and cannot be justly inferred from what can be observed, we should conclude that there are no (non-relational, objective) moral facts. Black endorses Mackie 1977 and its nihilism and claims that moral beliefs are epiphenomenal. Bayesian decision theory (or a causal variant) can replace moral evaluation of action. In contrast, Ross 2006 claims that unless we are certain of nihilism we can secure agreement with the norms of classic decision theory only by accepting the existence of objective values. Kaufmann 2004, a collection of existentialist essays, presents the idea that, in the absence of theological and biological foundations for morality, we are free to adopt rules, practices, and identities without constraint, a view endorsed in Wilson 2000 based upon a survey of the comparably minimal contribution to moral cognition the author assigns to our evolved biology. Scholars disagree on the degree to which Nietzsche's normative theorizing contains elements of nihilism (Nietzsche 1956). He clearly advocates a reexamination of contemporary thinking about values informed by an accurate genealogy of morals. But the genealogy of moral thought he endorses is meant to debunk Christian ideals of charity and humility, democratic ideals of equal representation, and liberal values such as freedom from coercion by assigning them an origin in the resentment slaves felt toward their masters. He argues that the meanings we assign to "good" and "bad" (as

applied to traits of character) are inverted relative to their original assignments; our idea of justice is a recent invention; and punishment originally compensated harm by satisfying an aggrieved party's sadism.

Black, Robert. "Moral Skepticism and Inductive Skepticism." *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 90.1 (1989/90): 65–82.

Black argues that assigning beliefs and desires to an agent is necessary if we are to construe her as acting for reasons and that charitable interpretations must construe agents as conforming to something like classical decision theory. We can, therefore, rule out a priori the possibility of someone's being a global normative skeptic, but moral belief is epiphenomenal and a rational agent can simply refuse to employ moral concepts.

Harman, Gilbert. *The Nature of Morality*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1977. [ISBN: 9780195021431]

See chapters 1–2. Harman argues that the best explanation of an observer's belief in the immorality of hoodlums torturing an animal is limited to the observer's upbringing and ideology; it does not cite the immorality of the act itself. He considers and rejects naturalistic "reductions" that model the relation between the moral and value-neutral properties of such acts on the relation between the colors and microphysical structures of objects.

Joyce, Richard. *The Myth of Morality*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001. [ISBN: 9780521808064]

Joyce argues that the categoricity of moral reasons is a non-negotiable presupposition of moral thought but argues against the existence of categorical reasons for action: one has a reason to perform an action only if one wants to perform it or one wants something one can help bring about by performing it. He proposes a fictionalist attitude toward morality on the part of those who recognize its illusory nature.

Kaufmann, Walter, ed. *Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre*. Rev. ed. New York: Plume, 2004. [ISBN: 9780452009301]

Originally published in 1957. Kaufmann collects some of the most important work by some of the most important existential thinkers. A common theme among them is that, in the absence of theological and biological foundations for morality, we must accept that morals are created rather than discovered. We have a radical freedom to adopt moral or (more broadly) normative

rules, practices, and identities without constraints imposed by God's commands or human nature.

Mackie, J. L. *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong.* New York: Penguin, 1977. [ISBN: 9780140219579]

Mackie argues that there are no objective values while distinguishing this "second-order" form of skepticism according to which values are just not "part of the fabric of the word," from a "first-order" skepticism that says, "All this talk of morality is tripe" (pp. 15–16). There cannot be objective facts that have "internal" deliberative and motivational import and the best explanation of moral disagreement is that objective morals do not exist.

Nietzsche, Friedrich. *The Genealogy of Morals.* In *The Birth of Tragedy and the Genealogy of Morals.* Edited by F. Golffing. New York: Doubleday, 1956.

Originally published in 1887. Nietzsche argues that "good" is derived from "noble," which was introduced by elites as "triumphant self-affirmation" to label their own traits of character in contrast with the characters of slaves and weaklings. The Jews started a "slave revolt in morals" (pp. 168–169) and by giving birth to Christianity and various democratic ideals have produced an uninspired, despondent populace, whose outlook he equates with pessimism and nihilism.

Ross, Jacob. "Rejecting Ethical Deflationism." *Ethics* 116.4 (July 2006): 742–768.

Ross argues that whether or not moral nihilism is true, acting on its basis is rationally indefensible. So long as an agent is uncertain of nihilism and other "deflationist" theories, these theories will be dominated by others that assign disparate values to an agent's alternative courses of action.

Wilson, Catherine. "The Biological Basis and Ideational Superstructure of Morality." In *Moral Epistemology Naturalized.* Edited by Richmond Campbell and Bruce Hunter, 211–244. Canadian Journal of Philosophy Supplementary Volume 26. Calgary, AB: University of Calgary Press, 2000. [ISBN: 9780919491267]

Wilson discusses the evolution of morality and concludes, "Biology radically underdetermines the specific formulas of obligation" (p. 221). No compelling reason exists to accede to even those pro-social sentiments and conceptions that do owe their existence to our evolved biology. Moral rules shift advantage from "strong" to "weak" but, prior to the "voluntary adoption of a normative stance, moral norms have no power to bind us or affect our behavior" (p. 240).

Moral Disagreement

DeCew 1990 argues that there can be a fact as to what we are required to do in certain cases even if there are moral dilemmas that have no resolution. McGrath 2008 discusses intractable disagreements on the morality of abortion, capital punishment, and eating meat between people who share a fundamental ethical outlook. We can often rebut our opponent's arguments but we cannot do this when she simply accepts (value-laden) premises we reject. The author argues that disagreement undermines knowledge in these cases: a view rejected in Wedgwood 2007. Miller 1985, Moody-Adams 1997, and Wong 2006 focus on disagreements between different cultures, and Setiya 2012 stresses disagreement with hypothetical creatures. Miller 1985 gives as examples of substantive moral difference the "ethic of fierceness" observed by the Yanomamo, which permits a great deal of intentional violence that Westerners judge immoral, and the ethic of familial partiality common among the Tiv, which permits lying under oath in service of kin. Though anthropologists report that cultures have different attitudes toward infanticide, female circumcision, abortion, and incest, Moody-Adams 1997 points out that people who are harmed or stifled by these practices tend to reject these "prevailing" attitudes and argues, on this basis, for a culturally sensitive, pluralistic form of moral realism. Nagel 1979 countenances disagreements arising from the existence of five fundamental forms of value: (1) specific obligations to others, (2) universal rights, (3) utility or aspects of benefit and harm, (4) perfectionist ends apart from welfare, and (5) private commitments. We typically move between the different perspectives from which things have these different species of value, but the desire to avoid the practical conflicts that inevitably arise does not justify assigning one perspective fundamentality: a charge he levels against utilitarians. Wong 2006 argues that no ethical conception gets us everything we want. Objective constraints on moral views are provided by "human nature" and two "essential" functions that Wong assigns to moral norms and forms of reasoning derived from this nature: (1) moralities must "regulate cooperation, conflicts of interest, and the division of labor . . . and specify the conditions under which some people have authority over others with respect to cooperative activities" (p. 37), and (2) moral norms must help satisfy, "a distinct set of human desires to . . . aspire to a way of being and living that is worthwhile and that can be recommended . . .as deserving . . . admiration" (pp. 43–44). Despite their differences, mainstream Western and Eastern moral frameworks both meet these constraints.

DeCew, Judith Wagner. "Moral Conflicts and Ethical Relativism." *Ethics* 101 (1990): 27–41.

DeCew argues against Stuart Hampshire that we can reconcile a belief in objective moral truths with a belief in moral disagreements and dilemmas that cannot be rationally resolved, citing, among other things, Ruth Barcan Marcus's argument that irresolvable conflicts among moral norms need not imply any form of inconsistency among moral statements and Philippa Foot's argument that such conflicts are compatible with a realist view of moral facts.

McGrath, Sarah. "Moral Disagreement and Moral Expertise." In *Oxford Studies in Metaethics.* Vol. 3. Edited by Russ Shafer-Landau, 87–107.. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. [ISBN: 9780199542062]

McGrath argues that we can check a person's record at predicting the weather to discern whether she is an expert meteorologist, but we have no way to check someone's reliability on moral matters. Substantial moral disagreement is not itself a reason to deny that someone is one's epistemic peer. Disagreeing with someone who shares one's fundamental moral outlook undermines one's knowledge of the disputed claim.

Miller, Richard W. "Ways of Moral Learning." *Philosophical Review* 94.4 (1985): 507–556.

Miller defends a view he considers "half-relativist." "In normal contexts . . .we are right to say that a husband should not shoot his wife for being late with supper *and* right to say we know this. Yet for Changon and Bohannan in the field, and for us when we are thinking about moral relativism . . . the exotic alternatives are salient. In these contexts, we do not know that the self-same act is wrong" (p. 550).

Moody-Adams, Michele. *Fieldwork in Familiar Places*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997. [ISBN: 9780674299535]

Though arguments for normative relativism assume that there are fundamental moral "disputes that are neither reducible to non-moral disagreement nor susceptible of rational resolution" (p. 15), Moody-Adams argues that the anthropological evidence does not warrant this assumption. There are objective moral truths—the obligation to respect other people and cultures among them—though there is room for people and cultures to adopt different, equally permissible, orderings of values within this framework.

Nagel, Thomas. "The Fragmentation of Value." In *Mortal Questions.* Edited by Thomas Nagel, 128–41. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1979. [ISBN: 9780521223607]

Nagel identifies five fundamental types of value. The desire to avoid conflicts between these does not justify simplifying our moral conception. Though the faculty of judgment we employ

to resolve fundamental conflicts may be described as the utilization of unconscious principles of one sort or another, its efficacy does not depend on the truth of this hypothesis. Theorists should concentrate on developing relatively domain-specific principles of rational judgment and decision.

Setiya, Kieran. *Knowing Right from Wrong.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. [ISBN: 9780199657452]

Setiya argues that we have ethical knowledge held on the basis of wholly value-neutral evidence and that this knowledge would be impossible if ethical facts were not reducible to facts about human nature. In the absence of such a reduction, general epistemic norms to which we subscribe would force us to abandon our ethical beliefs when faced with communities of (hypothetical) people who radically disagree with our fundamental ethical concerns.

Wedgwood, Ralph. "Disagreement and the A Priori." In *The Nature of Normativity.* By Ralph Wedgwood, 248–266. Oxford: Clarendon, 2007. [ISBN: 9780199251315]

Because my intuitions directly guide my beliefs, and the intuitions of others only indirectly guide them, Wedgwood claims, "It is simply out of the question . . . that they should play exactly the same role in guiding my reasoning" (p. 240). In consequence, it will be rational to retain an intuitive moral belief even when it clashes with the intuitions of those I think are reliable judges on moral matters.

Wong, David. *Natural Moralities*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006. [ISBN: 9780195305395]

Though Wong acknowledges diversity within cultures, he sees a macro-level difference between Western and Eastern moralities. Westerners value both relationships and autonomy, but they tend to grant the latter priority. In contrast, Eastern cultures grant family priority over autonomy. No moral conception gives us everything we want. This realization induces a kind of *moral ambivalence*. Doing justice to this phenomenon means embracing relativism within limits.

Intuitions about Cases

DePaul and Ramsey 1998 is an important collection on intuition. Its authors agree that we have intuitions but are divided on their nature and function. Strawson 1949 features a character "North" who argues that value-neutral knowledge of an action elicits an intuition of its rightness

or wrongness from which moral principles can be constructed. Kagan 2001 similarly argues that our moral judgments are often generated by states of intuition comparable to our perceptual experiences. Since Kagan claims that we are justified in trusting our perceptual experiences only because we have a "theory of the world" and a "theory of our senses" that together explain how sense experience provides us with a reliable guide to the world, and since he is pessimistic about the success of a similar "vindicating explanation" of our moral experiences, he suggests that we should put less stock in our moral intuitions. The author of Timmons 1990 holds a similar pessimism about establishing the reliability of our moral intuitions, which is part of his case against moral realism. Both Timmons and Sencerz 1986 focus on "considered" moral judgments or intuitions filtered for bias. Sencerz argues that the filters Rawls proposed are both insufficient and inexact routes to reliability. Gigerenzer 2008 and Sinnott-Armstrong, et al. 2010 focus on the role heuristics or unconscious inferences play in generating moral intuitions. The contributors to Sinnott-Armstrong, et al. 2010 discuss Kahneman, Slovic, and Tersky's evidence that we employ availability and representativeness heuristics and Gigerenzer's case for a recognition heuristic. The contributors allow that heuristics are reliable in typical circumstances, but they become unreliable in "unusual" environments, and they suggest that the range of the unusual is a matter for "empirical study." They further hypothesize that feelings of compunction might be a heuristic for the wrongness of an anticipated act and that guilt or shame might be a heuristic for the wrongness of something one has done, anger might be a heuristic for the moral wrongness of someone's harming another, contempt might be a heuristic for the wrongness of violations of hierarchy or displays of disrespect, and disgust might be a heuristic for the immorality of "impure" acts. Wedgwood 2007 equates intuitions with dispositions to experience these kinds of emotion and provides an a priori argument for their reliability. In cases in which a moral intuition is felt as the result of a disposition that is truly essential to possession of the attitude or concepts involved in that intuition, accepting the intuition at "face value" will result in moral knowledge.

DePaul, Michael, and William Ramsey. *Rethinking Intuition: The Psychology of Intuition and Its Role in Philosophical Inquiry*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998. [ISBN: 9780847687954]

Sixteen essays on intuition, including Stephen Stich's attack on the epistemic credentials of reflective equilibrium in "Reflective Equilibrium, Analytic Epistemology and the Problem of

Cognitive Diversity" and Ernest Sosa's defense of intuitive knowledge of principles in "Minimal Intuition." Essays by Alvin Goldman, Joel Prust, and George Bealer provide divergent answers on whether intuitions are just evidence of how we conceive of things or instead provide knowledge of extra-mental reality.

Gigerenzer, Gerd. "Moral Intuition = Fast and Frugal Heuristic?" In *Moral Psychology.* Vol. 2, *The Cognitive Science of Morality: Intuition and Diversity*, Edited by Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, 1–26. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008. [ISBN: 9780262195690]

Gigerenzer argues that when we employ heuristics we reason to intuitive judgments in a manner that rarely matches the reasoning we would employ to defend or justify our judgments. He asks us to remain open to the possibility "that when it comes to issues of justice and morals, there are situations in which the use of heuristics, as opposed to an exhaustive analysis of possible actions and consequences, is preferable" (p. 20).

Kagan, Shelly. "Thinking about Cases." *Social Philosophy and Policy* 18.2 (2001): 44–63.

Kagan thinks we must develop "an explanation of the moral phenomena that are the subject matter of our intuitions" (p. 53), along with a theory of the psychological faculties responsible for them, to demonstrate that our intuitions are a reliable guide to the moral phenomena. Since Kagan is pessimistic about the success of this endeavor, he concludes that we should put less stock in our single case intuitions than we currently do.

Sencerz, Stefan. "Moral Intuitions and Justification in Ethics." *Philosophical Studies* 50 (1986): 77–95.

