

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00603-3 - Moral Knowledge

Edited by Ellen Frankel Paul, Fred D. Miller and Jeffrey Paul

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

## MORAL KNOWLEDGE

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00603-3 - Moral Knowledge

Edited by Ellen Frankel Paul, Fred D. Miller and Jeffrey Paul

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00603-3 - Moral Knowledge

Edited by Ellen Frankel Paul, Fred D. Miller and Jeffrey Paul

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

# MORAL KNOWLEDGE

*Edited by*

**Ellen Frankel Paul, Fred D. Miller, Jr.,  
and Jeffrey Paul**



Cambridge University Press  
978-0-521-00603-3 - Moral Knowledge  
Edited by Ellen Frankel Paul, Fred D. Miller and Jeffrey Paul  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

32 Avenue of the Americas, New York NY 10013-2473, USA

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9780521006033](http://www.cambridge.org/9780521006033)

Copyright © 2001 Social Philosophy and Policy Foundation

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2001

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data*

Moral Knowledge / edited by Ellen Frankel Paul,  
Fred D. Miller, Jr., and Jeffrey Paul. p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-521-00603-1 (pbk.)

1. Ethics.

I. Paul, Ellen Frankel. II. Miller, Fred Dycus, 1944–  
III. Paul, Jeffrey.

BJ1012 .M6325 2001

170–dc21 2001025328

CIP

ISBN 978-0-521-00603-3 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

## CONTENTS

	Introduction	vii
	Acknowledgments	xvi
	Contributors	xvii
DAVID COPP	Realist-Expressivism: A Neglected Option for Moral Realism	1
SHELLY KAGAN	Thinking about Cases	44
GEORGE SHER	But I Could Be Wrong	64
BRIAN LEITER	Moral Facts and Best Explanations	79
PHILIP PETTIT	Two Sources of Morality	102
STEPHEN DARWALL	“Because I Want It”	129
DAVID O. BRINK	Realism, Naturalism, and Moral Semantics	154
DAVID SIDORSKY	Incomplete Routes to Moral Objectivity: Four Variants of Naturalism	177
DAVID SOBEL	Explanation, Internalism, and Reasons for Action	218
JULIA ANNAS	Moral Knowledge as Practical Knowledge	236
JAMES BERNARD MURPHY	Practical Reason and Moral Psychology in Aristotle and Kant	257
THOMAS E. HILL, JR.	Hypothetical Consent in Kantian Constructivism	300
GEOFFREY SAYRE-McCORD	Mill’s “Proof” of the Principle of Utility: A More than Half-Hearted Defense	330
	Index	361

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00603-3 - Moral Knowledge

Edited by Ellen Frankel Paul, Fred D. Miller and Jeffrey Paul

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00603-3 - Moral Knowledge

Edited by Ellen Frankel Paul, Fred D. Miller and Jeffrey Paul

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## INTRODUCTION

Philosophers since ancient times have pondered how we can know whether moral claims are true or false. Aristotle (386–322 B.C.) called attention to this concern in his *Nicomachean Ethics*: “Now fine and just actions admit of much variety and fluctuation of opinion, so that they may be thought to exist only by convention, and not by nature.” The first half of the twentieth century witnessed widespread skepticism concerning the possibility of moral knowledge. Indeed, some argued that moral statements lacked cognitive content altogether, because they were not susceptible to empirical verification. The British philosopher A. J. Ayer, for example, contended in his seminal work, *Language, Truth, and Logic* (1936), that “sentences which simply express moral judgements do not say anything. They are pure expressions of feeling and as such do not come under the category of truth and falsehood. They are unverifiable for the same reason as a cry of pain or a word of command is unverifiable—because they do not express genuine propositions.”

The second half of the twentieth century brought a revival of interest among philosophers in moral and political questions. Part of that revival consisted in a vigorous debate over the veracity of the earlier skepticism over the possibility of moral knowledge. Whether or not ethics can be founded upon a rational basis continues to roil the philosophical community at the dawn of the new century, with no consensus likely on these enduring questions: Can morality be founded upon facts about human nature, social agreement, volition, subjective preference, *a priori* reasoning, intuition, or some other basis? Is morality knowable in any objective sense that would make it universal and, therefore, binding on humans in all times, places, and circumstances? Or, rather, is morality inherently subjective, culture bound, or more radically still, uniquely determined by each individual for that individual? Is there an answer to Ayer’s progeny who maintain that it is misguided even to think in terms of moral knowledge, on the grounds that moral utterances are expressions of feelings or attitudes rather than claims that can be known to be true or false?