Sencerz argues that achieving reflective equilibrium among one's moral views and background theories is no more than a "reshuffling of prejudices" because our considered judgments do not themselves have "intrinsic" credibility (p. 86). Commonalities in our considered judgments are not evidence of a shared moral sense but evidence of shared features of moral training. To posit a moral sense is to countenance an implausible ontology of perceptible moral features.

Sinnott-Armstrong, Walter, Liane Young, and Fiery Cushman. "Moral Intuitions." In *The Moral Psychology Handbook*. Edited by John Doris, 246–272. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010. [ISBN: 9780199582143]

Sinnott-Armstrong, et al. agree that moral intuitions arise from Laland's "do-what-the-majority-does" and Chaiken's "I-agree-with-people-I-like" heuristics, but because people don't always agree with majority sentiment, topic-neutral heuristics must be buttressed with varieties

of affect to fully explain moral judgment. Moral intuitions are often unreliable; heuristics might provide consequentialists with a "debunking" explanation of deontic judgment; and intuitions do not provide us with "direct" insight into moral wrongness.

Strawson, P. F. "Ethical Intuitionism." *Philosophy* 24.88 (1949): 23–33.

Strawson's character "North" argues (what his opponent "West" denies) that a correct moral evaluation of a case is not identical to a sensory perception of it or emotional reaction to it but is instead non-inferential knowledge of its rightness or goodness along with knowledge of the value-neutral properties on which this moral characteristic depends from which a basic moral principle can be extracted via intuitive induction.

Timmons, Mark. "On the Epistemic Status of Considered Moral Judgments." *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 29.Suppl. (1990): 97–130.

Timmons offers a "Moral Twin Earth" argument against moral realism and argues against combining a realist account of moral phenomena with a coherentist moral epistemology on two grounds: (1) wide reflective equilibrium does not require any "input" from (inquiry-independent) moral properties and facts, and so is unlikely to provide evidence of them; (2) there is no reason to expect convergence among moral inquirers who achieve (even) wide reflective equilibrium.

Wedgwood, Ralph. "The Status of Normative Intuitions." In *The Nature of Normativity*. By Ralph Wedgwood, 225–247. Oxford: Clarendon, 2007. [ISBN: 9780199251315]

Wedgwood sketches an account of the doxastic justification provided by those emotions with which he equates our moral intuitions. A mental state "counts" as a feeling of disapproval only if it reliably provides one with information about the wrongness of its object. Nevertheless, our "essential" emotional dispositions are guaranteed (in the absence of defeating conditions) to be reliable indicators of the propriety of the relevant emotions.

Intuitions about Principles

Audi 2004 defends a Kantian form of intuitionism: mid-level moral generalizations and the categorical imperative can both be known via understanding alone. Hooker 2002 argues that moral reflection can enhance the rationality of our moral convictions only if we believe principles that are "independently credible" in Audi's sense. Butchvarov 1989 draws on Sartre and Moore to argue that evaluative experience is "transparent" awareness of goodness itself, and

the author goes on to defend indubitable moral principles known on the basis of conception. Huemer 2005 argues that intuitions of moral principles cannot be equated with beliefs because they often conflict, as when a utilitarian *believes* that it is right to cut up one healthy patient when harvesting his organs is necessary to save five ill patients, while admitting that this belief is "counter-intuitive." An intuition that P provides the person who has it with prima facie justification for believing that P. When inconsistency between intuitions undermines their justification, moral reasoning is necessary; but because intuitions are indispensable, and intuition is a basic source of belief, we do not need to first establish the reliability of our intuitions to arrive at justified beliefs in what we intuit. Brink 1989 rejects intuitive knowledge of principles on coherentist grounds by arguing that nothing can justify a belief except another belief. Copp 2007 allows that the existence of self-evident moral truths is compatible with naturalism but argues that moral principles are all, in fact, empirically defeasible. Dreyfus and Dreyfus 1990 and Walker 1987 express skepticism about the role principles play in mature moral thought. Walker focuses on the way morally admirable agents define themselves by making and observing precedents, adopting roles and commitments, and sustaining them over time. In many cases, these precedent-setting commitments instill values, which provide a person with a basis for choice and significantly enhance her capacity for moral discrimination and performance. But a person can adopt a moral persona and so shoulder various obligations in a context without thinking others ought to do the same. According to Dreyfus and Dreyfus 1990, a child begins moral education by learning simple rules ("Never lie"), which she abandons for maxims that presuppose some ethical understanding ("Only lie when it's necessary to prevent something worse"). Competence is transcended for proficiency when the child abandons maxims and deliberates from her perception of needs and interests. She achieves expertise when she can successfully cope without deliberating at all (p. 252).

Audi, Robert. *The Good in the Right*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004. [ISBN: 9780691114347]

Audi argues that we can know mid-level moral generalizations (e.g., "Lying is immoral") in a non-inferential way via our understanding of the concepts involved and their interrelations, but we can also infer them from the categorical imperative. Kantian intuitionism is preferable to Ross's account because it allows us to see what our diverse duties have in common, how conflicts between them are best resolved, and the proper limits of beneficence.

Brink, David. *Moral Realism and the Foundations of Ethics*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1989. [ISBN: 9780521350808]

Brink argues that intuitionists must posit non-inferentially justified beliefs in moral principles, but that all justification must be inferential. To be justified in believing some proposition P one must have a reason to believe P. But P cannot itself be a reason for one to believe P, nor can facts one does not yet believe.

Butchvarov, Panayot. *Skepticism in Ethics*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989. [ISBN: 9780253353214]

Butchvarov argues for Cartesian knowledge of moral goodness. He states: "We find it unthinkable that we should be mistaken in judging that existence, health, pleasure, satisfaction, knowledge, fortitude and friendship are good" (p. 112). Our inability to conceive of how these things might not be good provides us with knowledge of their goodness just as our inability to conceive of a true contradiction provides us with knowledge of the law of non-contradiction.

Copp, David. "Moral Naturalism and Self-Evident Moral Truths." In *Morality in a Natural World*. By David Copp, 93–112. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007. [ISBN: 9780521863711]

In the course of rejecting substantive a priori moral knowledge, Copp allows that that there are self-evident moral truths that we are justified in believing on the basis of understanding alone: e.g., that friendship is *ceteris paribus* good, and that torturing babies for fun is bad. But he argues, on the basis of an account of how we acquire moral concepts, that these principles are all in fact empirically defeasible.

Dreyfus, Hubert, and Stuart Dreyfus. "What Is Morality? A Phenomenological Account of the Development of Ethical Expertise." In *Universalism vs. Communitarianism*. Edited by David Rassmussen, 237–264. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990. [ISBN: 9780262181402]

Dreyfus and Dreyfus endorse a "phenomenological approach" that emphasizes our "everyday ethical coping" (p. 238) rather than the evaluation of each other's actions. Learning begins with instruction in general rules, but competence is transcended for proficiency when the student stops looking for principles to guide her actions and "is struck" by the features relevant to successful coping. Expertise arrives when there is no sense of deciding what to do.

Hooker, Brad. "Intuitions and Moral Theorizing." In *Ethical Intuitionism: Re-evaluations*. Edited by Philip Stratton-Lake, 161–183. Oxford: Clarendon, 2002. [ISBN: 9780198250999]

According to Hooker, children learn "fairly general" moral principles before they make judgments about cases. He articulates nine such principles prohibiting murder, harm, theft, promise breaking, lying, and enjoining the promotion of justice, and benefits to self and others. The "most exciting" question as yet unanswered by ethicists is whether these fairly general principles are "explained" by some more basic (perhaps fully general) principle.

Huemer, Michael. *Ethical Intuitionism*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005. [ISBN: 9781403989680]

Huemer argues that we cannot perceive that something is bad because there is no distinctive way bad things appear. Knowledge of irreducibly moral facts is grounded in "intellectual" intuitions, which include our sense that enjoyment is better than suffering; that courage, benevolence and honesty are virtues; and that if a person has a right to do something no one has a right to prevent him from doing it.

Walker, Margaret Urban. "Moral Particularity." *Metaphilosophy* 18 (1987): 171–185.

Which considerations are moral in nature and how these considerations ought to be weighed are matters that depend on the agent's "moral persona." But a world in which everyone has the same persona and so has the same values—and so must find the same considerations morally relevant in the same ways— is not desirable. Diversity is good even if it makes the discernment of obligation irreducibly particular.

Moral Perception

Perceptual theories of moral knowledge assert that the moral quality of an action or person can itself be perceived. Nussbaum 1985 and McNaughton 1988 describe the ways in which moral judgment differs from the rote application of principles to cases by involving emotional sensitivities of various kinds and a skilled weighing of the disparate feelings and concerns of those involved. Nussbaum stresses how knowledge of obligations is itself derived from skilled apprehension of the needs and commitments of others. Watkins and Jolley 2002 focuses on the comparison between the virtuous person's appraisal of a situation and an expert's aesthetic evaluation of arts, crafts, and fine things. According to Audi 2013, if a child becomes "disturbed" when seeing her parent buy her twin a nicer pair of shoes, this may result from a "discriminative sensitivity to differential treatment" she can employ to grasp a full-blooded conception of injustice. A perceiver must use "pattern recognition" to represent the value-neutral

properties via which she perceives an act's injustice, but the representation in question needn't constitute belief nor initiate an inference to the act's immorality. Blum 1994 analyzes moral agency into seven steps beginning in perception: (1) feature recognition, (2) awareness of the moral relevance and relative importance of these features, (3) questioning whether to act, (4) deciding whether to act, (5) bringing to mind those rules or principles one takes to be applicable to the decision, (6) figuring out which action "best instantiates the principle one has selected," and (7) figuring out how to perform the action upon which one has settled. Against objections to the perceptual model, McBrayer 2010 argues that moral phenomena have a distinct appearance via which they are perceived. Tolhurst 1990 argues that emotions represent fittingness, obligation, and value in a reliable way because, as with paradigmatic cases of perceptual judgment, we can justly restrict our assessment of their reliability to "suitably favorable conditions" for their exercise; and our beliefs about the reliability of the processes in question "[c]an themselves be based . . . on moral beliefs formed in response to our moral experiences" (p. 85). McGrath 2004 criticizes Harman for claiming that scientific theories primarily aim at explanations of scientists' own beliefs. It allows with Sturgeon 1988 that we posit virtues and vices to explain each other's behavior but argues that knowledge of the immorality of a particular act is often not grounded in evidence distinct from the fact known.

Audi, Robert. *Moral Perception*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013. [ISBN: 9780691156484]

Though moral phenomena are not "perceptual," Audi argues they are "perceptible." We perceive the injustice of an act by seeing the non-moral properties in virtue of which it is unjust, tacitly bringing to bear relevant background knowledge, and experiencing disapproval, disgust, or a sense of "unfittingness" toward the act in question. Emotions often ground moral perception but they can be caused by a perception, part of it, or be absent altogether.

Blum, Lawrence. *Moral Perception and Particularity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994. [ISBN: 9780521430289]

Influenced by Iris Murdoch, Blum explores the limits of universally applicable ethical rules, fully impartial forms of moral reasoning, and principle-based accounts of moral judgment. Part 1 criticizes theorists for ignoring crucial features of moral sensitivity and agency, which a postscript analyzes into seven steps. Part 2 examines moral heroes, saints, and exemplars, and Part 3 criticizes influential psychological theories of moral development.

McBrayer, Justin P. “A Limited Defense of Moral Perception.” *Philosophical Studies* 149.3 (2010): 305–320.

A morally permissible act of self-defense might look exactly like a morally impermissible homicide. Must the perceptual theorist then claim acts of self-defense “look” immoral? McBrayer argues that an experience must only be “normally” accompanied by the instantiation of a property for the experience to represent that property. Since an experience of people burning a cat is normally caused by an act of immorality, it can represent that act’s immorality.

McGrath, Sarah. “Moral Knowledge by Perception.” *Philosophical Perspectives* 18 (2004): 209–228.

McGrath argues that someone acquainted with a homosexual couple can come to perceive that there is nothing wrong with their relationship without inferring this conclusion from any distinct facts about them: e.g., their monogamy or evident concern for one another. These value-neutral facts won’t entail the permissibility of the relationship, and “ought” cannot be inferred from “is” without at least tacit knowledge of a bridge principle.

McNaughton, David. *Moral Vision*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1988. [ISBN: 9780631154082]

McNaughton’s introduction to metaethics draws upon the views of John McDowell and Jonathan Dancy to develop a “particularist” account of moral response and the reality to which it is a response. Discerning the moral valence of some value-neutral feature of the context of choice requires a “holistic” awareness of that context. Moral principles can have a heuristic value, but they can instead compromise a more reliable (perceptual) form of moral discernment.

Nussbaum, Martha. “Finely Aware and Richly Responsible: Moral Awareness and the Moral Task of Literature.” *Journal of Philosophy* 82 (1985): 516–529.

Nussbaum gives a close reading of Henry James’s *The Golden Bowl* and finds within it a perceptual account of moral knowledge that she also attributes to Aristotle. “Moral knowledge . . . is not simply intellectual grasp of propositions . . . [or] intellectual grasp of particular facts; it is perception. It is seeing a complex concrete reality in a highly lucid and richly responsive way; it is taking in what is there, with imagination and feeling” (p. 521).

Sturgeon, Nicholas L. “Moral Explanations” In *Essays on Moral Realism*. Edited by Geoffrey Sayre-McCord, 229–255. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988.

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Tolhurst, William. "On the Epistemic Value of Moral Experience." *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 29.Suppl. (1990): 67–88.

Cases in which we experience something as bad without believing it to be bad (e.g., the newfound atheist's guilt over avoiding church) show that moral judgments are sufficiently independent of emotions to be justified by them. Emotions don't merely "sensitize" us to the conditions we (antecedently) think warrant moral judgment. Drawing on Mandelbaum 1969 (cited under *Emotions and Moral Judgments*) and Brentano 1969 (cited under *Desires as Intuitions of Value or Reasons*), Tolhurst argues that emotions represent relations of fittingness, propriety, and obligation.

Watkins, Michael, and Kelly Dean Jolley. "Polyanna Realism: Moral Perception and Moral Properties." *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 80 (2002): 75–85.

Inspired by Aristotle (and Nussbaum), Watkins and Jolley argue that good moral training allows someone to "perceive" the right or moral thing to do in a given circumstance. The entrained affective apparatus enabling moral perception is compared to aesthetic expertise and distinguished from the rightness of what is perceived. Moral properties are objective; they cause the virtuous person's awareness of them via their physical realizers.