The thirteen essays in this volume—written by prominent philosophers of diverse perspectives—represent the latest thinking on these questions in moral epistemology. Some authors argue for versions of moral realism and also address concerns raised by their antirealist critics. Others focus on our moral beliefs and intuitions, asking whether our reliance on them is rendered hopelessly problematic by their tenuous connection to factual matters or by the presence of moral disagreement. Several essays examine aspects of practical reason, showing how certain accounts of reason and desire can generate important consequences for other aspects of ethical

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00603-3 - Moral Knowledge

Edited by Ellen Frankel Paul, Fred D. Miller and Jeffrey Paul

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

theory. Still others analyze the theories of seminal thinkers in moral philosophy, assessing how they treat moral knowledge and justification.

In the volume's first essay, "Realist-Expressivism: A Neglected Option for Moral Realism," David Copp argues that elements from two seemingly opposed metaethical theories can be reconciled into a theoretically attractive position. Copp begins by explaining that moral realism holds that our moral judgments express beliefs and refer to moral properties, whereas expressivism—a position that is typically a component of anti-realist theories—holds that moral judgments are expressions of attitudes or motivational states. Often thought incompatible, Copp shows that realism and expressivism can be combined into one coherent view: realist-expressivism. Though numerous realist-expressivist views are logically possible, Copp spends much of the essay elaborating upon his own preferred account. Under this account, moral judgments involve beliefs whose truth can be assessed by referring to the standards that would be involved were a society to follow the social moral code that would best meet its needs. At the same time, Copp claims, because moral terms have what Frege called "coloring," one's moral judgments also express a distinctive kind of motivational state—namely, they express one's subscription to the relevant moral standards. Respectively, these two points represent the realist and expressivist aspects of Copp's proposal. Copp concludes his essay by noting ways in which realist-expressivist views can address certain important metaethical disputes. In particular, realist-expressivism is able to account for intuitions fueling internalist accounts of the connection between moral belief and motivation, yet is itself compatible with externalism. Furthermore, realist-expressivism is also capable of accounting for various beliefs that underlie antirealism, while remaining fully realist. With these virtues, Copp says, realist-expressivism is an interesting metaethical alternative worthy of further consideration.

The volume's next pair of essays focus on aspects of our moral beliefs and intuitions. In "Thinking about Cases," Shelly Kagan begins by noting the prominent role that our intuitions about particular cases (case specific intuitions) play in our arguments about moral claims and theories. In such arguments, it seems we treat case specific intuitions as generating evidence upon which we can rely. How, Kagan asks, can we justify such reliance? The primary way such justification proceeds is by pointing to an analogy between moral intuition and empirical observation. Our observations about the world certainly seem relevant to tests of empirical theories, so this analogy goes, and our moral intuitions are likewise relevant to tests of moral theories. Kagan argues, however, that this analogy goes awry at a crucial point: whereas we have been able to construct empirical theories that largely endorse our empirical observations, we have not been able to develop an explanatorily adequate moral theory that incorporates our moral intuitions in like fashion. Thus, the evidentiary value of our moral intuitions is questionable at best. The upshot,



Kagan claims, is that with respect to our moral intuitions we must accept some form of error theory, under which many of our moral beliefs are mistaken. There is room under error theories for people to have justified moral intuitions, but which intuitions these are will depend on the specifications of whatever error theory is utilized. As Kagan shows, determining which error theory correctly reflects the reliability of our moral intuitions is difficult given factors such as widespread moral disagreement. In the end, Kagan concludes, our use of moral intuitions will inevitably continue, but their use remains problematic to the core.

George Sher's essay, "But I Could Be Wrong," also touches on the phenomenon of moral disagreement. Sher commences by noting how John Stuart Mill and John Rawls point to the contingent nature of one's moral beliefs as raising a challenge to the authority of one's moral judgments. This realization, though congenial to liberal political principles, is problematic when we engage in moral deliberation as individuals. In such deliberation, we often find that we disagree with others. If our moral judgments are based merely on contingent factors of upbringing and background, then using them to justify our actions, when others disagree, is troubling. Thus, the authority of our moral judgments is put in question both because of the contingency of our moral beliefs and the presence of moral disagreement. One might be tempted to argue that the challenge to our moral judgments rests only on one of these factors, rendering the other superfluous, but Sher shows that if we are to confront the challenge to our judgments in its strongest form, we must assume that premises of both sorts are in play. Though it is possible that the moral judgments of individuals would converge if people were to engage in rational reflection, Sher argues that this will not be enough to establish the possibility that one's own judgments are authoritative. In conclusion, he states that we may well have to reconcile ourselves to the fact that though we have rational reasons for following our own moral judgments, the truth or justifiability of these judgments may nevertheless be dubious.

Brian Leiter's "Moral Facts and Best Explanations," presses several prominent accounts of moral realism on their inability to meet the "best-explanation test." According to a popular argument supporting realist positions in the philosophies of mind and science, only those properties that fit into the best explanation of the world can qualify as real properties. The implication of this for moral realism is that it must show that moral properties fit into such an explanation. Leiter argues that this is a daunting task. He proceeds to examine two criteria by which we can evaluate explanatory accounts: consilience and simplicity. Applying these criteria to various explanatory accounts of moral judgments, he finds that moral explanations compare unfavorably with explanations provided by evolutionary psychology and psychoanalytic theory. Faced with this hurdle, the moral realist will be forced to argue for two claims: first, that moral facts are supervenient upon or identical to other, nonmoral explan-

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00603-3 - Moral Knowledge

Edited by Ellen Frankel Paul, Fred D. Miller and Jeffrey Paul

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

atory facts; and second, that without moral facts we suffer an explanatory loss (or some similar epistemic loss) in our ability to understand the world. However, in surveying the work of prominent moral realists—Geoffrey Sayre-McCord, David Brink, and Joshua Cohen—Leiter concludes that none of their versions of moral realism truly shows that moral facts provide us with a significant explanatory gain. As a result, it seems that the best explanatory account of the world will not include moral properties, and that, therefore, such properties should not be deemed real.

Our use of terms that invoke moral properties raises an important question: where in human experience are moral terms and concepts grounded? Where in experience, that is, does the moral become salient to us? In his essay “Two Sources of Morality,” Philip Pettit attempts to answer this question by providing a naturalistic genealogy of moral conceptualization. Though humans are intentional creatures who can form and act on beliefs and desires, this in itself does not establish that humans use any sort of normative concepts. As discursive creatures, however, humans engage in a practice that depends upon our giving terms common meanings. As a result, Pettit shows, expressing our thoughts through discourse demands that we follow various norms of inferential reasoning. In this way, normative concepts, though not moral concepts proper, secure a role in human conceptual thought. The emergence of moral concepts, Pettit explains, could come about in two separate ways. First, as we privilege discourse as a form of interaction, the fact that such discourse involves norms of rationality will mean that the practice itself will also involve norms concerning how interactive discourse should take place. Certain methods of expression are inconsistent with the purpose of such discourse, and terms with ethical force will arise so that we may condemn such types of expression. Alternatively, ethical concepts might emerge as we attempt to use discourse to express our sentiments in such a way as to guide others’ reasons for action. These two separate sources of ethical conceptualization, Pettit notes in closing, bear connections to the important divide in contemporary ethical theory between deontology and consequentialism.

Communicating with others also plays a key role in Stephen Darwall’s contribution to this volume, “‘Because I Want It.’” In his essay, Darwall asks how an agent’s desire or will can give him reasons for acting. In the past, many philosophers argued that all reasons for acting are based in the agent’s desires, but this view is now widely rejected in favor of a vision in which desires are only in the “background” of an agent’s deliberations. Some might argue that accounts of instrumental reasoning and hypothetical imperatives, or of desire’s “direction of fit,” could provide a way for desires to ground reasons, but Darwall shows that none of these options can really accomplish this task. What is key to the reason-giving character of one’s desires is the fact that unlike one’s theoretical

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00603-3 - Moral Knowledge

Edited by Ellen Frankel Paul, Fred D. Miller and Jeffrey Paul

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## INTRODUCTION

xi

perspective, which only gives one reasons to act to the extent that it accurately reflects the world, one's practical perspective, based in one's will, cannot be treated as though it is a mere appearance reflecting some outside phenomenon. Because of this, Darwall argues, an agent's will can have a reason-giving character rooted in one's standing as one rational agent among others. One discovers this in one's interactions with others. In making claims on another, one attempts to give the other reasons for action by engaging in "second-personal" address, which by its nature involves reciprocal recognition of one's standing as a free and rational agent. As one finds that other free and rational agents have reasons for action based in their wills, one realizes that because of one's own status as a free and rational agent, one's own will also has a reason-giving character.