Desires as Intuitions of Value or Reasons

Though we often want what is bad for us, desires might be roughly reliable indicators of value. Sayre-McCord 2001 explains how Mill uses this conception to "prove" utilitarianism. McCann 2011 attributes it to medieval philosophers who claim we always desire things under the "aspect" of the good. Desire does not involve a belief in the goodness of what is desired but rationalizes this belief as "a reasonable next step" (p. 31). Stampe 1987 distinguishes deliberation premised in knowledge of what one wants from more basic forms of practical reasoning that do not require self-awareness. Their premises are provided by desires (not their contents), which represent things as good by constituting perceptions of somatic states. Brentano 1969 locates our basic perception of value not in desire but in experiences of a desire's correctness. The author allows, however, that "higher" preferences incorporate this experience, and he joins Mill in endorsing a "qualitative" form of utilitarianism on this basis (pp. 32–33). To argue that desires are not dispositions, the author of Quinn 1993 imagines finding himself disposed to turn on radios. Without augmentation by (e.g.) a desire to hear something, Quinn, "cannot see how this bizarre

functional state in itself gives me even a *prima facie* reason to turn on radios" (p. 237). In general, "A psychological state whose salient function is to dispose an agent to act, is just not the kind of thing that can rationalize . . . For that I need the *thought* that the direction in which I am psychologically pointed leads to something good . . . or takes me away from something bad" (p. 242). In contrast with those who model desire as a representation of value, Scanlon 1998 and Schroeder 2007 argue that central cases involve "taking" something to be a "reason for action." Scanlon says that instinctive anger with a child's insolence might involve "taking" there to be reason to hit him. Judgment enters in when the parent considers whether the insolence really is a reason to strike. Scanlon compares the judgment that X really is a reason to A to the basic judgments of set theory. We have fairly good standards for evaluating them but no "decision procedure or even a theory" (p. 77). Schroeder 2007 claims that, "an adequate theory of mental content would . . . [say] that the salience-strikings associated with desires turn out to have the content that the consideration so striking you is a reason for you to act" (pp. 158–159). And Pollock 1986 provides a sophisticated conceptual-role analysis of moral judgments in terms of idealized desires.

Brentano, Franz. *The Origin of Our Knowledge of Right and Wrong*. Translated by R. Chisholm and E. Schneewind. London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1969. [ISBN: 9780710062314]

"We call a thing true when the affirmation relating to it is correct. We call a thing good when the love relating to it is correct" (p. 32). We know x is better than y by experiencing a preference for x over y as correct. This experience is necessary for knowledge of value, as desires and preferences needn't be correct and, "There are simply no criteria for most . . . cases of correct preference" (p. 33). Originally published in 1889.

McCann, Hugh. "Conative Intuitionism." In *The New Intuitionism.* Edited by Jill Graper Hernandez. London: Continuum, 2011. [ISBN: 9781441170828]

McCann argues for *conative intuitionism*: in central cases, an agent's desire for something provides accurate information to her of its desirableness. "Desire and aversion convey information to us of what is good and bad. Experiences of felt obligation and forbiddenness . . . tell us about what is right and wrong" (p. 31). The relation between desire and value theory is "essentially" the same as the relation between experience and scientific theory.

Pollock, John L. "A Theory of Moral Reasoning." *Ethics* 96 (1986): 506–523.

We make moral judgments by imagining we are not involved in a case and figuring out how we would then want it to be. Aberrant desires can yield false but justified moral judgments. But there are various defeators for the warrant our abstract desires confer on our moral judgments, such as knowing that we do not know what some of the people in the case on hand are experiencing.

Quinn, Warren. "Putting Rationality in Its Place." In *Morality and Action*. By Warren Quinn, 228–255. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993 [ISBN: 9780521441643]

Unlike the unadorned disposition to turn on radios, there is "another element (of necessity) typically present in basic desire, namely some kind of evaluation of the desired object as good . . . . The pursuit is rationalized not by the attitude but by the apparent value that attaches to its object" (pp. 242–243). When merely apparent goods "take us in" they can rationalize choice but not when we know they are merely apparent (p. 248). Also in *Value, Welfare and Morality*, edited by R. G. Frey and Christopher Morris (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 26–50.

Sayre-McCord, Geoffrey. "Mill's 'Proof' of the Principle of Utility." *Social Philosophy and Policy* 18.2 (2001): 330–360.

On Sayre-McCord's reading, Mill's proof of the principle of utility relies on the purported fact that we each desire our happiness, and that, in doing so, we regard (or represent) happiness as desirable in itself. According to Sayre-McCord, Mill thinks that to desire something is both to be motivated to pursue it and to see it as good.

Scanlon, T. M. *What We Owe to Each Other*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998. [ISBN: 9780674950894]

Scanlon argues that "seeming to be a reason" to perform an action is, "the central element in what is usually called desire," where desires are "not a matter of preconceptual appetite but involve at least vague appeal to some evaluative category" (p. 65). Still, seemings are not "perceptions" of reasons since they "lack the crucial element of being a mechanism of representation through which things at a distance are presented to us" (pp. 380–381, n. 51).

Schroeder, Mark. "Motivation, Knowledge and Virtue." In *Slaves of the Passions*. By Mark Schroeder, 164–178. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007. [ISBN: 9780199299508]

Schroeder endorses an *attitude content view*: "Desires have the property of involving taking things to be reasons, even though this is not part of their analysis" (p. 155). Because desires

involve seeing considerations as reasons for action, "It is natural to hope that beliefs about reasons that are formed on the basis of this will turn out to be defeasibly justified in something like the way that basic perceptual beliefs are justified" (p. 174).

Stampe, Dennis. "The Authority of Desire." *Philosophical Review* 96.3 (1987): 335–381.

Stampe argues that "Desire is a kind of perception. One who wants it to be the case that p perceives something that makes it seem to that person as if it would be good were it the case that p, and seem so in a way that is characteristic of perception . . . It is autonomous in its authority, as is any perceptual modality, not requiring legitimation by the representations of the intellect" (pp. 359–377).

Emotions and Moral Judgment

Emotions play a central role in shaping our moral judgments, but Scheler 1954 argues that sentimentalists incorrectly identify moral thinking with judgments formed upon sympathetic identification with an agent and those affected by her actions. Hume and Smith fail to distinguish emotional contagion from truly shared emotion: only the latter has a common intentional object, a criticism Blum levels against neo-sentimentalists in his contribution in Bagnoli 2011. Though Scheler allows that sympathy may facilitate the realization that everyone is of equal value, he argues that this judgment does not depend for its justification on the episodes that engender it. Similarly, Mandelbaum's wide-ranging exploration of moral experience (Mandelbaum 1969) argues that we admire actions because we judge them right, not vice versa. Brady's contribution to Bagnoli 2011 agrees that emotions are inessential to moral knowledge but allows that "emotions can be useful substitutes for reasons in those circumstances where we cannot access the reasons that our emotions reliably track" (p. 143) as when an emotional reaction to a piece of music directly yields belief in its beauty. And though Roberts 2013 allows that "someone could be epistemically justified in making [a] moral judgment without his emotion being the basis for the judgment," he insists that the indignation a virtuous person feels at injustice is a "perceptual experience" of its immorality that provides more "intimate contact with this moral reality" than a cool evaluation (p. 52). Jones's contribution to Hatzimoysis 2003 goes further by arguing that emotions are often more reliable than our explicit evaluations. Huck Finn's autonomy is not compromised when he helps Jim escape slavery despite Huck's belief that he is doing wrong. Autonomy requires critical self-reflection but not blind allegiance to articulate evaluation.

Nussbaum 2001, de Sousa 2011, and Roberts 2013 develop detailed accounts of how emotions acquire content and the kinds of phenomena that render this content true. And though Roberts 2013 allows that we must employ our background belief in values to arrive at a conception of emotional truth, he argues that the application of "truth" to scientific theories relies on similar background assumptions. Greenspan's contribution to Hatzimoysis 2003 summarizes her influential examination of emotional truth and rationality and integrates it with neurobiology; and her contribution to Goldie 2010 examines the role that innate emotions play in constraining moral education, thereby fixing the objective, cross-cultural elements of an otherwise pluralistic moral reality.

Bagnoli, Carla, ed. *Morality and the Emotions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. [ISBN: 9780199577507]

Bagnoli introduces thirteen essays on the emotions including Brady's argument that emotions do not play an essential role in justifying our evaluative judgments. "It is normal for us to endorse the content of our emotional experience only after we have discovered. . . reasons to think that our emotional appearance is veridical," though "emotions can be useful substitutes for reasons in those circumstances where we cannot access the reasons that our emotions reliably track" (pp. 142–143).

de Sousa, Ronald. "Love Undigitized." In *Emotional Truth*. By Ronald de Sousa, 250–262. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. [ISBN: 9780195181548]

Starting from Plato's claim in the *Philebus* that pleasure can be false, de Sousa explores the idea that emotions can be rendered fitting or unfitting—and so true or false in an analog fashion—by their proper objects. Horror at a child falling into a well is verified by the need to intervene. Emotions in general constitute "apprehensions of axiological reality" (p. 27, cf. 103) though some emotions are not to be trusted.

Goldie, Peter, ed. *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Emotion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. [ISBN: 9780199235018]

Goldie's collection includes six essays on the relation of our emotions to our values. Highlights include Greenspan's argument in "Learning Emotions and Ethics" that basic emotions evolved for behavioral readiness but came to have a primarily communicative function as evidenced by their characteristic facial expressions. Greenspan endorses Rawls's account on which moral

norms vary but are constrained by the essential function innate emotions play in moral learning.

Hatzimoysis, Anthony, ed. *Philosophy and the Emotions.* Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement 52. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003. [ISBN: 9780521537346]

Leading researchers discuss the nature, rationality, and relation of emotions to moral judgment. Greenspan summarizes her 1988 approach in arguing that emotions are not "thoughts with hedonic tone" but "feelings with evaluative content." Jones argues that emotions are often more reliable guides to action than our explicit judgments. Autonomy requires not absolute adherence to evaluative judgments but a "commitment to the on-going cultivation and exercise of habits of reflective self-monitoring" (p. 194).

Mandelbaum, Maurice. *The Phenomenology of Moral Experience*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969.

Originally published in 1955. After arguing that experience of moral obligation is the sense that one available course of action has seemingly objective features making it more "fitting" in the context than any others, Mandelbaum explores the role emotions play in our evaluation of other people's actions, arguing that moral thought precedes judgments of the fittingness of moral emotions. We admire actions and judge them admirable because we judge them morally right, not vice versa.

Nussbaum, Martha C. *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001. [ISBN: 9780521462020]

Integrating reflection on her mother's death with contemporary studies of the science of emotions, Nussbaum argues for a neo-Stoic view of emotions as standing evaluative attitudes representing the importance to us (or our wellbeing) of people or objects we don't fully control. True or apt emotions are perceptions of eudaimonistic value. Grief involves the judgment that the mourner is right to be upset about the loss of something of real importance to her.

Roberts, Robert C. *Emotions in the Moral Life*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013. [ISBN: 9781107016828]

See especially chapters 3–5. Drawing on his 2003 theory of emotions as "concern-based construals" (p. 46), Roberts argues that emotions are "a kind of [non-sensory] perceptual state through which we can be acquainted with the values (positive and negative) that situations have" (p. 30). Though emotions are not necessary for justified moral judgments, "one who

feels injustice for himself, by way of his indignation, has an epistemically *higher-quality* judgment than the emotionless person" (p. 52).

Scheler, Max. *The Nature of Sympathy*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1954.

Scheler's discussion is divided into three sections: fellow-feeling, love and hatred, and other minds. He criticizes the sympathy-based moralities of Hume and Smith for failing to distinguish the emotional contagion of excitement spreading through a crowd from the emotional identification of a couple mourning their dead child, and he articulates four laws of dependence: identification underlies vicarious feeling, which underlies fellow-feeling, which underlies benevolence, which underlies "non-cosmic" love of persons.

Inferring "Ought" from "Is"

That one cannot infer "ought" from "is" is typically labeled "Hume's Law" on the basis of his *Treatise* 3.1.1. Hudson 1969 begins with MacIntyre's case for an alternative reading along with important papers by Anscombe, Foot, and Searle arguing that "ought" can be inferred from "is," together with important criticisms of these arguments from Flew and Hare. The author of Anscombe 1958 argues that she knows that she owes the grocer for potatoes by directly inferring as much from the grocer's fulfilling his side of the transaction. In the course of reconstructing and criticizing the sophisticated non-cognitivism of Stevenson and Hare, Foot 1958 allows that someone might refuse to use moral concepts, but if he does use them he must accept certain "ought" from "is" inferences independently of his feelings and commitments. Searle's argument in "How to Derive 'Ought' from 'Is'" similarly derives obligations from promises. Gewirth 1973–1974 categorizes and criticizes these prior attempts to derive "ought" from "is" as insufficiently "categorical" as they assume the normative status of institutions (etiquette, promising, purchasing) that needn't be endorsed. Brink 1989 concedes that moral claims cannot be "deduced" from a set of wholly value-neutral premises but argues that this is compatible with identities between moral facts and non-moral facts and the kinds of "evidential relations" between moral and non-moral beliefs that enable us to justify belief in "ought" on the basis of "is." In contrast, Bambrough 1979 and Zimmerman 2010 argue that core moral inferences do not differ in epistemologically significant ways from paradigmatic deductions. Bambrough cites Wisdom 1970 (originally published in 1965) in arguing that principles of logic are not self-evident; we must infer the soundness of a form of argument from our a posteriori knowledge of

the cogency of its instances. Zimmerman 2010 allows that some disposition to infer the relevant "ought" claims from the relevant "is" claims is necessary for possession of normative concepts. But the attribution of these concepts is a holistic manner. So in any given case someone skeptical of a moral claim can resist the inference from value-neutral premises to a value-neutral conclusion without evincing a failure of understanding. Nevertheless, Zimmerman agrees with the argument in Thomson 1990 that there are principles that successfully bridge the gap between "is" and "ought" and that they are a posteriori known necessities. Thomson also argues that there is no possible world in which acute pain is not bad overall, so pain's "favorable relevance" to prohibitions on its intentional infliction is necessary.

Anscombe, G. E. M. "On Brute Facts." *Analysis* 18 (1958): 69–72.

From the fact that Anscombe asked the grocer for potatoes and the grocer delivered and billed for them, Anscombe directly infers that she *owes* the grocer payment. Certain "background institutions" must be in place for the behavior to constitute a transaction, and conditions must be "unexceptional" for it to yield an obligation, but these institutions needn't be considered nor exceptional circumstances ruled out to infer "ought" from "is."

Bambrough, Renford. *Moral Scepticism and Moral Knowledge*. London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1979. [ISBN: 9780710003058]

Bambrough attacks the classical model on which we infer the immorality of a particular action from knowledge of a general moral principle and the facts of the case. Our judgments about the immorality of particular actions or the validity of particular inferences are not foundational in a Cartesian sense: They are not indubitable or infallible. They resemble logical principles in being based in shared inferential dispositions acquired in early childhood.

Brink, David. "Moral Realism and the Is/Ought Thesis." In *Moral Realism and the Foundations of Ethics*. By David Brink, 144–170. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press (1989). [ISBN: 9780521350808]

Brink argues that conceding that moral claims cannot be "deduced" from a set of wholly non-moral premises is compatible with identities between moral facts and non-moral facts (or the thesis that moral phenomena are wholly constituted by non-moral phenomena), and it is compatible with the kinds of "evidential relations" between moral and non-moral beliefs that Brink's coherentist theory of moral knowledge (and justified moral belief) posits.