The next two essays consider the interrelationship between moral realism and ethical naturalism. In "Realism, Naturalism, and Moral Semantics," David O. Brink provides an explanation and defense of the semantic commitments of those who would defend both realism and naturalism in ethics. He begins by revisiting G. E. Moore's famous attack on ethical naturalism in the "open question" argument and the recent strategy of defending ethical naturalism by appeal to the direct-reference tradition. Brink defends this strategy against arguments that direct reference implies both an antirealism form of semantic relativism and the obsolescence of moral reasoning in ascertaining the extension of moral predicates. Replies to these arguments can be made within the semantic tradition that treats the reference of moral terms as a function of the properties of people, actions, and institutions that causally regulate their use. But, Brink argues, this tradition is unable to deliver a sufficiently robust form of moral realism. A more promising line of response, he claims, appeals to the importance of referential intentions in fixing the reference of terms. On one such view, terms pick out moral properties just in case speakers have or inherit the intention to refer to properties of people, actions, and institutions that allow them to justify their conduct to others. Such an account provides a common subject matter about which adherents of rival moral codes can have a disagreement in belief, and it explains the role of moral reasoning in ascertaining the extension of moral predicates. This semantic view does not establish the truth of moral realism or ethical naturalism, but it undermines various semantic objections to combining the two.

In "Incomplete Routes to Moral Objectivity: Four Variants of Naturalism," David Sidorsky surveys four prominent accounts of ethical naturalism and discusses the problems that each faces in its attempt to establish that morality is objective. Under Aristotelian naturalism, objective moral norms are rooted in human nature and are discoverable in the same way that we can uncover norms concerning other species. There are important problems with this view, but Hume's naturalism seems to avoid many of

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00603-3 - Moral Knowledge

Edited by Ellen Frankel Paul, Fred D. Miller and Jeffrey Paul

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

them by linking ethics to the idea of an impartial hypothetical observer. As Sidorsky shows, though, applying Hume's theory to particular cases is difficult, throwing into doubt whether Hume's brand of naturalism is practical. In Deweyan ethical theory, competing moral hypotheses can be tested through a process of scientific inquiry in which the hypotheses are compared with respect to their consequences. However, this posited connection between ethics and scientific inquiry is questionable on several counts. The failures of these naturalistic projects and the development of various nonnaturalist theories in the early twentieth century gave rise to Sidorsky's fourth kind of ethical naturalism—linguistic naturalism. On this view, an intrinsic connection exists between the ascription or predication of moral terms and the reasons given for their use. Accordingly, such terms can be used in objectively correct or incorrect ways, depending upon the truth or falsity of the given reasons. Noting that this linguistic naturalist project hinges on whether "reason" has a fixed meaning in moral discourse, Sidorsky examines several objections to this claim and suggests that they each have telling weaknesses. Though linguistic naturalism does not provide a method of resolving moral disagreements, he concludes, it is able to ground the claim that moral judgments can be objective.

One important dispute in metaethics concerns internalism, the idea that moral claims have intrinsic motivational force. In "Explanation, Internalism, and Reasons for Action," David Sobel argues that an important contemporary argument in this debate is misguided. Bernard Williams is well known for advocating internalism, but Sobel claims that Williams's argument for the position misfires for two reasons. First, noting that Williams bases his argument for internalism on an "explanation condition," Sobel shows that various ways of interpreting this condition fail to truly support the internalist view. Sobel's second attack on Williams's position emerges from a discussion about accounts of reasons for action. Sobel is a subjectivist about reasons for action: he believes that an agent's subjective motivational set is the ultimate determinant of whether an agent has a reason to do something. Surveying various subjectivist positions, Sobel argues that the most plausible are ideal advisor accounts, according to which a person has a reason to perform some action if and only if an ideally informed version of himself would recommend that he do so. Under such accounts, however, one's own reasons for action may differ from the reasons for action held by an idealized version of oneself. As a result, we must reject both the most plausible interpretation of Williams's explanation condition and internalism itself. Sobel ends his essay by noting that the upshot of this argument is that since subjectivism and internalism are incompatible, the really interesting philosophical questions involving reasons for action may hinge not on the dispute between internalists and externalists, but rather on that between subjectivists and objectivists.

The final four essays in this volume take an historical perspective to questions in moral epistemology. In her "Moral Knowledge as Practical

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00603-3 - Moral Knowledge

Edited by Ellen Frankel Paul, Fred D. Miller and Jeffrey Paul

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## INTRODUCTION

xiii

Knowledge," Julia Annas compares modern views on moral epistemology with Platonic and other ancient views. J. L. Mackie, among other recent philosophers, has complained that Plato's theory of moral "Forms" is metaphysically dubious. Annas's response to Mackie is that he works under problematic assumptions representative of modern moral epistemology, and she suggests that a truer understanding of the ancients renders Mackie's complaint ill-founded. To the ancients, moral knowledge was seen as a kind of practical knowledge. Rather than involving an improved epistemic state with respect to a particular fact, "knowledge" on this model of epistemology involves acquiring an understanding of what underlies and unifies various facts that belong to a common subject matter. That practical knowledge of this sort is possible seems evident given the wide variety of practical expertise we see all around us. Skills such as speaking French or repairing computers, for example, clearly involve a sort of knowledge, one that is teachable and involves the ability to provide articulate explanations within a particular field. Annas argues that the ancients saw moral knowledge in analogous fashion, as a kind of practical expertise about how to live well and do the right thing. Seen this way, moral knowledge is hardly metaphysically puzzling. To the contrary, Annas shows that the assumptions Mackie uses to reject moral knowledge, if applied consistently, would force Mackie to reject the possibility of ordinary practical expertise of the kind we observe every day.

James Bernard Murphy's essay also compares ancient and modern views. In "Practical Reason and Moral Psychology in Aristotle and Kant," Murphy lays out Aristotle's and Kant's radically different conceptions of practical reason, and explores the implications of this difference for each scholar's ethical views. For Aristotle, "practical wisdom" involves the quest for happiness, which mainly consists in intellectual and moral excellence, while for Kant, practical reason is sharply divided between the merely prudential quest for happiness and the moral quest for virtue. These divergent views of practical reason stem from Aristotle's and Kant's differing understandings of both human nature and the moral psychology of agents. Aristotle has confidence that practical wisdom can shape our desires, passions, skills, habits, and temperament so that all of these things are internally oriented toward the good. In contrast, Kant has much less confidence that practical reason can effect such a unity. Thus, for Kant our nonmoral capacities and dispositions will always be alienated to a large degree from moral reason. Because of this, Kant liberates moral action from contingent facts of one's upbringing and abilities; he counsels that we should set these factors aside and act from rational principle alone. Aristotle suggests that we cannot achieve such radical freedom from our nature through rational thought, for he conceives of moral goodness as being inextricably linked to our natural skills and acquired habits. Though there are undoubtedly cases of individuals overcoming their character in Kantian fashion, Murphy thinks that these ex-



Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00603-3 - Moral Knowledge

Edited by Ellen Frankel Paul, Fred D. Miller and Jeffrey Paul

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

amples only partially obscure the deep influence that character has on agents.

Kant is the focus of our next essay as well. Thomas E. Hill, Jr.'s topic is "Hypothetical Consent in Kantian Constructivism." Broadly speaking, Kantian constructivism refers to the view that moral principles are "constructions" of certain procedures of thought or will. In his ethical writings, Kant offers numerous constructivist procedures for determining which moral principles one ought to accept; the grounding of these justificatory procedures is an important component of Kant's moral epistemology. Hill sets out to ascertain how three different forms of consent—actual, possible, and hypothetical—fit into this Kantian framework. To do this, Hill examines Kant's various formulations of the Categorical Imperative as well as Kant's idea of an original contract. On the basis of this survey, Hill argues that actual consent plays only a derivative and qualified role in determining how we ought to be treated. Kant's more basic standard is that practices are justified only if we, as rational agents, could consent to them. This seems to suggest that possible consent is of primary importance, yet Hill shows that to apply this standard, we have to make assumptions about the context of choice and the principles of rationality that determine what it is possible, in the relevant sense, for agents to will. Once this is understood, the possible-consent standard is equivalent to a hypothetical-consent standard under which practices are condemned if they are contrary to principles that any rational agent would will under specified conditions. Though there are numerous objections to particular versions of hypothetical consent, Hill probes several of these criticisms and demonstrates that Kant's theory is able to withstand them.