Foot, Philippa. "Moral Arguments." *Mind* 67 (1958): 502–513.

From the fact that A has caused B offense by indicating A's lack of respect for B, we can conclude that A has acted rudely. If someone accepts our premise and denies its conclusion he shows a failure to understand "rude." A man might refuse to use moral concepts, but if he does, he must accept certain "is"-"ought" inferences independently of their effects on his feelings or commitments.

Gewirth, Alan. "The 'Is-Ought' Problem Resolved." *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* 47 (1973–1974): 34–61.

Gewirth criticizes previous attempts to derive "ought" from "is" as assuming the normative status of institutions (like promising) that needn't be endorsed. In contrast, Gewirth's "derivation" is purportedly unavoidable because rational agents must act and implicitly assume in stages the value of their ends, the well-being and freedom necessary for the pursuit of these ends, universal rights to such freedom and well-being, and an obligation to promote and protect these rights.

Hudson, W. D., ed. *The Is/Ought Question: A Collection of Papers on the Central Problem in Moral Philosophy*. London: Macmillan, 1969. [ISBN: 9780333101780]

Part 1 of Hudson's collection discusses interpretation of Hume's *Treatise* 3.1.1. Part 3 collects John Searle's argument that Hume's Law is false because we can infer an obligation from a promise. Part 4 includes Searle's reply to his critics along with G. E. M. Anscombe, "Modern Moral Philosophy," and Philippa Foot, "Moral Arguments" and "Goodness and Choice," which describe concepts and judgments that blur the "is"-"ought" boundary.

Thomson, Judith J. "Introduction and Metaethical Remarks." In *The Realm of Rights*. By Judith J. Thomson, 1–36. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990. [ISBN: 9780674749481]

Thomson argues that "E plans to torture a baby to death for fun" entails "E ought not do what he plans to do" full stop. The principle verifying the soundness of this inference is necessary but a posteriori in nature like "Water is H_2O." To grant a moral principle necessity is to commit to its being true no matter how the (non-moral) facts turn out.

John Wisdom. *Paradox and Discovery*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970.

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Zimmerman, Aaron. "Deductive Moral Knowledge." In *Moral Epistemology*. By Aaron Zimmerman, 107–140. New York: Routledge, 2010. [ISBN: 9780415485531]

Zimmerman argues that we can directly infer knowledge of the immorality of an action from our knowledge of its value-neutral properties. The principle that verifies the soundness of this inference can then be known a posteriori when its falsity is inconceivable to agents capable of perspective-taking, compassion, and other pro-social emotions. To see this we need to rid ourselves of mistaken conceptions of formal validity and its epistemic value.

Moral Knowledge from Inference to the Best Explanation

Hegel 1975 sets out to provide the best explanation of the gradual demise of slavery and infers "[t]hat world history is governed by an ultimate design, that it is a rational process—whose rationality is not that of a particular subject, but a divine and absolute reason" (p. 28). The goal of the spirit that animates the universe is the kind of positive freedom and self-awareness enjoyed by citizens of Christian democracies. Sturgeon 1984, Railton 1986, and Cohen 1997 embrace Hegel's explanation of the death of slavery stripped of its teleological elements. That some institution is objectively bad for the people subjected to it—because it frustrates their needs and impedes the development and exercise of their capacity for fulfilling activity—is an essential part of the best explanation of their dissatisfaction with that institution, which in turn explains revolts and revolutions. (Sturgeon 1984 also maintains a micro-level corollary: An individual's viciousness can often be inferred as the best explanation of his oppressive actions.) According to Habermas 1979, Marx incorrectly inferred (in reaction to Hegel) that economic changes undermined slavery without the top-down influence of moral beliefs or religious ideologies. Communication requires some form of mutual recognition, honesty, and capacity for justification, which eventually generate moralities and mechanisms for regulating conflict that are the "pacemaker" of social evolution. But Satz 1989 rejects Habermas's nihilistic reading of Marx. "Ethical causes are implicit in Marx's own account of historical change . . . . It is because freedom is objectively good for human beings that history moves in the way it does: human beings can recognize their interest in freedom and this recognition leads them to change their social relations in ways which explain their freedom" (p. 395). Harman 1977 (cited under *Moral Nihilism*) is skeptical that (e.g.) the immorality of an act of torture can be "reduced" to the motives of the torturer and the distress of his victim. In the absence of the required reduction, the immorality of torture plays no role in the best explanation of our belief in its immorality. But Sober 2009 insists that the immorality of torture supervenes on the psychological facts cited in

the best explanation of our disapproval of it, so we cannot say that these non-moral facts might obtain in the absence of torture's immorality. In contrast, Enoch 2011 accepts Harman's argument but rejects the nihilism it seemingly entails. Though moral truths do not explain observable phenomena, we are justified in believing those irreducibly normative truths that are indispensable to practical deliberation.

Cohen, Joshua. "The Arc of the Moral Universe." *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 26.2 (1997): 91–134.

Cohen does not think that immorality must explain observable events to exist nor does he think the truth of a moral explanation is sufficient to establish a realist conception of moral facts. Nevertheless, he argues that injustice helps explain social change. He affirms: "Characterizing slavery as unjust conveys information relevant to explaining the demise of slavery that is not conveyed simply by noting that slavery conflicts with the interests of slaves" (p. 94).

Enoch, David. *Taking Morality Seriously: A Defense of Robust Realism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. 50–84. [ISBN: 9780199579969]

Enoch argues that "irreducibly normative truths, though not explanatorily indispensable, are nevertheless deliberatively indispensable," and this "justifies belief in normative facts, just like the explanatory indispensability of theoretical entities like electrons justifies belief in electrons" (p. 50). Both explanation and deliberation are "intrinsically indispensable," and an agent's commitment to normative truths—as to what it makes most sense for her to do in a given context—is essential to her deliberation (pp. 69–71).

Habermas, Jürgen. "Historical Materialism and the Development of Normative Structures." In *Communication and the Evolution of Society*. Translated by T. McCarthy. By Jürgen Habermas, 95–129. Boston: Beacon, 1979. [ISBN: 9780807015124]

According to Habermas, Marx treats culture as purely "superstructural": economic conditions and activities determine the moral, political, and religious views of people and their group and self-identities. His corrective is to develop and integrate economic history with "communication theory"—an account of the top-down influence of language and culture on economic organization and activity—without lapsing into a Hegelian history of spirit.

Hegel, G. W. F. *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*. Translated by H. B. Nisbett. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1975. [ISBN: 9780521205665]

Originally published in 1837. Hegel reads a macro-level trajectory into human history. As we have transitioned from living under "Oriental" forms of government to Greek, Roman, and now Christian states, people have enjoyed increasing forms of self-awareness and autonomy. He infers that a form of autonomy—enjoyed by the self-aware citizens of a democracy guided by the norms of a Christian morality—is the goal of the spirit that animates the universe.

Railton, Peter. "Moral Realism." *The Philosophical Review* 95 (1986): 163–207.

Railton argues that an agent's acting in accord with her objective good often explains why she is satisfied with her life. The kind of dissatisfaction that results in revolution can often be best explained by a society's (more or less widespread) failure to adhere to norms that promote the objective good of its members. We can often infer that an action is wrong (because bad) when it contravenes such norms.

Satz, Debra. "Marxism, Materialism and Historical Progress." *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* Suppl. 15 (1989): 393–424.

Satz's Marx allows that "[i]t is because freedom is objectively good for human beings that history moves in the way it does: human beings can recognize their interest in freedom and this recognition leads them to change their social relations in ways which explain their freedom . . . . We believe that photons exist because there are photons; we believe that freedom is good because it is good" (p. 415).

Sober, Elliot. "Parsimony Arguments in Science and Philosophy—A Test Case for Naturalism." *Proceedings and Addresses of the APA* 83.2 (2009): 117–155.

Sober objects to Harman's argument for nihilism on three grounds: (1) if the moral supervenes on the non-moral, we cannot say that the non-moral facts might be just as they are in the absence of moral truths; (2) justified belief in logical and moral norms needn't be abductive; (3) some ethical truths may be needed to explain others, even if ethics is not needed to explain value-neutral truths.

Sturgeon, Nicholas. "Moral Explanations." In *Morality, Reason and Truth*. Edited by David Copp and David Zimmerman, 49–78. Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Allanheld, 1984. [ISBN: 9780847673681]

Sturgeon argues that virtues and vices explain behavior. For example, Woodworth's vanity and cowardice can better explain his failure to save the Donner party than can any explanation

couched in entirely value-neutral terms. We can therefore acquire knowledge of certain kinds of value-laden fact by inferring these facts as the best explanations of behaviors we observe.

Coherence Theories of Moral Knowledge and Warrant

Coherentists argue that a moral belief is rationally or justly held to the degree that it coheres with the believer's other beliefs. Brink 1989 argues for coherentism from the conviction that nothing can justify a given belief unless it is itself believed. Though Sayre-McCord 1996 similarly insists that the reasons for which someone holds a moral belief must include the contents of her other moral beliefs —because moral beliefs cannot be justly held on wholly value-neutral grounds—a believer need not be aware of the "evidential consistency, connectedness and comprehensiveness" in which, Sayre-McCord argues, coherence consists (pp. 165–166). Thus, moral beliefs for which we cannot argue may be justified by the fact of coherence alone. He also rebuts traditional objections to coherentism: that it implausibly requires higher-order beliefs for first-order justification, that it treats the fact of belief as a reason for belief, and that it fails to appreciate the special role experience plays in justifying belief. Timmons 1987 argues that coherentists reject the foundationalist conviction that disagreements between competing ethical systems can be rationally resolved by appealing to some combination of science, metaphysics, and argument. Goldman 1988 adopts a similar understanding. He allows that we often bring "extra-moral standards" of psychological health, social utility, and freedom from factual error to bear when evaluating moral beliefs, but he argues that these constraints are too minimal to yield a uniquely justified or true ethic. He affirms: "All moral beliefs are justified only in terms of coherence with other beliefs. Such coherence seems to exhaust our concept of moral truth as well, or at least our knowledge of what makes moral beliefs true" (p. 181). Walker 2007 emphasizes that the kind of coherence an ethical understanding should possess if it is to remain worthy of our continued employment requires interpersonal discussion, agreement, and criticism. And though Walker denies that nihilism can be rationally rejected, the author of Sinnott-Armstrong 2006 agrees that this extended form of coherence provides a person's moral beliefs with the best kind of warrant she can obtain for them. In contrast, Lemos 1994 argues that we have defeasible a priori justification for various evaluative beliefs, and the author mounts a number of different arguments against both Bonjour's general coherentism and Brink's coherentist account of moral justification. Conversely, DePaul 1988 argues that coherence is

insufficient for justification as coherent systems of ethical belief that are based on the wrong kinds of experience—with both art and life—will often lack warrant.

Brink, David. “A Coherentist Moral Epistemology.” In *Moral Realism and the Foundations of Ethics*. By David Brink, 100–143. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1989. [ISBN: 9780521350808]

Brink argues that a moral belief is justified insofar as it is part of a coherent system of beliefs, both moral and non-moral, where the coherence of the belief with the subject’s other beliefs (at least partly) explains why the subject holds it. He then argues that coherentism (so understood) is compatible with a realist account of the moral facts we can come to know by achieving coherence among our beliefs.

DePaul, M. “Argument and Perception: The Role of Literature in Moral Inquiry.” *Journal of Philosophy* 85 (1988): 552–565.

A developer who does not care about biodiversity might alter a pastoral environment so that it “is inhabited by a single hybrid species of soya bean” (p. 555). His anthropocentric ethic might be internally coherent but still unjustified because it results from “experiential naiveté” that can be corrected only by engaging with nature or the kind of art and literature that celebrates it.

Goldman, Alan. *Moral Knowledge*. New York: Routledge, 1988. [ISBN: 9780415013109]

The book’s final two chapters sketch a coherentist epistemology and argue for its superiority to emotivism and realism. There is too much variation in moral experience to sustain belief in moral perception. Though moral beliefs are not amenable to refutation by observation. they are unlike aesthetic judgments in the demands of consistency, psychological health, social utility, and freedom from factual error we often bring to bear in their evaluation.

Lemos, Noah. “Coherence and Experience.” In *Intrinsic Value*. By Noah Lemos, 161–195. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994. [ISBN: 9780521462075]

In the course of arguing that we have modest a priori justification for certain evaluative beliefs, Lemos argues against Bonjour’s general coherentism and Brink’s application of it to the moral realm. Coherentism provides an implausible, overly intellectual model of introspective knowledge and justification, generates infinite regresses, wrongly denies the importance of a belief’s etiology to its justification, and conflicts with the supervenience of epistemic justification on value-neutral properties.

Sayre-McCord, Geoffrey. “Coherentist Epistemology and Moral Theory.” In *Moral Knowledge? New Readings in Moral Epistemology*. Edited by Walter Sinnott-Armstrong and Mark Timmons, 137–189. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996. [ISBN: 9780195089899]

Sayre-McCord argues that only factors apparent to someone can augment the justification with which she holds her beliefs. But we needn’t have knowledge of the “evidential consistency, connectedness and comprehensiveness” that imbue our beliefs with the kind of coherence that exhausts epistemic justification, as “the externalism here concerns not what counts as a person’s reasons for believing as she does but rather what counts as a justified belief” (pp. 165–166).

Sinnott-Armstrong, Walter. “Coherentism.” In *Moral Skepticisms*. By Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, 220–252. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006. [ISBN: 9780195187724]

Sinnott-Armstrong defends “a version of coherentism” according to which a belief is justified to the degree that the belief system of which it is a part is “consistent, connected and comprehensive” (p. 222). His coherentism is “limited in ways that support moderate moral skepticism,” and he emphasizes the kind of coherence that can be secured through self-conscious evaluation of moral reasoning and belief formation (p. 220).

Timmons, Mark. “Foundationalism and the Structure of Ethical Justification.” *Ethics* 97 (1987): 595–609.

Timmons distinguishes a number of different forms of moral foundationalism before arguing that their essential difference with coherentist epistemologies lies in their endorsing the claim that we can “develop” theories about people and society independently from moral considerations that are sufficiently powerful to constrain our choice between “competing moral systems” (p. 607). The existence of such a theory is not yet on hand, but we cannot rule out its development a priori.

Walker, Margaret Urban. *Moral Understandings: A Feminist Study in Ethics*. 2d ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007. [ISBN: 9780195315394]

Walker argues for an “expressive-collaborative” account of relationships, narratives, emotional reactions, and our critical evaluations of them. The tacit understandings of our roles, values, and obligations that shape our interactions cannot be cleanly distinguished into moral and non-moral components. Though different communities can share equally coherent and so equally

justified (though mutually exclusive) understandings, criticism of another framework can be justified, but only when it can itself withstand criticism.