Our final essay, Geoffrey Sayre-McCord's "Mill's 'Proof' of the Principle of Utility: A More than Half-Hearted Defense," shifts our attention from Kant to Mill, though Kant will still make an appearance. The third paragraph of Chapter IV of Mill's *Utilitarianism* is Sayre-McCord's target; it is famous for its seemingly rampant fallacies. If the paragraph is examined in the context of the full work, Sayre-McCord claims that these "fallacies" appear only if one misinterprets Mill's aims. For example, Mill claims in this paragraph that just as the only proof that one can have that something is visible is that people see it, so it is that the only proof one can have that something is desirable is that people desire it. Numerous scholars have argued that with this move Mill embraces a "naturalistic fallacy" of thinking that evaluative concepts can be defined in naturalistic terms. In contrast, Sayre-McCord suggests that Mill is not claiming here that being desired and being desirable are equivalent, but rather that our desires are what provide us with evidence for our value judgments. In particular, the fact that people desire their own happiness suggests that they are committed to the claim that their own happiness is valuable. Next, Sayre-McCord examines another "fallacy"—Mill's apparent leap from the claim that each person values his own happiness to the claim

Cambridge University Press  
978-0-521-00603-3 - Moral Knowledge  
Edited by Ellen Frankel Paul, Fred D. Miller and Jeffrey Paul  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

## INTRODUCTION

xv

that each person should value the happiness of all. Sayre-McCord proposes that Mill's argument here is that acceptance of the value of one's own happiness carries with it the implication that one must agree that when others secure happiness, they have acquired something of value as well. The general structure of this argument, Sayre-McCord illustrates, is similar to that employed by Kant to show that if one values one's rational nature as granting one standing as an end, one is committed to the proposition that other people also have standing as ends because of their own rational natures. Thus, Mill and Kant—representatives of moral positions usually considered antipodal—utilize a similar argumentative structure at key points in the justification of their moral theories.

The thirteen essays in this volume span the ancients and moderns, and represent most of the competing views in contemporary discussions of moral epistemology.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00603-3 - Moral Knowledge

Edited by Ellen Frankel Paul, Fred D. Miller and Jeffrey Paul

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The editors wish to acknowledge several individuals at the Social Philosophy and Policy Center, Bowling Green State University, who provided invaluable assistance in the preparation of this volume. They include Mary Dilsaver, Terrie Weaver, Carrie-Ann Biondi, and Pamela Phillips.

The editors would like to extend special thanks to Publication Specialist Tamara Sharp, for attending to innumerable day-to-day details of the book's preparation; and to Managing Editor Matthew Buckley, for providing dedicated assistance throughout the editorial and production process.



## CONTRIBUTORS

**David Copp** is Professor of Philosophy at Bowling Green State University, and a Senior Research Fellow at the Social Philosophy and Policy Center at Bowling Green State University. He taught previously at the University of California, Davis, the University of Illinois at Chicago, and Simon Fraser University. He is the author of *Morality, Normativity, and Society* (1995) and of many articles in moral and political philosophy. He is also an Associate Editor of *Ethics*.

**Shelly Kagan** is Henry R. Luce Professor of Social Thought and Ethics at Yale University. He is the author of *The Limits of Morality* (1989) and *Normative Ethics* (1998), and of numerous articles in ethical theory. Much of his work has focused on the debate between consequentialism and deontology; he has also written on the nature of well-being and the concept of intrinsic value. He is currently at work on a book entitled *The Geometry of Desert*.

**George Sher** is Herbert S. Autrey Professor of Philosophy at Rice University. He is the author of *Desert* (1987), *Beyond Neutrality: Perfectionism and Politics* (1997), and *Approximate Justice: Studies in Non-Ideal Theory* (1997). He has written widely on topics in social and political philosophy; his articles have been published in the *Journal of Philosophy*, *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, *Ethics*, *Noûs*, and numerous other journals. He is currently writing a book on blame.

**Brian Leiter** is Charles I. Francis Professor in the School of Law, Professor of Philosophy, and Director of the Law and Philosophy Program at the University of Texas at Austin. Coeditor of the journal *Legal Theory*, he is also editor of *Objectivity in Law and Morals* (2001) and author of *Nietzsche on Morality* (2001). He has written on various topics in legal philosophy, ethics, Continental philosophy, and philosophy of mind; his articles have appeared, among other places, in *Ethics*, the *Yale Law Journal*, the *European Journal of Philosophy*, and the *Times Literary Supplement*.

**Philip Pettit** is Professor of Social and Political Theory at the Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University, and a regular Visiting Professor at Columbia University. He is the author of a number of books, including *The Common Mind: An Essay on Psychology, Society, and Politics* (1993), *Republicanism: A Theory of Freedom and Government* (1997), and *A Theory of Freedom: From Psychology to Politics* (2001). He is also coauthor of *Three Methods of Ethics* (with Marcia Baron and Michael Slote, 1997).

## CONTRIBUTORS

**Stephen Darwall** is John Dewey Professor of Philosophy at the University of Michigan, where he has taught since 1984. His work focuses on the foundations of ethics and practical reason and on the history of fundamental moral philosophy, especially in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He is the author of *Impartial Reason* (1983), *The British Moralists and the Internal 'Ought': 1640–1740* (1995), *Philosophical Ethics* (1999), and numerous articles in moral philosophy, moral psychology, and the history of ethics. He is also the coeditor of *Moral Discourse and Practice* (with Allan Gibbard and Peter Railton, 1997).

**David O. Brink** is Professor of Philosophy at the University of California, San Diego. His research interests are in ethical theory, political philosophy, constitutional jurisprudence, and the history of ethics. He is the author of *Moral Realism and the Foundations of Ethics* (1989) and is bringing out a new edition of T. H. Green's *Prolegomena to Ethics* through the Clarendon Press. He is currently working on issues in ethical theory and the history of ethics involving practical reason and moral demands, and on issues in constitutional jurisprudence involving judicial review and individual rights in a constitutional democracy.

**David Sidorsky** is Professor of Philosophy at Columbia University. He teaches moral philosophy, political philosophy, and literary theory; for a number of years, he chaired Columbia's University Seminar in General Education and the university's John M. Olin Colloquium in Political Philosophy. In addition to authoring numerous published essays, he is the editor of *The Liberal Tradition in European Thought* (1970), *John Dewey: The Essential Writings* (1977), and *Essays on Human Rights* (1979).

**David Sobel** is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Bowling Green State University. He has written several articles on reasons for action and accounts of well-being; these include "Full Information Accounts of Well-Being" (*Ethics*, 1994), "On the Subjectivity of Welfare" (*Ethics*, 1997), "Well-Being as the Object of Moral Consideration" (*Economics and Philosophy*, 1998), and "Do the Desires of Rational Agents Converge?" (*Analysis*, 1999). His current research is focused on a sustained defense of subjective accounts of well-being and reasons for action.

**Julia Annas** is Regents Professor of Philosophy at the University of Arizona. She is the author or coauthor of ten books and numerous articles on a range of issues in ancient philosophy, with her main focus being ethics and epistemology. Her books *The Morality of Happiness* (1993) and *Platonic Ethics, Old and New* (1998) explore the structure of ethical theory in ancient philosophy. She is currently working on an introduction to a new translation of Cicero's *On Moral Ends*.

Cambridge University Press  
978-0-521-00603-3 - Moral Knowledge  
Edited by Ellen Frankel Paul, Fred D. Miller and Jeffrey Paul  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

## CONTRIBUTORS

**James Bernard Murphy** is Associate Professor of Government at Dartmouth College. He is the author of *The Moral Economy of Labor: Aristotelian Themes in Economic Theory* (1993) and *The Normative Force of the Actual: The Morality of Positive Law*, forthcoming from Yale University Press. He has written several articles on labor, law, signs, and ethics in the Aristotelian-Thomistic tradition; these essays have appeared in, among other places, *Political Theory*, *The Review of Metaphysics*, and *The Thomist*.

**Thomas E. Hill, Jr.**, is Kenan Professor of Philosophy at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he has taught since 1984. He previously taught for sixteen years at the University of California, Los Angeles, and more briefly at Pomona College, at Johns Hopkins University, and (on visiting appointments) at Stanford University and the University of Minnesota. He is the author of *Autonomy and Self-Respect* (1991), *Dignity and Practical Reason in Kant's Moral Theory* (1992), and *Respect, Pluralism, and Justice: Kantian Perspectives* (2000).

**Geoffrey Sayre-McCord** is Bowman and Gordon Gray Professor of Philosophy at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He specializes in metaethics, moral theory, epistemology, and modern philosophy (especially Hume), and has written extensively in these areas. He is also the editor of *Essays on Moral Realism* (1988).