Moral Contextualism

According to common thought, social context plays an important role in determining a person's moral obligations, as we have particular obligations to family, friends, colleagues, and those we've promised. Contextualist theories of moral meaning, truth, and knowledge argue for various further roles. Walker 1987 describes how we develop "moral personas" by setting precedents, adopting roles, and sustaining choices over time, and the author takes such phenomena to undermine belief in the "universalizability" of moral obligations. Harman 1975 and Dreier 1990 focus on the role a person's commitments play in determining what she ought to do, and the authors reject fully categorical assignments of moral reasons and obligations on this basis. If someone doesn't tacitly accept an agreement to cooperate with others, it is not true that she ought to behave morally. In providing a context-sensitive semantics for moral terms, Unger 1996 describes how a single such term can vary in meaning. We use context to determine whether a morally useful term such as "good" is used to express a moral or non-moral concept, to get some sense of the ideal the speaker associates with it, and to judge how close someone must be to this ideal if she is to satisfy it. A man might be truly called "good" by a speaker contrasting him with his fellow capitalists and simultaneously truly described as "bad" by someone describing the hunger he could prevent with benevolence more general in scope. Beebe 2010, Brogaard 2008, and Capps, et al. 2009 similarly focus on the semantic role of context, with Brogaard 2008 investigating whether moral language differs in propositional content when used in different contexts or is, instead, used to make univocal claims that are nevertheless true relative to some contexts of evaluation and false relative to others. The wide-ranging treatment in Timmons 1998 describes both the semantic and epistemic roles of context. From a "detached" stance moral thoughts and utterances are not truth-evaluable, but they admit of truth and falsity from an "engaged" perspective. Moreover, the members of a moral community will be justified in assuming the immorality of certain things (e.g., lying and stealing) without inferential support, though members of different communities will have different justified assumptions, and a theorist aware of moral diversity and skepticism will not be justified in these same attitudes if she cannot answer trenchant challenges to them.

Beebe, James. "Moral Relativism in Context." *Noûs* 44.4 (2010): 691–724.

Beebe argues that semantic contextualism provides the most charitable interpretation of moral relativism. According to Beebe's semantics, the content and/or truth-value of "Stealing is immoral" depends upon interlocutors' attitudes and the alternatives to its truth salient in the contexts in which it is uttered or evaluated. It is false when speakers have the permissibility of theft to avoid starvation in mind, but true when no such alternative is salient.

Brogaard, Berit. "Moral Contextualism and Moral Relativism." *Philosophical Quarterly* 58 (2008): 385–409.

Brogaard distinguishes between "moral contextualism," on which "immoral" resembles indexicals such as "here," and "moral relativism," on which moral predicates do not vary in sense but the truth of the proposition they are used to assert is relativized to a context of assessment. She argues for the "perspectivalist" view that the sense of "immoral" is invariant but its extension depends on its context of use.

Capps, David, Michael P. Lynch, and Daniel Massey. "A Coherent Moral Relativism." *Synthese* 166.2 (2009): 413–430.

Capps, et al. argue that truth supervenes on a diverse set of properties; the truth of a moral judgment consists in its justified acceptance in the face of all possible evidence. A subject is justified in accepting a moral judgment if it augments the coherence of her beliefs and is true relative to her even if it isn't true relative to those whose beliefs it fails to render more coherent.

Dreier, J. "Internalism and Speaker Relativism." *Ethics* 101 (1990): 6–26.

Moral terms have a motivational character but acquire different contents in different contexts. "When a person with a moral system, M, says 'x is morally good,' . . . she is asserting that x has . . . the property of being rated highly by M. It follows . . . that when different speakers say 'x is morally good' they may be asserting of x that it has different natural properties, each determined by the speaker's own moral system" (pp. 9–10).

Harman, Gilbert. "Moral Relativism Defended." *Philosophical Review* 84 (1975): 3–22.

Though he allows that some moralities are better than others, Harman argues that the "logical form" of "inner judgments" of ought and right "makes sense" only when relativized to a tacit agreement among people in the way that judgments of large and small make sense only against

a comparison class. If we say that a Mafioso—not a party to the agreement—shouldn't kill strangers, we "misuse language."

Timmons, Mark. *Morality without Foundations*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. [ISBN: 9780195117318]

Timmons argues for a "minimalist" account of moral truth on which it does not consist in correspondence with moral facts but concord with natural facts and operative norms, along with a contextualist epistemic theory according to which ordinary moral thinkers are justified in utilizing norms even if they lack access to the arguments philosophers must employ to defend these norms from skeptical challenge.

Unger, Peter. *Living High and Letting Die*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996. [ISBN: 9780195075892]

See pp. 162–176. Unger defends a "multi-dimensional context-sensitive semantics for many morally useful sentences" (pp. 162–163). Within constraints (and subject to criticism), the context in which (e.g.) "Your behavior was all right" is used or understood determines whether "all right" is associated with a moral or non-moral standard, which ethical dimensions (e.g., motive or consequences) "count" in evaluating the relevant behavior, and how "close" to the standard it must be to render the sentence true (pp. 164–166).

Walker, Margaret Urban. "Moral Particularity." *Metaphilosophy* 18 (1987): 171–185.

Walker argues: "The acknowledgement of particulars as moral grounds can lead to situations where X ought morally to do A and Y ought morally to do B (or ought not morally to do A) even though X and Y find themselves in extremely similar circumstances" (p. 171). The differences between X and Y that explain this difference in obligation need not do so in a "universalizable" way.

The Reliability of Pre-theoretical Moral Judgment

Haidt 2001 argues that moral judgments typically have their source in visceral reactions such as disgust. We rarely use reasoning to figure out the truth on some moral issue; instead, we defend our intuitive—emotion-based—responses in the prejudicial manner in which an attorney defends her clients. On the basis of Haidt's results—and studies of the neurology of moral response—Singer 2005 argues that single case intuitions are less reliable than the "intuition" of those principles that entail utilitarianism. Sinnott-Armstrong 2011 agrees with Singer that many of our

moral beliefs are biased or false—and cites experimental evidence in support of this claim—though the author allows that we can correct for the more obvious forms of distortion without abandoning single case intuitions en masse. Similarly, Tersman 2008 criticizes Haidt and Singer for focusing on "gut feelings" rather than sophisticated intuitions, which are more promising guides to moral truth. Horgan and Timmons 2007, Kennett and Fine 2009, and Railton 2013 argue against Haidt 2001 and its contention that moral intuitions are not the products of intelligent thought. Though Horgan and Timmons 2007 allows that moral responses are typically not grounded in conscious inference, their "morphological rationalism" grants tacit knowledge of principles a causal role in shaping these responses. Kennett and Fine 2009 cites a number of studies—including Govorun and Payne 2006 and Amodio, et al. 2008—to argue that person-level background knowledge affects both the nature of our intuitive moral responses and the manner in which we process these responses in moving to a moral judgment. The authors affirm: "We may effortfully override judgments based on moral intuitions, discount moral emotions that we believe to be irrelevant or misplaced, and exert preconscious control such that the activated associations of our moral intuitions do not interfere with the processing of more relevant information . . . . This is best conceptualized as the preconscious influence of prior moral reasoning on the intuitive judgment link" (p. 93). Railton 2013 similarly concludes, "Our affective system is integral to our cognition and analysis of information, and while it is "automatic" it is not reflexive. It is a core part of our capacity to respond aptly to reasons—our *rationality*" (p. 38). And while Liao 2011 grants to Haidt 2001 its claim that the (conscious) reasoning we use to defend our moral judgments is conservative and driven by a desire for consensus, Liao denies that these are necessarily sources of bias or unreliability.

Amodio, D. M., P. G. Devine, and E. Harman. "Individual Differences in the Regulation of Intergroup Bias: The Role of Conflict Monitoring and Neural Signals for Control." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 94 (2008): 60–74.

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Govorun, O., and B. K. Payne. "Ego Depletion and Prejudice: Separating Automatic and Controlled Components." *Social Cognition* 24 (2006): 111–136.

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Haidt, Jonathan. "The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail: A Social Intuitionist Approach to Moral Judgment." *Psychological Review* 108 (2001): 814–834.

According to Haidt's "social intuitionist" model, moral judgments are typically generated by emotions—like revulsion at the thought of incest—rather than reasoning. We use reasoning to justify moral judgments when these conflict with the judgments of others, but our justifications are more prone to bias than reasoning in other domains. When people reason about morality they are more like attorneys building a case than scientists verifying a hypothesis.

Horgan, Terry, and Mark Timmons. "Morphological Rationalism and the Psychology of Moral Judgment." *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 10 (2007): 279–295.

Horgan and Timmons argue that "morphological rationalism" better fits the phenomenology of moral judgment than Haidt's social intuitionism. Moral principles are embodied in the "standing structure" of a person's mind and so causally shape her moral judgments without giving rise to conscious reasoning. The reasons we invoke to defend our moral judgments reflect the principles we tacitly cognize in this fashion. Justifications are not typically ad hoc rationalizations.

Kennett, J., and C. Fine. "Will the Real Moral Judgment Please Stand Up?" *Moral Theory and Ethical Practice* 12 (2009): 77–96.

Kennett and Fine review evidence that intuitive responses and controlled reasoning play an interactive role in the generation of moral judgments. We can prevent ourselves from experiencing prejudicial reactions we judge unreliable upon reflection or prevent reactions that persist in the face of our disavowals from guiding our consequent judgments. This capacity is essential to agency and explains why we do not hold children and animals fully responsible for their actions.

Liao, Matthew. "Bias and Reasoning: Haidt's Theory of Moral Judgment." In *New Waves in Ethics*. Edited by Thom Brooks, 108–127. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. [ISBN: 9780230232754]

Liao argues against Haidt's contention that moral reasoning is unduly biased. Liao defines "bias" in terms of epistemic justification—to reason in a biased way is to arrive at beliefs in an unjustified manner—and argues that the desire to cohere with one's standing beliefs and the opinions of one's friends needn't bias one's conclusions in this sense. The appearance of bias often results from justified differences in background belief.

Railton, Peter. "The Affective Dog and Its Rational Tail." *Ethics* (2013).

Railton describes an attorney modifying her summary in response to her intuitive realization that the jury is not responding to her arguments to argue that "system 1" intuitive processes are flexible, intelligent, and embody standing knowledge of how to manage interpersonal situations in an adaptaive manner. He states: "Because affect is the brain's principal way of representing value, "affective primacy" in perception suggests a natural psychological model for Aristotelian 'evaluative perception'" (p. 20).

Singer, Peter. "Ethics and Intuitions." *Journal of Ethics* 9 (2005): 331–352.

On the basis of Haidt's experiments revealing moral dumbfounding, Damasio's discussion of acquired psychopathy, and Greene's fMRI scans of responses to moral dilemmas, Singer argues that many moral intuitions have their origins in aversion to up close and personal harm that evolved in close-knit hunter-gatherer societies. These intuitions are less reliable than (e.g.) our "intuition" that the good of one human is no more valuable than the good of another.

Sinnott-Armstrong, Walter. "An Empirical Challenge to Moral Intuitionism." In *The New Intuitionism*. Edited by Jill Graper Hernandez, 11–28. London: Continuum, 2011. [ISBN: 9781441170828]

Sinnott-Armstrong draws upon empirical studies to argue that moral beliefs are often "distorted by partiality, emotion, context, wording, grammatical person, priming and lack of sleep" (p. 21). We cannot be justified in holding a moral belief without grounding it in some commitment to its lacking these distorting properties, but a belief that depends on this commitment for its justification is inferentially justified and so not an intuition.

Tersman, Folke. "The Reliability of Moral Intuitions: A Challenge from Neuroscience." *Australasian Journal of Philosop*hy 86 (2008): 389–405.

Tersman criticizes Singer for identifying intuitions with gut feelings rather than judgments about particular cases that are the products of reflection and rejects Singer's claim that the drive toward wide reflective equilibrium is a "vacuous" moral methodology on the grounds that reflective equilibrium is incompatible with both a foundationalist rejection of single case intuitions and a particularist rejection of general principles.

The Possibility of Theoretical Moral Knowledge

Schneewind 1991 describes historically important accounts of the relative merits of "folk" moral cognition and convictions shaped by moral theorizing. "Particularists" such as Dancy 2004 argue

that virtue requires doing what is right from one's knowledge that it is right, but such knowledge does not require (even tacit) knowledge of a theory or set of principles. Instead, virtue requires the "skill" of acquiring knowledge that a certain consideration favors or disfavors a certain action or attitude in a given context and a skill at "weighing" these reasons, or moving from them "to give an overall answer to the practical question of what is the thing to do." Knowledge of reasons for action is contingent but a priori. Dancy notes: "Particular cases can reveal to us facts about reasons, even if facts available to the senses are not acting as grounds for them. . In fact there doesn't seem to be a *method* of acquiring that sort of knowledge at all" (pp. 147–148). Lance and Little 2006 critiques Dancy's rejection of moral theory and argues that moral principles can (and should) provide some "check" on intuitions about cases. Copp 1995 agrees that verdicts about cases can be traced to moral principles, though the author distinguishes between theorists' epistemic assessment of these principles and everyday criticism of the individual judgments they shape. Jackson 1998 goes further to model everyday moral competence as tacit knowledge of a folk theory. Since moral properties are just whatever natural (or value-neutral) properties verify the principles that together comprise the most coherent form of this theory, augmenting coherence increases our grasp of moral reality. Boyd 1988, Ripstein 1987, and Tännsjö 1995 agree that moral theorizing is first and foremost an attempt to increase the coherence of folk moral beliefs and that greater coherence yields greater justification. Tännsjö 1995 argues that intuitions about cases must be brought into coherence with principles to be justly endorsed at all. Boyd 1988 argues that the development of morality over time is best explained by a realist construal of the needs and rights of individuals. It is because our diverse tacit folk moralities were approximately true that increases in their coherence have induced increasing convergence on core moral norms and individual protections. Finally, though the author embraces the project of constructing moral theories, Ripstein 1987 objects to foundationalist attempts to ground claims about the justice of social institutions in theories of rational choice that contain—often poorly masked—substantive normative presuppositions.

Boyd, Richard. "How to Be a Moral Realist." In *Essays on Moral Realism*. Edited by G. Sayre-McCord, 181–228. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988. [ISBN: 9780801495410]

Boyd argues that our intuitive verdicts about the moral goodness of actions and institutions result from both observation and the tacit acceptance of theories of goodness. Reflection on the development of morality over time yields good reason to think these tacit theories are

approximately true and that, in consequence, achieving reflective equilibrium between our intuitions and explicitly articulated theories of moral goodness can provide us with theoretical moral knowledge.

Copp, David. "Relativism, Realism, and Reasons." In *Morality, Normativity and Society*. By David Copp, 218–246. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995. [ISBN: 9780195078794]

Copp argues that our ordinary moral beliefs are typically justified and that they can be justified even if we rely (when forming or defending them) on the assumption of invalid or unjustified social norms. So long as we have no salient evidence that a widely accepted norm is unjustified, we can rely on that norm to form justified moral beliefs about cases and further principles.

Dancy, Jonathan. "Knowing Reasons." In *Ethics without Principles*. By Jonathan Dancy, 140–161. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. [ISBN: 9780199270026]

In the course of arguing for a moral metaphysics on which there are no context-independent general normative truths, Dancy addresses how we know what we ought to do in particular circumstances. We have non-inferential knowledge of the contingent fact that a certain consideration is a reason for doing something in a given context that is not grounded in sense experience. He affirms: "Our skills in reason discernment are not rule based" (p. 142).

Jackson, Frank. *From Metaphysics to Ethics*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1998. [ISBN: 9780198236184]

The task of "moral functionalism" is to construct a "coherent theory out of folk morality, respecting as much as possible those parts that we find most appealing, to form mature folk morality," where maturity is best achieved by "debate and critical reflection." We must start with folk morality, "otherwise we start from somewhere unintuitive, and that can hardly be a good place to start from" (pp. 134–135).

Lance, Mark, and Margaret Little. "Particularism and Antitheory." In *The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory*. Edited by David Copp, 567–594. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006. [ISBN: 9780195147797]

Lance and Little describe the various "particularist" doctrines advanced by those who reject the existence or importance of "classical moral principles" (p. 570). They conclude that even if defeasible generalizations and intuitions about particular cases are "inextricably intertwined," generalizations can "often be developed with some degree of independence . . . exert leverage

on one's commitments about particular instances . . . and stand as serious epistemic checks on one's other moral intuitions" p. (592).

Ripstein, Arthur. "Foundationalism in Political Theory." *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 16.2 (Spring 1987): 115–137.

Taking Hobbes as his stalking horse, Ripstein argues against "foundationalist" attempts to justify adopting certain laws or institutions without making controversial moral assumptions. Interpretive rationality is inescapable but insufficient to justify anything; prudential rationality must be invoked and a skeptic can reject its value. He notes: "Nothing can both be safe from the skeptic and carry weight in justification" (p. 133). Generally, contractualist approaches to justifying political arrangements assume the value of autonomy.

Schneewind, J. B. "Natural Law, Skepticism and Methods of Ethics." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 52.2 (1991): 289–308.

Schneewind describes how theorists from Hobbes to Kant wrestled with the relation between common moral judgment and theoretical methods for determining obligation. To hold people responsible for transgressions we must allow that they know when they're acting immorally despite their ignorance of theory. Montaigne and the British moralists were skeptical about theory. In contrast, Kant's categorical imperative describes the rationale behind common thought and is also useful for "explicit guidance."

Tännsjö, Torbjörn. "In Defense of Theory in Ethics." *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 25.4 (1995) 571–593.

Tännsjö criticizes the particularist doctrines of McDowell 1979, ("Virtue and Reason," *The Monist*, 62, 3, pp. 331-350), Dancy 1993 (Jonathan Dancy, *Moral Reasons* [Oxford: Blackwell]), and Jonsen and Toulmin 1988 (Albert Jonsen and Stephen Toumin, *The Abuse of Casuistry* [Berkeley: University of California Press])on the grounds that coherence is necessary for epistemic justification and the moral beliefs of self-avowed particularists lack coherence. He affirms: "Rather than having resort to particularism, if we find that all known moral principles seem to be flawed, we ought to continue to look for better principles" (p. 573).

Reflective Equilibrium

Rawls 1971 defends a contractualist theory of justice because it "better approximates" our "considered judgments" than do its utilitarian and intuitionistic rivals, where our considered

judgments are "those judgments in which our moral capacities are most likely to be displayed without distortion" (p. 47). We achieve the best overall conception of justice by moving back and forth between our considered judgments, general principles that can be extracted from them, and background theories of the person, social stability, and flourishing so as to arrive at "reflective equilibrium." The author of Daniels 1996 collects his papers endorsing Rawls's methodology with qualifications. He rejects Rawls's comparison between moral and linguistic theory on the grounds that moral intuitions are more malleable than intuitions of grammaticality, and he denies that moral intuitions are comparable to sense perceptions because only the latter are caused by the facts they represent. Though we must be open to the possibility that our particular moral judgments are prejudiced or demonstrably unreliable, we arrive at a worse theory if we discount them altogether, and coherence with well-supported theories of human nature, rational decision, and social stability—which have themselves sustained critical review—further augments the justification with which one endorses a settled moral view. Against Daniels, Holmgren 1989 argues that moral views held in "wide" reflective equilibrium because consciously integrated with social science are not necessarily more justified or more likely to constitute knowledge than beliefs held in "narrow" equilibrium. In a similar vein, Freeman 2007 argues that Rawls thought morality "autonomous" in that knowledge of science and conceptual analysis radically underdetermine an extremely diverse set of rationally acceptable ethical views. Kelly and McGrath 2010 argues that Rawls attempted to avoid moral realism by providing a morally neutral conception of considered judgment. In contrast, Mikhail 2011 argues that considered judgments are supposed to be limited to the outputs of our sense of justice and disagrees with Daniels in endorsing Rawls's comparison of a theory of this capacity with cognitive scientific accounts of our linguistic faculties. Morris 1996 rejects Rawls's methodology for using antecedent moral constraints to specify the contractualist procedure for determining acceptable principles of distributive justice and articulates an alternative "morally unconstrained" contractualist view that—like Gauthier 1986 —invokes norms of rational choice to justify the particulars of the social contract, but not distinctively moral norms. Singer 1974 argues that Sidgwick's intuitionist methodology is superior to attaining reflective equilibrium because less conservative.

Daniels, Norman. *Justice and Justification: Reflective Equilibrium in Theory and Practice*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996. [ISBN: 9780521467117]

Daniels collects his seminal publications on reflective equilibrium in which he rejects Rawls's comparison between moral and linguistic theory and denies that moral intuitions are comparable to sense perceptions but resists debunking explanations that attribute considered moral judgments to brute enculturation. Throughout, Daniels argues that achieving "wide" reflective equilibrium by engaging with the best work in social science yields a view with greater epistemic justification than a more "narrow" equilibrium.

Freeman, Samuel. "Introduction." In *Rawls*. By Samuel Freeman, 1–42. London: Routledge, 2007. [ISBN: 9780415301084]

Freeman explains Rawls's concept of reflective equilibrium as the goal of reasonable attempts to justify the use and advocacy of principles of social justice in contrast with the epistemic doctrine endorsed by Goodman and views on which the principles we are uniquely justified in adopting can be determined through some combination of conceptual analysis and science. A number of different moral conceptions are compatible with science and analysis.

Gauthier, David. *Morals By Agreement*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

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Holmgren, Margaret. "The Wide and Narrow of Reflective Equilibrium." *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 19 (1989): 43–60.

Holmgren rejects Daniels's claim that moral beliefs that cohere with social scientific theories of human nature and social stability—resulting in wide reflective equilibrium—are better justified than beliefs held in narrow equilibrium. The bearing of non-moral theories on moral claims is always mediated by the acceptance of a non-moral-to-moral bridge principle, which can be evaluated from within the perspective afforded by narrow equilibrium. Neither approach is univocally preferable.

Kelly, Thomas, and Sara McGrath. "Is Reflective Equilibrium Enough?" *Philosophical Perspectives Epistemology* 24.1 (2010): 325–359.

Kelly and McGrath argue that Rawls allows that "one is morally required to occasionally kill randomly" (p. 347) might figure among a person's considered judgments. On this basis, they argue that the employment of the methods Rawls prescribes for attaining reflective equilibrium needn't augment the justification or reasonableness of one's moral beliefs. Unless the considered judgments from which we reason meet independent constraints, coherence will not yield justification.

Mikhail, John. “Part 3: Objections and Replies.” In *Elements of Moral Cognition*. By John Mikhail, 183–306. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011. [ISBN: 9780521855785]

Mikhail argues that Rawls attributed our considered judgments about justice to a “sense” of justice and that moral philosophers can and should use the techniques employed by linguists and other cognitive scientists to investigate this faculty. He bases his reading on Rawls’s assertion that the “provisional aim” of moral philosophy should be the “attempt to describe our moral capacity” by “describing our sense of justice” (p. 184).

Morris, Christopher. “A Contractarian Account of Moral Justification.” In *Moral Knowledge? New Readings in Moral Epistemology*. Edited by Walter Sinnott-Armstrong and Mark Timmons, 215–242. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996. [ISBN: 9780195089899]

Morris rejects Rawls’s contractualist theory of justice for placing antecedent moral constraints on the kind of contract that can be used to identify the principles of justice in favor of an unconstrained doctrine that he articulates. The norms of justice must be constructed or legislated because, as Hobbes claimed, there is “want of a right reason constituted by nature at least with regard to justice” (p. 229).

Rawls, John. *A Theory of Justice*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971. [ISBN: 9780674880108]

Rawls defends a contractualist theory of justice on the grounds that it “better approximates” our “considered judgments” than do its utilitarian and intuitionistic rivals and that it therefore constitutes the most “appropriate moral basis” for a democratic society (pp. 23–24). An adequate overall conception of justice is best derived by mutually adjusting our considered judgments, general principles that can be extracted from them, and social scientific theories to arrive at “reflective equilibrium.”

Singer, Peter. “Sidgwick and Reflective Equilibrium.” *The Monist* 58.3 (1974): 490–513.

Singer argues that Rawls’s description of the methods we should employ to reach reflective equilibrium is supposed to supply a “definition” of “validity” as it is applied to moral theories and therefore excludes (a priori) the possibility that we have intuitive knowledge of various self-evident moral principles. Sidgwick’s intuitionist methodology is superior to that of Rawls. Because intuitionism is less closely tied to folk morality, it has greater normative potential.

Moral Expertise and Deference

Children unquestionably require proper instruction to reach moral maturity, but post-enlightenment moral theorists have questioned whether there is something problematic in the idea of "moral expertise" and the deference of presumably autonomous adults to the views of those "wise" on moral matters. Anscombe 1981 argues that children do not have an obligation to believe what their caregivers tell them; they have an obligation only to believe the truth. Nevertheless, fallible teachers of values and other matters have the right that those they teach "should be generally prepared to believe their teachers." Since generalities such as "to do good and avoid doing harm; not to do what will get you disrepute; not to do what will make you poorer; not to take other people's property" are utilized in action and training, and since various theoretical questions can be raised about these generalities—e.g., whether they are true or false, right or wrong; what exceptions (if any) they allow; and exactly how they should be applied in a given circumstance—deference to the authority of experts on certain matters is compatible with the essentially practical point of morality and the applied essence of moral learning (pp. 47–48). Anscombe nevertheless rejects the idea of moral understanding that is "per se" inaccessible to rational adults. Driver 2006 similarly argues that there is nothing inherently wrong in trusting others on moral matters. To determine whether someone is a moral expert we must figure out whether she reliably reaches the truth on moral matters, has good reasoning skills, and is relatively impartial regarding the matter at hand. Baier 1992 and Jones 1996 provide complex conceptual analyses of what it is to trust another and the conditions under which we think this affective-cognitive-conative attitude is warranted. Baier and Jones 1999 argue that trust is often necessary for well-grounded moral judgment because an individual's experience is unavoidably parochial and can therefore benefit from the insights of others. Jones concludes: "Through trusting, [someone] can come to have moral knowledge that would otherwise be inaccessible to her" (p. 26). Conversely, Hills 2011 argues that praiseworthy action must proceed from the kind of moral understanding incompatible with deference to the views of others, and McGrath 2009 and McGrath 2011 argue that our discomfort with moral deference is best explained by the constructed nature of moral reality and the difficulty (if not impossibility) of acquiring convincing evidence that someone is a better moral judge than oneself.

Anscombe, G. E. M. “Authority in Morals.” In *Ethics, Religion, and Politics*. By G. E. M. Anscombe, 43–50. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981. [ISBN: 9780816610822]

Anscombe distinguishes between “per se” and “per accidens” moral revelation. One can accept from an authority that one oughtn’t hit disobedient children, but the revelation is only “per accidens,” as the decision to act on the expert’s advice is ultimately one’s own and the expert must be thought to have grounds that are in principle “discoverable by reason’s unaided investigation” (p. 49). There is no such thing as “per se” moral revelation.

Baier, Annette. *Tanner Lectures on Human Values*. Vol. 13. Edited by Grethe B. Peterson. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1992.

Baier’s writing on trust begins with an analysis of its affective, cognitive, and conative components and the conditions under which trust is rational, though Baier is skeptical of attempts to formulate “valid” general moral principles dictating when trust is appropriate. She argues that trust is intrinsically good, but that the goals and terms of a trusting relationship must be just for it to be good on the whole.

Driver, Julia. “Autonomy and the Asymmetry Problem for Moral Expertise.” *Philosophical Studies* 128.3 (2006): 619–644.

The autonomy problem is to explain why we accept aesthetic experts but not moral experts even though most of us think that morality is more objective than beauty. Driver rejects answers that posit an obligation to distinguish right from wrong on one’s own. We demand more evidence of moral than aesthetic expertise because justice is more important to us than beauty—were it not, the asymmetry would disappear.

Hills, Alison. “Moral Epistemology.” In *New Waves in Metaethics*. Edited by Michael Brady, 249–63. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. [ISBN: 9780230251618]

Hills sets out to explain why we think mature individuals can take advice on moral matters but should not defer to the moral opinions of others. She concludes that we value moral understanding over mere knowledge of right and wrong, and we think morally estimable action must be motivated by such understanding.

Jones, Karen. “Trust as an Affective Attitude.” *Ethics* 107.1 (October 1996): 4–25.

Interpersonal trust “is an attitude of optimism that the goodwill and competence of another will extend to cover the domain of our interaction with her, together with the expectation that the

one trusted will be directly and favorably moved by the thought that we are counting on her" (p. 4). Since distrust is a reliable indicator of untrustworthiness, one person can be justifiably suspicious of another without on-balance support from her total evidence.

Jones, Karen. "Second-Hand Moral Knowledge." *Journal of Philosophy* 96.2 (1999): 55–78.

Testimony might seem to be ultimately unnecessary for virtue because we should evaluate the moral principles we accept, moral ignorance does not exculpate the misdeeds of rational adults, and the rationale behind moral generalizations must be internalized to apply them correctly. But Jones uses the case of a liberal man who should trust women in his co-op regarding the subtle sexism of applicants to argue that these appearances are misleading.

McGrath, Sarah. "The Puzzle of Pure Moral Deference." *Philosophical Perspectives* 23.1 (2009): 321–344.

McGrath argues that the problem with moral deference is that there are no objective standards of reliable moral judgment. Someone with a poor sense of direction can know that she should defer to those better at navigation; but someone with poor moral judgment can't have good evidence of her deficit, so it will be irrational for her to defer to others even if they are (objectively) better moral judges than she.

McGrath, Sarah. "Skepticism about Moral Expertise as a Puzzle for Moral Realism." *Journal of Philosophy* 108.3 (2011): 111–137.

McGrath argues that our discomfort with moral deference is a point against moral realism because it is not "contingent" in the manner it would be were its explanation fully epistemic. The best explanation of why we criticize deference on the premises of moral arguments as well as their conclusions, and criticize deference on matters that are not directly germane to acting or voting, is that morality is constructed and not discovered.

Feminist Approaches to Moral Epistemology

Feminists are united in the active goal of mitigating both bias against women and blindness to the concerns of women. Referencing Anderson 1995, Haslanger 1999 cites a number of areas in which "our actual knowledge attributions and practices of authorization privilege men and help sustain sexist and racist institutions" (p. 462). Acceptance rates for papers by women increase when sex is not revealed to referees; teachers treat men and boys as more capable than women and girls in the kinds of questions they ask; certain research methods are coded as "masculine"

and valued more highly than others coded as "feminine" even when there is no demonstration of the greater value or success of the former in comparison to the latter; theories that affirm the "naturalness" of current sex roles are more quickly endorsed than evidence warrants; and a great deal of "outright sexism" remains in research communities. Anderson 1995 and Baier 1994 argue further that feminist moral epistemologies emphasize the construction of minds evident to mothers and the importance of love and support (in contrast with justice) in creating people capable of acquiring and deploying moral knowledge. Code 1991 highlights the mutual understanding upon which friendships are built as the paradigm of moral knowledge, and Baier 1994 similarly argues that a feminist moral epistemology would grant trust a more central role than obligation. Feminist epistemologists also tend to reject traditional dichotomies between fact and value, reason and feeling, and subjectivity and objectivity. Alcoff 1996 argues on this basis for a coherence theory of knowledge and truth. Anderson 1995, Walker 1998, Jaggar 2000, and Calhoun 2004 reject hasty abstraction in favor of attention to the real social interactions that produce or subvert various kinds of knowledge and argue that feminist epistemologists generally endorse this "naturalized" approach. Code 1991 exemplifies the methodology with case studies of nurses and psychiatric patients who are denied the authority inherent in knowledge claims by doctors and administrators. Haslanger 1999 also finds feminist approaches focused on "how rituals of authorization create and sustain self-affirming ideological communities." She asks whether we can isolate a politically unproblematic concept of knowledge—and its associated truth conditions—so as to assign politically problematic features of the use of "knows" to its utterance conditions or pragmatics (narrowly construed). Walker 1998 finds the desired ideal in a moral community that is both self-aware and stable because it approves of the moral understandings it embodies and is sufficiently flexible to adjust its ethic when desirable.

Alcoff, Linda Martin. *Real Knowing: New Versions of the Coherence Theory*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996. [ISBN: 9780801430473]

Drawing on a diverse body of work from Gadamer and Foucault to Davidson and Putnam, Alcoff argues that traditional epistemologists have been biased by their race, gender, and class in favor of foundationalist approaches to knowledge and justified belief. Due consideration to the kinds of knowledge acquired by women, nonwhites, and working class people yields a form of coherentism about both rationality and truth.

Anderson, Elizabeth. “Feminist Epistemology: An Interpretation and Defense.” *Hypatia* 10 (1995): 50–84.

Anderson argues that because men have dominated epistemology as a discipline, accepted theories have placed greater value on impersonal theoretical knowledge than the personal knowledge and know-how acquired in child care, and that this has led to a distortion in our understanding of knowledge in general. Feminism isn’t anti-science. It improves our understanding of science by embracing a naturalistic account of the reasoning and social interactions in which it consists.

Baier, Annette. *Moral Prejudices.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994. [ISBN: 9780674587151]

Baier argues that moral thinking is not gendered but that female moral theorists—such as Foot, Anscombe, Murdoch, Wolf, Card, Lovibond, Held, and Jaggar—share a perspective and set of concerns. Standard liberalism cannot offer an adequate theory of the loving parenting necessary to transmit a concern for justice across generations. An adequate moral theory would make the concept of trust more central than that of obligation.

Calhoun, Cheshire, ed. *Setting the Moral Compass: Essays by Women Philosophers*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. [ISBN: 9780195154740]

Calhoun collects nineteen essays by female philosophers unified by their “inventive realism.” The outsider status of women has augmented the “realism” of moral theory by allowing women to identify overlooked moral phenomena, distorted notions of rationality, and the parochial interests of those advancing universalist normative theories. Feminist work is “inventive” because more open to narrative and less beholden to academic idioms and forms of expression than is standard.

Code, Lorraine. *What Can She Know? Feminist Theory and the Construction of Knowledge*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991. [ISBN: 9780801424762]

Code argues against gender-biased biology that views women as intellectually inferior and egalitarian parenting arrangements as socially impossible. Engaging with case studies of misogyny in medicine, psychiatry, and social services, Code shows how feminists can improve academic epistemology by focusing on the role friendship, mutual acknowledgment, and nonvisual forms of perception play in generating ecological knowledge that belies traditional dichotomies of fact versus value and subjective versus objective.

Haslanger, Sally. “What Knowledge Is and What It Ought to Be: Feminist Values and Normative Epistemology.” *Philosophical Perspectives, 13, Epistemology* (1999): 459–480.

Haslanger argues that “something is epistemically valuable if it is a cognitive disposition, ability, or achievement that figures in a kind of (moral, autonomous) agency that is intrinsically good” (p. 471). We ought to value truth because it is a constitutive value of belief. She affirms: “Questions of value are already implicit in traditional epistemological debates. . . and feminist work on the self, agency, and on social/political values can fruitfully inform and engage these debates” (p. 473).

Jaggar, Alison. “Ethics Naturalized: Feminism’s Contribution to Moral Epistemology.” *Metaphilosophy* 31.5 (2000): 452–468.

Feminist moral philosophy attempts to identify and challenge bias against women and their concerns, but Jaggar argues that it is also characteristically “naturalist” or explicitly integrated with psychology and related sciences. She affirms: “Because all agents are limited and fallible, feminists generally conceptualize moral rationality as a process that is collaborative rather than individual and its conclusions as partial, situated, and provisional rather than universal or absolute” (p. 463).

Walker, Margaret Urban. *Moral Understandings: A Feminist Study in Ethics*. New York: Routledge, 1998. [ISBN: 9780415914208]

Walker criticizes traditional epistemology for its undue formalism, pretentions to objectivity, emphasis on justice, blindness to the cooperative nature of science, and its assumption that science is the only knowledge. Her “expressive-collaborative” alternative emphasizes the role played by linguistic practices (of excuse, condemnation, and approval), exemplars, and various modes of reasoning in enabling social coping by rendering us intelligible to one another, extending agreements, and mitigating conflicts.

Moral Skill or Know-How

Plato considers whether virtue is a skill like medical expertise: an analogy defended at length in Annas 2011. Kamtekar 2013 traces the subsequent debate—over the kind of knowledge one needs to have a virtuous character and reliably perform praiseworthy actions—through the Stoics and beyond. Plato equated real virtue with knowledge of what to do acquired from reflecting on the nature of courage, temperance, justice and, their respective roles in a choice-worthy life. But

Aristotle denied both the necessity and the sufficiency of such knowledge for virtue. Incomplete forms of the virtues can be acquired in childhood via habituation without explicit reflection, and the merely continent man who controls his inappropriate emotions or appetites to do what he knows is right lacks full virtue. Anscombe 2000 agrees with Aristotle that intentional action requires some practical knowledge. To act (e.g.) benevolently, one must intentionally help others, but to *intentionally* benefit B, A must act from A's *knowledge* that A is benefiting B. However, the intended act needn't be conceptualized as morally good. A Nazi might knowingly "kill off Jewish children" from the premise that "it befits a Nazi, if he must die, to spend his last hour exterminating Jews" (p. 76). The account in Driver 2001 is radically anti-intellectualist. Huck Finn frees Jim from sympathy (a virtue) though Huck doesn't believe (or know) that he is acting well. According to Driver, modesty, blind charity, impulsive courage, and trust actually require an agent's ignorance of the desirable features of her actions. Driver states: "With modesty, not only does the agent act without knowing he is modest, the agent doesn't even realize that he is underestimating himself" (p. 25). Swanton 2003 develops a fully contextualist view of the virtues and the criteria we employ in judging traits virtues. We judge a trait a virtue when we think it supplies a "good enough" response to various people, things, and situations. Ryle 2000 equates moral knowledge with social skill at interacting with others so as to achieve one's goals and is skeptical of Aristotle's distinction between phronesis and the kind of cleverness bad men can have, whereas Snow 2010 distinguishes phronesis from cleverness via different affective dispositions. In contrast, Annas 2011 and Russell 2009 argue that phronesis differs from cleverness by incorporating both: (a) general "specificatory" knowledge of the ends and acts that are good for us, and (b) the ability to determine which actions accord with this good in any given context.

Annas, Julia. *Intelligent Virtue*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. [ISBN: 9780199228782]

> Virtues are complex skills, which (unlike habits) require focused intelligence for their exercise and an articulable awareness of the reasons justifying a given action in a given context. Though "natural virtue" doesn't require domain-neutral intelligence, "Full, proper virtue requires that our natural dispositions be formed and guided by practical intelligence, which functions holistically over the person's life, integrating lessons from the mixed and complex situations that we are standardly faced with" (p. 89).

Anscombe, G. E. M. *Intention*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000. [ISBN: 9780674003996]

Anscombe defends Aquinas's view that speculative knowledge is "derived from the causes known" whereas practical knowledge is the "cause of what it understands" (p. 87). Anscombe notes: "It is the agent's knowledge of what he is doing that gives the descriptions under which what is going on is the execution of an intention" (ibid). These descriptions pick out some characteristic of the action under which it is desired or thought good by the agent. Originally published in 1957.

Driver, Julia. *Uneasy Virtue*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001. [ISBN: 9780521034067]

Driver argues that a character trait is a virtue in a given context if it "systematically produces a preponderance of good . . . consequences" in that context (p. 60). Some virtues (e.g., modesty) actually require ignorance (e.g., of one's own worth). Virtuous action as such does not require knowledge of the reasons justifying that action, though knowledge of reasons will help someone retain her virtue in the wake of environmental changes.

Kamtekar, Rachana. "Ancient Virtue Ethics: An Overview with an Emphasis on Practical Wisdom." In *The Cambridge Companion to Virtue Ethics*. Edited by D. C. Russell, 29–48. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013. [ISBN: 9781107001169]

Kamektar reviews the evolution of views on the relation between wisdom and eudaimonia from Plato through Aristotle, the Epicureans, and the Stoics. Plato thought knowledge of the definitions of the virtues and their place in a happy life necessary for eudaimonia and sufficient for virtue, but Aristotle allows that a merely continent man with inappropriate appetites, emotions, or habits might lack virtue despite his understanding of what is best for him.

Russell, Daniel. *Practical Intelligence and the Virtues*. Oxford: Clarendon, 2009. [ISBN: 9780199565795]

Russell equates phronesis (practical intelligence) with the ability to "specify the content of virtuous ends" (e.g., what courage would amount to in the agent's context) and determine the best means to their realization, and he argues: "There can be an adequate tie between the notion of virtue and that of right action . . . only if phronesis is part of every virtue, since reliably finding a right action requires deliberative skill and excellence" (preface, p. x).

Ryle, Gilbert. *The Concept of Mind*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012. [ISBN: 9781299760202]

Ryle compares moral knowledge to the knowledge of engineers, grammatical speakers, and those skilled at chess or whist. It is a kind of skill that requires prior intellectual development. He affirms: "Moral knowledge, if the strained phrase is to be used at all, is knowing how to behave in certain sorts of situations in which the problems are neither theoretical nor merely technical" (p. 316). Originally published in 1949.

Snow, Nancy. *Virtue as Social Intelligence*. New York: Routledge, 2010. [ISBN: 9780415999090]

Drawing on the personality theories of Mischel and Yoda, and Cator and Kihlstrom's work on the distinction between academic and social intelligence, Snow defends the existence of relatively stable cognitive-affective units that generate an agent's response to social opportunities and problems. An agent's interpretation is affected by her temperament, dispositions, and history. Goldie's analysis is used to distinguish virtues from other forms of social intelligence by their component motivations (see Peter Goldie, *On Personality* [London: Routledge, 2004]).

Swanton, Christine. *Virtue Ethics: A Pluralistic View*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. [ISBN: 9780199253883]

A virtue is a disposition to acknowledge or respond to feelings, ideas, situations, people, and things in a "good enough" way, where what is "good enough" depends on the context of evaluation (pp. 198–211). The interconnected modes of responsiveness (e.g., promoting, honoring, appreciating) that constitute a virtue's "profile" are many, as are the "bases" of virtuous response (value, status, goodness, and bonds) that supply the "demands of the world" (pp. 101–102).

Moral and Mathematical Knowledge

Moral rationalists, including Samuel Clarke, compare moral to mathematical knowledge (Clarke 1738). We use our senses to establish (e.g.) the lengths of things but then directly infer which things are equal in length. Similarly, we use our senses to establish that someone has helped us, but reason alone to infer that gratitude is the fitting response. Gill 2007 surveys the comparison's history and argues that it is not entirely apt. Macnamara 1991 endorses Hilbert's account of

basic mathematical cognition and uses it to advance a similar model of moral thought. The basic principles of geometry articulate our implicit knowledge of space. Geometrical concepts are then altered by logically permissible extensions and modifications. Basic moral prohibitions articulate our implicit knowledge of social reality; moral concepts are then altered by logical extensions and theories. Nagel 1979 concurs. Moral theorists have as little need as mathematicians for biological theories of the foundations of the type of cognition they seek to advance. Scanlon 1998 argues that philosophical reflection on mathematics and morality gives rise to a similar challenge: to find an analysis of the target facts commensurate with our knowledge of them. The best response is constructivist: to equate right actions with those permitted by norms that no one can reasonably reject. Fine 2001 and Schecter 2010 defend the importance of meeting a similar "reliability challenge" and the consequent distinction between realist and non-realist accounts of moral and mathematical reality. Schecter thinks natural selection can explain the reliability of natural deduction without sacrificing the objectivity of logical truths but rejects a similar explanation of reliable cognition of purportedly objective morals. However, Clarke-Doane 2012 argues that logic may be special. To assess whether moral cognition might have conferred a fitness advantage without reliably tracking the moral facts, we must imagine scenarios in which the moral facts were very different, but our (actual) moral beliefs still enhanced fitness. If we can coherently imagine this, we can coherently imagine a world in which the mathematical facts were very different, but our mathematical beliefs were nevertheless fitness enhancing. But if the actual (first-order) logical facts are held fixed, were 1+1=0 we would still benefit from acting on the assumption that 1+1=2. Clark-Doane affirms: "The argument that we would not be selected to have true moral beliefs shows equally that we would not be selected to have true mathematical beliefs" (p. 338).

Clarke, Samuel. "A Discourse Concerning the Unchangeable Obligations of Natural Religion." In *A Deomstration of the Being and Attributes of God: And Other Writings*. Edited by Ezio Vailati, 147–150. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Clarke states: "For a Man endued with Reason, to deny the Truth of [basic moral principles] is the very same thing . . . as if a Man that understands Geometry or Arithmetick, should deny the most obvious and known Proportions of Lines or Numbers, and perversely contend that the Whole is not equal to all its parts, or that a Square is not double to a triangle of equal base and height" (p. 179). Originally published in 1738.

Clarke-Doane, Justin. "Morality and Mathematics: The Evolutionary Challenge." *Ethics* 122.2 (2012): 313–340.

According to Clarke-Doane, if we can coherently imagine scenarios in which the moral facts are different but our fitness is nevertheless still enhanced by our moral beliefs, we can coherently imagine a world in which the mathematical facts are different, but our fitness is nevertheless enhanced by our mathematical beliefs, so long as the (first-order) logical facts are held fixed. Moral and mathematical realism must stand or fall together.

Fine, Kit. "The Question of Realism." *Philosopher's Imprint* 1.2 (2001): 1–30.

Fine argues that the debate between realist and anti-realist accounts of morality and mathematics is intractable unless construed in terms of what *grounds* the target facts and practices. Anti-realists assert and realists deny that we can explain moral truths and practices without using moral terms. He infers: "The question of whether or not to be a factualist is therefore the question of whether or not to adopt a representational account of what grounds our practice" (p. 24).

Gill, Michael. "Moral Rationalism v. Moral Sentimentalism: Is Morality More Like Math or Beauty?" *Philosophy Compass* 2.1 (2007): 16–30.

Gill describes how Cudworth, Clarke, and Balguy compared moral to mathematical judgment to explicate morality's origin in reasoning and its purported objectivity: Arithmetical and moral principles are equally self-evident. In contrast, Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, and Hume compared moral to aesthetic judgment to explain its motivational force and connection to emotion. Gill concludes that we should probably split the difference, as moral experience is heterogeneous.

Macnamara, John. "The Development of Moral Reasoning and the Foundations of Geometry." *Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior* 21.2 (1991): 125–150.

Macnamara endorses Hilbert's account of mathematical practice: mathematicians (e.g., Euclid) "make explicit" the ideal elements implicit in ordinary sensory cognition of space, but alter arithmetic thought by introducing novel elements (e.g., extensionless points) (see David Hilbert, *The Foundations of Geometry* [Chicago: Open Court, 1902]). Kohlberg's 1981 methodology is criticized for failing to make explicit the analogous origins of common moral thought (see Lawrence Kohlberg, *The Philosophy of Moral Development* [San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981]). Brentano's account, which begins with intuitions of the fittingness of

love and hate, is superior in this regard (see Brentano 1969, cited under *Desires as Intuitions of Value of Reasons*).

Nagel, Thomas. "Ethics without Biology." In *Mortal Questions*. By Thomas Nagel, 142–146. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1979. [ISBN: 9780521223607]

Nagel argues against apparent asymmetries between ethics and mathematics in regard to universality and disagreement. We begin math and ethics with intuitive beliefs about numbers and values that have a biological explanation, but progress comes from criticizing and extending these beliefs using our combined intellectual resources. The differences are that ethical instruction shapes motivation more than mathematics and theoretical mathematics is currently more advanced than theoretical ethics.

Scanlon, Thomas. *What We Owe to Each Other*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998. [ISBN: 9780674950894]

See especially pp. 64–72. Scanlon endorses the analogy between mathematics and morality. In each case, philosophers must find an analysis of the target facts that explains our knowledge of them. An identification of right action with action permitted by rules or norms no one could reasonably reject meets this desideratum. To feel an obligation is to realize that acting is required by a rule to which people can reasonably insist one adhere.

Schecter, Joshua. "The Reliability Challenge and the Epistemology of Logic." *Philosophical Perspectives* 24 (2010): 437–464.

Schecter defends the importance of explaining the reliability of our basic mechanisms of deductive inference without abandoning belief in the objectivity (or practice-independence) of logical truths. After rejecting rational intuition and the necessity of reliability for concept possession, he embraces an evolutionary account. Reliable deduction persisted because it enhanced reproductive fitness. He concludes that an analogous explanation of the reliability of basic forms of moral inference is unpromising.

Decision under Moral Uncertainty

Deliberators often do not know the differing consequences their various prospective courses of action will have. Hudson 1989 therefore argues that utilitarians must advise us to maximize "expected" utility if they are to give us advice we can directly put to use. But what if an agent is certain of the value-neutral facts relevant to her decision but nevertheless uncertain as to which

course of action is right because she is uncertain about which moral principle is paramount or which moral theory true? Oddie 1994 recommends maximizing the overall expected "goodness or value" of our actions in such circumstances. We should estimate the "real chances" that various morally relevant features will obtain should we x and multiply this with our estimate of the "real value" of these features. Performing x is "morally justified" if its expected value is at least as high as that of any available alternative, even if x turns out to be wrong. Hudson 1989 rejects this view as requiring impossible inter-theoretic comparisons of the value of (e.g.) pleasure and self-realization. Lockhart 2000, however, defends the practice at great length. If I am certain x is wrong, somewhat confident that y is right, but certain that z is right, Lockhart argues I should z. Choosing to y would be objectionably risky, even if y and z are both permissible. Lockhart concludes, "Ethicists should recommend the 'no abortion' alternative for the vast majority of women" (p. 54). Guerrero 2007 argues for a similar (albeit nonquantitative) "Don't Know, Don't Kill" principle and applies it to the morality of killing animals for their meat, driving a car, and other risky matters. Ross 2006 argues that the relevant decision-theoretic norms preclude us from acting on nihilism and other "deflationist" moral theories unless we are certain of their truth and proposes that a theory is more pro tanto acceptable to the degree that it posits a greater difference in value between an agent's best and average options. Sepielli 2009 tries to improve on Ross's recipe for measuring expected value in the face of moral uncertainty.

Guerrero, Alexander A. "Don't Know, Don't Kill: Moral Ignorance, Culpability and Caution." *Philosophical Studies* 136 (2007): 59–97.

Guerrero employs the case of someone eating a pig to argue against the thesis that we can't act immorally from non-culpable ignorance. "If someone knows that she doesn't know whether a living organism has significant moral status or not, it is morally blameworthy for her to kill that organism or to have it killed, unless she believes that there is something of substantial moral significance compelling her to do so" (pp. 78–79).

Hudson, James. "Subjectivization in Ethics." *American Philosophical Quarterly* 26 (1989): 221–229.

Hudson argues that moral theories are incomplete if they fail to supply "rules for action" that we can apply with "moral" certainty (p. 221). Objective utilitarianism might be correct as theory of which actions are best, but "maximize *expected* utility"—where an agent's

assignments of utility are understood to be directly present to her consciousness—is superior to "maximize utility" because only the later can be applied with the requisite certainty (p. 225).

Lockhart, Ted. *Moral Uncertainty and Its Consequences*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. [ISBN: 9780195126105]

Lockhart argues that if I am certain x is wrong, somewhat confident that y is right, but certain that z is right I should z. To y would be unwarrantedly risky, even when y and z are both permissible. In cases of uncertainty, agents should maximize the degree of expected rightness. He affirms: "This means that ethicists should recommend the 'no abortion' alternative for the vast majority of women" (p. 54).

Oddie, Graham. "Moral Uncertainty and Human Embryo Experimentation." In *Medicine and Moral Reasoning*. Edited by K. W. M. Fulford, Grant Gillett, and Janet M. Soskice, 141–61. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994. [ISBN: 9780521459464]

Oddie recommends maximizing the overall expected "goodness or value" of our actions. The agent estimates the "real chances" that various morally relevant features will obtain should she x and multiplies this with her estimate of the "real value" of these features. S is "morally justified" in performing x if its expected value is at least as high as that of any available alternative, even if x turns out to be wrong (p. 150).

Ross, Jacob. "Rejecting Ethical Deflationism." *Ethics* 116 (July 2006): 742–768.

"Deflationism" denotes nihilism and the view that different moral theories are equally good guides. Ross argues that accepting deflationism is irrational whether or not it is true. So long as it isn't certain, deflationism's recommendations will be "dominated" by those of any non-deflationary theory the agent regards as possibly true. We have reason to prefer theories that posit comparatively larger differences between our best and average options.

Sepielli, Andrew. "What to Do When You Don't Know What to Do." In *Oxford Studies in Metaethics*. Vol. 4. Edited by Russ Shafer-Landau, 5–28. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. [ISBN: 9780199566303]

An agent who is irremediably uncertain about what is moral should maximize expected objective value. We derive the difference in value between A and B on the assumption that A is better than B and the difference on the alternative assumption that B is better than A from our belief in various "practical conditionals" such as: If A is better than B, then A and C are of equal value.

Sepielli, Andrew. "What to Do When You Don't Know What to Do When You Don't' Know What to Do. . ." *Nous* (2013) [doi:10.1111/nous.12010].

Solomon thinks retribution is probably reason to punish Norman but is uncertain and is worried punishment would be "horribly wrong" if retributivism is mistaken, but he rejects the advice that he should hedge his bets and exercise leniency. After distinguishing perspectival from systematic rationality, Sepielli argues that punishing would be perspectivally rational, leniency first-order systemically rational, but punishing Norman second-order systemically rational, where no order of systematically rationality can be justly privileged. Available *online[http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/nous.12010/abstract]* by purchase or subscription.

Non-cognitivism and Moral Epistemology

If non-cognitivists think that moral language is not used to assert truths or that the states of mind we frame with moral language are not beliefs but instead desires, plans, or feelings, they would seem committed to skepticism. If there are no moral truths, there is no moral knowledge, as knowledge is traditionally thought to entail true belief. Gibbard 2003 avoids skepticism by adopting a nontraditional account of knowledge. To attribute moral knowledge is to plan to trust someone with regard to certain "final ends" that figure in her life-plan. But attributions of knowledge of what to "live for" are "weak" as they lack a "deep" evolutionary vindication. (Perceptual judgments augment fitness by reliably representing our environment; moral judgments do not.) In contrast, Blackburn 1996 rejects the importance of external vindications, and Ridge 2007 claims we typically don't make the plans Gibbard posits. Hare 1996 argues that the epistemology of moral thought is radically different from the epistemology of scientific thought. Hare affirms: "The chief obstacle to success in general epistemology . . . is the fact that we are after a way of establishing facts. Moral epistemology . . . is after something different," namely, "rationally acceptable prescriptions" (p. 191). Schroeder 2010 defines "non-descriptivism" as the thesis that moral questions "are not really about anything," so that we "don't have to answer" traditional questions about the relation between moral judgments and reality (pp. 12–13). "Non-cognitivism" is defined as a family of nondescriptivist theories, which model moral thoughts as states with "world-to-mind" direction of fit to explain the conceptual connection between moral judgment and motivation. The "Frege-Geach" problem for non-

cognitivism is to provide a compositional semantics for moral thought without betraying the assumption that it is "world-to-mind" in nature. Chapter 9 discusses Cian Dorr's epistemic challenge to non-cognitivism so understood (Dorr 2002). If Edgar has the standing belief that if lying is wrong, liars will be punished in the afterlife, and he comes to accept that lying is wrong, and then infers that liars will be punished in the afterlife, he has seemingly reasoned cogently. But the non-cognitivist says that in coming to accept that lying is wrong, Edgar does not acquire new evidence that lying is punished in the afterlife but instead develops something like a plan to condemn liars. To ground belief in such an attitude is akin to "wishful thinking." So non-cognitivism forces us to classify certain intuitively cogent inferences as irrational. Lenman 2003 and Budolfson 2011 defend non-cognitivism from Dorr's argument.

Blackburn, Simon. "Securing the Nots." In *Moral Knowledge? New Readings in Moral Epistemology.* Edited by Walter Sinnott-Armstrong and Mark Timmons, 82–100. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996. [ISBN: 9780195089899]

Most moral knowledge is inarticulate know-how, though we know hedged principles: e.g., malicious lying is bad. Reliability is necessary for knowledge but there must also be "no improvement in the subject's acquaintance with the facts" that would "undermine" belief, where "improvement" and "undermine" resist value-neutral analysis (pp. 87–88). One's positive evaluation of an act can meet these conditions and so constitute moral knowledge even if one's reliability cannot be vindicated without circularity.

Budolfson, Mark Bryant. "Non-cognitivism and Rational Inference." *Philosophical Studies* 153 (2011): 243–259.

Non-cognitivists can answer Dorr's wishful thinking argument (see Dorr 2002) if they can solve the Frege-Geach problem (by providing a truth-eschewing compositional semantics for moral language). When Edgar comes to believe that lying is wrong, he does not therein acquire new evidence that lying is punished in the afterlife whether or not cognitivism is true, as in the needed sense of "evidence" beliefs are not evidence but responses to it.

Dorr, Cian. "Non-cognitivism and Wishful Thinking." *Nous* 36 (2002): 97–103.

Dorr describes a seemingly cogent inference that, he argues, non-cognitivists must classify as a case of wishful thinking. He states: "If non-cognitivism about wrongness is true, it is never rational to infer factual conclusions from premises about wrongness, unless one comes to accept those premises in virtue of some change in one's cognitive state. This. . . leaves a very

wide range of cases where non-cognitivism conflicts with our intuitions about rationality" (p. 101).

Gibbard, Allan. *Thinking How to Live*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003. [ISBN: 9780674011670]

Gibbard argues that "ought" and "reasons" are used to express decisions about what "is the thing to do." To attribute moral knowledge in a weak sense is to plan to trust someone's "life-plan" or adopt its constituent "final ends." We lack moral knowledge in a strong sense because we lack evidence that we are reliable at determining the value of final goods independently of their contribution to our reproductive fitness.

Hare, R. M. "Foundationalism and Coherentism in Ethics." In *Moral Knowledge? New Readings in Moral Epistemology*. Edited by Walter Sinott-Armstrong and Mark Timmons, 190–199. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996. [ISBN: 9780195089899]

Hare hypothesizes that when someone refrains from lying and therein knowingly incurs a financial loss, his main motive, insofar as he is rational, is to avoid "having" to prescribe that other people lie when this serves their financial interests. The demands of a particularly moral form of coherence between general and particular prescriptions provide the only constraints to which rational moral thought is amenable.

Lenman, James. "Noncognitivism and Wishfulness." *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 6 (2003): 265–274.

Lenman argues that non-cognitivists can meet the challenge posed by Dorr's argument against non-cognitivism (see Dorr 2002). If Edgar does not have any independent, descriptive belief in the relation between lying and being punished in the afterlife, he is guilty of irrationality. But if he does have such a belief, the non-cognitivist can appeal to the (non-moral) evidence it supplies to account for the intuition that Edgar reasons rationally.

Ridge, Michael. "Epistemology for Ecumenical Expressivists." *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplement* 81 (2007): 83–108.

Ridge criticizes Blackburn (Blackburn 1996) and Gibbard's (Gibbard 2003) accounts of moral knowledge in favor of one better suited to his "ecumenical expressivism," which equates a moral judgment with the belief that an ideal adviser would approve of something for certain reasons and approval of this adviser's approval. Ridge states: "Knowledge attributions express

a speaker's commitment," from "epistemic motives," to those "procedures of belief formation and revision" she endorses or improvements upon them (pp. 100–103).

Schroeder, Mark. *Noncognitivism in Ethics*. New York: Routledge, 2010. [ISBN: 9780415773430]

Schroeder defines "non-cognitivism" and discusses the problems it faces as a semantic view. Chapter 9 describes Dorr's epistemic challenge to the doctrine and criticizes extent responses to it (see Dorr 2002). Enoch's solution violates projectibility and endorses hubris. Lenman's response achieves only propositional (not doxastic) justification for the target belief and implies that a subject must be irrational if his evidence involves normative premises "all the way down" (Lenman 2003, p. 182).